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Celebrating Our Past:
The First Fifty Years of Denver Service Center's Service and Stewardship

Terry Hallahan, 1972

Denis Galvin, 1978

Sandy Schuster, Linda Russo, Joan Huff, circa 1980s

Cultural Fair, 1990

Dick Morishige

Edie Ramey, Dan Wenk, Kathy Ziegenfus

John Gerbich and Sarah Bodo, Abraham Lincoln Birthplace NHP

Sam Whittington and BJ Johnson accept an accessibility award

Veteran's Day, 2016

FROM THE DENVER SERVICE CENTER DIRECTOR

I am pleased to present the history of the first fifty years of the Denver Service Center (DSC). This important history of the Denver Service Center of the National Park Service, which has been compiled, expanded, and written by Edie Ramey, is dependent on the DSC histories and draft histories that precede it. Specifically, the history has relied on the work and the words of Park Service historians and DSC alumni, most notably Dr. John Luzader (1983), Merrill J. Mattes (1989), Harlan D. Unrau (1999), and Dr. Tom Thomas (2019).

It has also been shaped by all the DSC employees who contributed to the Center's Annual Reports over the decades and by the generous National Park Service professionals (retired and current employees) who supplied the project descriptions and Division stories for this anniversary volume.

I offer my sincere gratitude to the people who have contributed to the mission of the National Park Service for fifty years through their work at the Denver Service Center, and I celebrate the accomplishments that enable parks to preserve resources and provide for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.

Happy fiftieth anniversary to the Denver Service Center!

Ray Todd, Director, Denver Service Center
18 November 2021

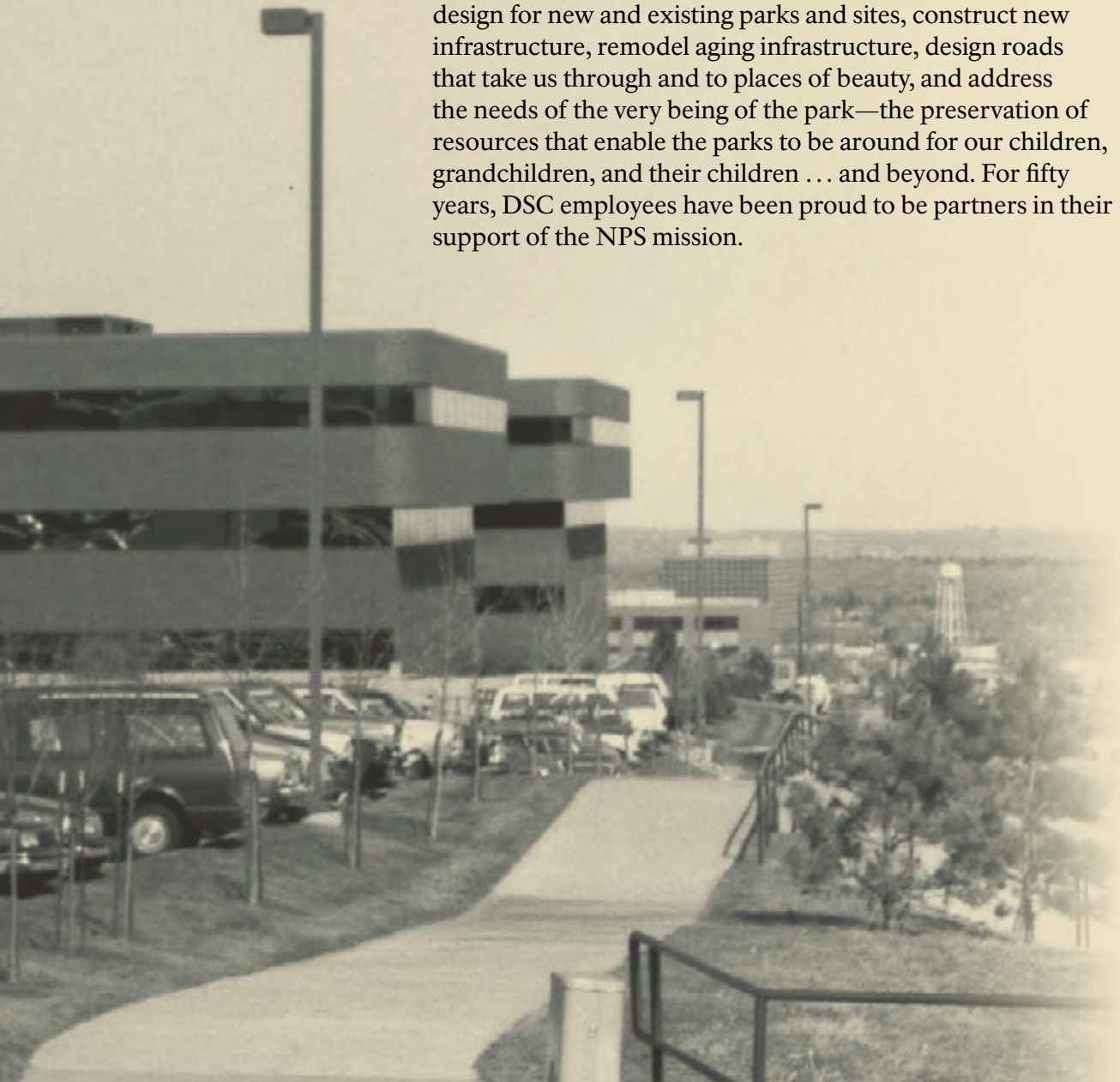
INTRODUCTION

The Denver Service Center (DSC) of the National Park Service (NPS) occupies a distinctive niche in the bureau's organizational structure. In a very substantial way, it is a unique operation. While the Denver Service Center is a Washington support office on the bureau organizational chart, it is nearly 2,000 miles from the District of Columbia. It is not a park; nor is it a regional office. It does, however, house one of the largest bodies of federal workers of any organizational unit in the entire National Park Service.

This concentration of professional talent at the Denver Service Center is an enormous asset in fulfilling the bureau's mission. In good times, when budgets have been more generous as a result of large, servicewide initiatives—such as Mission 66, the Bicentennial celebration, the system expansion during the Carter Administration, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, and the Great America Outdoors Act—the need for DSC personnel and services was obvious. Only the Denver Service Center could provide a critical mass of professional expertise and flexible organizational resources sufficient to implement such large-scale programs and initiatives. This unique function is fundamental to the organization's identity.

This history records the many times that the Denver Service Center has proved itself essential and the few painful moments when it (or the bureau as a whole) has feared itself expendable. For all its ups and downs, the Denver Service Center has been among the most stable of all NPS offices, if only in terms of its ability to remain in one location for nearly fifty years. This is the service center's fundamental identity: essential to the mission in flush times, but a vulnerable component of the bureau during challenging times.

The Denver Service Center traces its roots to the origins of the National Park Service and its historical significance to the bureau's success is beyond question. When the public thinks about the National Park Service, they're usually thinking about the parks and the uniformed rangers, interpreters, and other staff who keep the parks open, not about the project managers, architects, landscape architects, engineers, planners, and supporting staff who provide the planning and design for new and existing parks and sites, construct new infrastructure, remodel aging infrastructure, design roads that take us through and to places of beauty, and address the needs of the very being of the park—the preservation of resources that enable the parks to be around for our children, grandchildren, and their children . . . and beyond. For fifty years, DSC employees have been proud to be partners in their support of the NPS mission.



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LOLA KESSLER

PART ONE:
DSC HISTORY

CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The genesis of what became the National Park Service was the establishment, on March 1, 1872, of Yellowstone National Park near the headwaters of the Yellowstone River in Wyoming Territory, which on that day was "dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasuring-ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people."[1] Yellowstone was the first designated national park, but the action that created it was modelled after the transfer of the Yosemite Valley to the State of California in 1864.[2]

Following the Civil War, the country's attention was on everything but the preservation of natural resources, landscapes, and scenery. Following the end of the war, America's industrial revolution entered a second, even more intense phase as the nation's energies were focused on expansion into the West, development of the nation's urban environments, defining the reunited national economy, and processing the millions of immigrants who arrived to help satisfy the nation's insatiable need for labor. The manufacture of steel and the consumption of fossil fuels were essential to the expansion of the nation's railroads, the construction of a vertical urban environment, the accommodation of an increasingly mobile population, and the domination of a vast underdeveloped landscape between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean. Resource consumption, not conservation, was the driving force behind the effort to realize an industrialized, urbanized manifestation of "the city on the hill"[3] envisioned by Puritan settlers nearly 250 years before.

1. https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/management/yellowstoneprotectionact1872.htm.
2. It could be argued that Hot Springs, set aside as a reservation in 1832, was the beginning of a park system, but most historians see Yellowstone as the official first park. *The National Parks: Shaping the System*, p. 18.
3. "The passengers of the *Arbella* who left England in 1630 with their new charter had a great vision. They hoped to be an example for the rest of the world in rightful living. Future governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, John Winthrop, stated their purpose quite clearly: "We shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us." "Massachusetts Bay: 'The City Upon the Hill,'" ushistory.org, https://www.ushistory.org/us/3c.asp.

Even before the Civil War, the efforts to realize that idyllic city had begun to morph into a quest to achieve the nation's "Manifest Destiny." This vision of the future was multifaceted and dependent on the individual observer's point of view. However, nearly everyone agreed on the need to assert human agency over the landscape. In that sense, achieving America's destiny in the West looked more like a coordinated, multifront military campaign than a spiritual quest. Timber harvests, coal extraction, oil exploration, transcontinental railroad construction, hard-rock mining for precious metals, and the mass slaughter of bison on the western plains for their hides (which were needed for machinery belts) combined with actual military campaigns to subjugate the remaining unconquered indigenous tribes of the West, were all functions of a relentless drive to dominate much of North America. Less than a decade after the war, the American landscape was already fundamentally altered by economic development that devastated vast areas of the country's natural reserves.

At the same time, however, there were growing movements that countered the development ethos of nineteenth-century America. The Transcendentalist movement of the 1830s and 1840s; the artworks of Albert Bierstadt, Thomas Moran, and other artists of the Hudson River school; and the efforts of early preservationists began to persuade segments of the American public that natural landscapes have an intrinsic value beyond what they might yield in extraction development. In 1869, the settlers in Montana Territory pressed for exploration in what was then known only as the Yellowstone region. Expeditions in 1869 and 1871 documented the extraordinary landscapes and resources of the area, illustrated by the works of Thomas Moran and the pioneering outdoor photographer William Henry Jackson. Their reports ultimately inspired the creation of the world's first national park and, incidentally, a reserve in which the nation's few remaining bison were protected from extermination.

Bridalveil Fall, Yosemite National Park. Oil painting by Thomas Moran (1837–1926).

Yellowstone was granted virtually no budget, no staff, and no facilities. Early on, this did not present much of a problem, since there were also virtually no visitors, but that was about to change. The growing industrial and commercial economy of the late nineteenth century spurred the growth of a professional class in the American workforce. More affluent citizens already enjoyed the benefits of disposable wealth and leisure time, but now business professionals, attorneys, bankers, engineers, and architects had the time and money for "vacations," a previously unknown phenomenon in the United States (US). A handful of recreational tourists, such as big-game hunters, artists, and photographers, had made their way west before and after the war, but these small numbers ballooned as railroads provided vastly greater access to the once inaccessible West and tourist towns sprang up to cater to and exploit a new kind of resource.

For the next eighteen years, Yellowstone effectively was the national park system, if one doesn't count Mackinac National Park, a designation that was reversed when the fort there was decommissioned, and the area was transferred to Michigan in 1895. A second national park unit wasn't named to the system until Sequoia was designated in 1890. One week later, an area just to the north of Sequoia was folded in and designated as General Grant National Park (now Kings Canyon).

That same year, Yosemite was also designated a national park, but control of the park was left to California until (after a few Supreme Court battles) Theodore Roosevelt brought it under federal control in 1906. After 1890, growth of the system stalled until 1899, with the addition of Mount Rainier National Park. After that, the system grew rapidly until by 1916 there were thirty-five national parks and monuments.

The steady growth of the park system brought about a number of unanticipated consequences. There now existed a far wider range of visitor experiences, and as the second NPS Director, Horace Albright, later reported, the expanding network brought a variety of challenges.

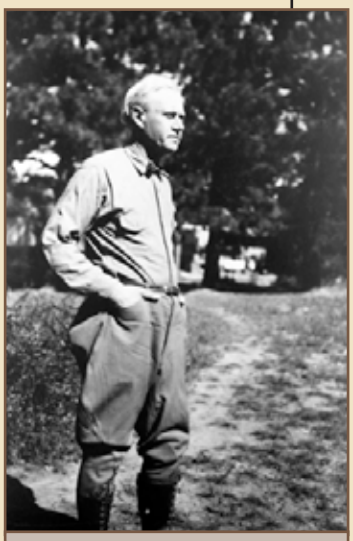
> ***I learned that few people were going to the parks and monuments. They were hard to get to and had limited accommodations. Yellowstone, for instance, was getting only twenty thousand visitors a year. The little management that existed was split among the Interior, Agriculture, and War Departments. A cavalry unit-controlled Yellowstone throughout the year, and in the summer army troops were sent in to administer Yosemite and Sequoia.[4] There was little or no communication among the three departments. Even within Interior, there was no coordination among the areas it administered. One assistant secretary . . . spent part of his time shuffling papers concerned with national parks and monuments, and two or three of his clerks and accountants spent part of their time on it.*** **(Albright 1985, p. 6).**

4. It is likely these were African American troops of the 9th or 10th US Cavalry, the legendary Buffalo Soldiers.

Still, Stephen T. Mather, a wealthy businessman who had been serving as assistant to the secretary of the interior since January 1915, his assistant Horace Albright, and their skeletal staff (both of them), continued to receive pressure from local boosters to designate additional parks. While visiting the newly designated Rocky Mountain National Park, Mather and Albright were beset by local boosters from Denver who leaned on the two federal officials to consider the designation of "Denver National Park."[5]

To address the near-crippling bureaucratic deficiencies of the national park system, streamline the multiagency administrative overlap, provide Mather and Albright some sorely needed administrative support (perhaps offer a little cover from local political pressure), and strengthen the national parks' credibility in Washington, Congress acted to establish the National Park Service as a bureau in the Department of the Interior (DOI) with the August 25, 1916, passage of the National Park Service Organic Act (16 USC 1-4).[6] The 1916 Act directed the National Park Service to promote and regulate the use of the national parks, monuments, and similar reservations to "conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

Stephen T. Mather was appointed the first Director of the National Park Service on May 16, 1917. He would serve in that capacity for twelve years, retiring on January 12, 1929. His replacement as director was Horace M. Albright, who had served both as superintendent of Yellowstone National Park and as Assistant Director of the National Park Service during Mather's tenure.



Stephen T. Mather, First Director of the National Park Service.

5. Horace M. Albright and Marian Albright Schenck, *Creating the National Park Service: The Missing Years* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), p. 57. Even by the standards of urban boosters in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Denver's advocates were relentless. The city was in the midst of an ambitious beautification campaign and emerging as one of the nation's outstanding examples of the "City Beautiful" movement. A major feature of that movement, ironically, was the city's mountain parks system, which Denver's civic leaders hoped to crown with a national park surrounding Mount Evans west of the city. https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/city-beautiful-movement-denver and https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/denver-mountain-parks. See also, Stephen J. Leonard and Thomas J. Noel, *Denver: Mining Camp to Metropolis*, Chapter 13, "Mayor Speer's City Beautiful." University of Colorado Press, 1990.

6. Funds were provided for the operation of the new bureau by a subsequent act on April 17, 1917 (40 Stat. 20).

A policy statement that would come to serve as a creed to guide the administration and development of the national parks under the new bureau was contained in a letter from Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane to Mather on May 13, 1918. The letter, which had been drafted by Albright and endorsed by Mather, listed three broad management principles that would guide the management policy of the bureau:

> ***First, that the national parks must be maintained in absolutely unimpaired form for the use of future generations as well as those of our time; second, that they are set aside for the use, observation, health, and pleasure of the people; and third, that the national interest must dictate all decisions affecting public or private enterprise in the parks*** **(Albright 1985, p. 69).**

After stating these underlying management principles, Secretary Lane's policy directive listed twenty-three specific points, one of which would shape the philosophy of the new bureau toward park planning, design, and construction, as well as the employment of professionals to accomplish those activities:

> ***In the construction of roads, trails, buildings, and other improvements, particular attention must be devoted always to the harmonizing of these improvements within the landscape. This is a most important item in our program of development and requires the employment of trained engineers who either possess a knowledge of landscape architecture or have a proper appreciation of the esthetic value of park lands. All improvements will be carried out in accordance with a preconceived plan developed with special reference to the preservation of the landscape, and comprehensive plans for future development of the national parks on an adequate scale will be prepared as funds are available for the purpose.*** **(Albright 1985, p. 70).**

The creation of a true bureau within the Interior Department also enabled Mather and Albright to staff their offices from the most appropriate professional disciplines, including landscape architecture, architecture, and engineering.

The new director and his deputy recognized that the demand for visitation far exceeded the capacity of the facilities in place in the parks. They set out to improve the conditions of existing facilities; construct new lodges, administrative, and maintenance facilities; and facilitate access by substantially expanding the existing road networks in the parks.

Railroads had been the primary conveyance for visitors to remote parks since the 1880s, but Mather and Albright saw that the automobile represented the future. Perhaps influenced by the car parks in Denver's mountain parks system, they poured tremendous time, energy, and resources into making the parks automobile-friendly. According to Kevin Percival, a veteran of the Park Facility Management Division, while Mather wanted to let automobiles into Yellowstone, there was pushback from the transportation concessioners, who were the biggest moneymakers in the park. Even though President Taft was foursquare against growing the federal government, Mather and Albright were able to sell roads as economic development.

Whether this foundational decision was a good one for the nation's parks and wilderness areas has been a significant point of debate for the full history of the Park Service. And it would be an important element in defining the role of the Denver Service Center.

Horace Albright (right), NPS Director, at the Mt. Whitney Trail Dedication, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.

CHAPTER 2

BUILDING THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, 1917–1971

The National Park Service Begins the Park Design and Construction Process

By 1916, the growth of the nation's parks and monuments required the establishment of several technical divisions in the Park Service office in Washington, DC. In 1917, the Engineering Division became the first such division to take form. Soon, the wide distribution of the parks would create organizational complications. George E. Goodwin was appointed the first chief engineer in the National Park Service, and during part of his tour of duty, he also served as acting superintendent of Glacier National Park in northern Montana. In 1918, the Landscape Engineering Division was established with the appointment of Charles P. Punchard Jr., as the bureau's first landscape architect. Punchard's first office was in Yellowstone. When he died in 1920, he was succeeded there by Dan R. Hull who focused his activities primarily on four western national parks: Yellowstone, Yosemite, Sequoia, and Grand Canyon. By 1921, Goodwin's engineering office had been relocated to Portland, Oregon.

In 1922, the landscape architectural staff was doubled when Thomas C. Vint joined the Park Service with headquarters in Yosemite. The following year, when the landscape office became the Landscape Division, it was moved to Los Angeles. There, under Vint's leadership, staff in the division was gradually increased as more parks were added to the national park system and as development of the new parks proceeded.

In 1925, after Goodwin retired, acting Chief Engineer Bert H. Burrell and a few employees moved the engineering office from Oregon back to Yellowstone.

In 1926, a memorandum of agreement was executed by the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture providing that the Bureau of Public Roads would handle major road and bridge construction projects for the Park Service. The engineering office was reorganized in March of that year to supervise highway and trail maintenance activities and to coordinate all other Park Service engineering work under one engineering head.

Following the resignation of Hull in 1927, Vint was placed in charge of the entire spectrum of the National Park Service's landscape architectural work. In March 1927, the landscape architectural office moved to San Francisco. In October of that year, the engineering office also moved to San Francisco, and field headquarters were established in the Underwood Building there for both the engineering and landscape architectural divisions. The following June, the San Francisco office was designated by Mather as Field Headquarters for the Park Service. That designation embraced the operations of the Civil Engineering Division under Frank A. Kittredge as chief engineer; the Landscape Division under Vint as chief landscape architect; and the Educational and Forestry Division under Ansel Hall as chief naturalist and forester. Hall, however, maintained his office at the University of California, Berkeley, which had been established as the headquarters of the Educational Division on July 1, 1925.

Thomas C. Vint, NPS landscape architect and his staff reviewing master plans in the early 1930s.

By 1930, several national parks and monuments had been established in the eastern United States, making it necessary to have eastern offices to provide for professional engineering, architectural, and landscape architectural work in those Park Service areas. To meet these needs, a field office was established in Yorktown, Virginia, with Oliver G. Taylor as chief of the engineering office and Charles E. Peterson as chief of the architectural and landscape architectural office. The Educational Division was abolished in July 1930, with the establishment of the Branch of Research and Education in the Washington Office.

The technical divisions were now dispersed across the country.

By 1933, when Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal vastly increased the scope and range of activities for the Park Service, Vint had established an office of "public practice" professionals who specialized in "rustic" park architectural and site development, scenic road design, master planning, and other specialized aspects of work in the national parks. As part of a major reorganization of the federal government, the former Landscape Division was reorganized as the Branch of Plans and Design in 1933. The branch consisted of the Office of the Chief Architect in San Francisco, an Eastern Division office in Washington, DC, and a Western Division office in San Francisco. Vint served as chief architect, Peterson was in charge of the Eastern Division, and William G. Carnes headed the Western Division. Late in 1933, Vint moved to Washington to continue his duties as chief architect.

The Office of the Chief Architect supervised a staff of architects, landscape architects, consultants, and collaborators for such large projects as the proposed Green Mountain Parkway, the Historic American Buildings Survey, the Morristown Library-Museum, Shenandoah-Great Smoky Mountains National Parkway (later to be designated the Blue Ridge Parkway), and Natchez Trace Parkway.

In addition to a staff of twenty-five to thirty architects and landscape architects, each of the division offices had a sizeable number of these professional employees on field assignments in the national parks and monuments. As a result of government reorganization in 1933, the Branch of Engineering was established with Kittredge as chief. The branch had an organizational structure (i.e., eastern and western divisions) similar to that of the Branch of Plans and Design.

When Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) activities were initiated during the early 1930s, many professional disciplines were employed to assist in Depression-era park development projects. The professionals were principally located in eight district offices, although some were also stationed in the parks. When the National Park Service established a regionalized organizational administrative structure in August 1937, the ECW/CCC district offices and their professionals were incorporated into four National Park Service regional offices, each of which included a broad range of professional disciplines. At the same time, the Eastern and Western Division offices of the Branch of Engineering and the Branch of Plans and Design were abolished, and their professionals were incorporated in the new regional offices.

In addition, a small office of each branch was located in Washington, and small staffs were placed in the offices of the Blue Ridge and Natchez Trace Parkways located in Roanoke, Virginia, and Jackson, Mississippi, respectively. These professionals provided support for the parks in their day-to-day maintenance operations and undertook the major design and construction work in the parks. This "regionalization" was essentially a decentralization of management, professional, and administrative activities, providing greater flexibility to meet the increasing demands of expanding National Park Service programs.

In August 1942, the Washington Office of the National Park Service moved to the Merchandise Mart in Chicago to provide more office space in Washington for defense- and war-related agencies during World War II. Because of the war effort, the staffing of the Branches of Engineering and Plans and Design were reduced to four or five professionals each to supervise their portion of the wartime housekeeping and maintenance activities in the national parks and to formulate postwar planning activities for the parks. But following the Allied victory over the Axis powers, the professional offices began to increase their staffing.

On December 2, 1946, the Branch of Development was established in Chicago by consolidating the former Branches of Plans and Design and Engineering. The following October, that office returned to the Interior building in Washington, DC. Subsequently (on July 1, 1948), the designation of the office was changed from "branch" to "division" to conform to the designation of similar organizational levels of responsibility throughout the federal government.

In January 1950, the name of the office was changed from the Development Division to the Planning and Construction Division. Later that year, the Water Resources Branch and the Project Branch of the National Park Service were transferred from the Planning and Construction Division to the Branch of Lands. Shortly thereafter, the organizational title of the office was changed from the Planning and Construction Division to the Design and Construction Division.

Clearly, the time had come for a new organizational structure for design and construction in the National Park Service.

As a result of an organizational evaluation of the Department of the Interior in 1953, the National Park Service would be fully reorganized. A substantial portion of the reorganization occurred the following year under the leadership of Conrad L. Wirth, a professionally trained landscape architect with some twenty years of park planning experience who had become NPS director in December 1951. By June 1954, the field personnel and functions of design and construction work formerly handled by the regional offices had been transferred to the Eastern and Western Offices, Division of Design and Construction. These offices, consisting primarily of architects, engineers, and landscape architects and supporting disciplines, were established in Philadelphia and San Francisco, respectively, in part to handle the upcoming Mission 66 program, a ten-year park development and construction program that was to be completed in time for the fiftieth anniversary of the National Park Service.

Mission 66

Development had lagged in the parks during World War II and in the immediate postwar period. However, this coincided with the postwar economic boom that propelled the rapid growth of America's middle class. Tourism, particularly automobile tourism, exploded in the 1950s, and millions of these travelers made their way to the national parks. The increased visitation placed additional stress on park roads, visitor centers, and other facilities, which were showing signs of deterioration. Some elements of the old infrastructure were now simply inadequate to meet the needs of the growing numbers of park visitors.

The visitor center at Haleakalā National Park is a great example of Mission 66 design and construction.

In response, the National Park Service launched in 1955 an ambitious initiative to upgrade park facilities, construct new visitor centers and other visitor amenities, improve roads and parking, and upgrade maintenance facilities in preparation for the bureau's fiftieth anniversary in 1966. This initiative, known as Mission 66, proved to be the largest development initiative in the bureau's history.

It also created a new and distinctive architectural style that became historically significant and in time put the National Park Service effectively in the position of commemorating itself.

The Service Center Concept

Programmed funding for design and construction eventually would reach between $80–$90 million annually, which in turn required an increase in staff and engaging dozens of architectural and engineering consultants. The majority of park planning for Mission 66, however, remained a field responsibility, originating at the park level, with review and approval at the regional and Washington Office levels. The design analysis portion of planning continued to be handled by the design and construction offices. And because a comprehensive update of park master plans was needed due to the extensive Mission 66 construction program, the master planning function was transferred to the regional offices.

Near the end of the program, the National Park Service, under the leadership of George B. Hartzog Jr., who would serve as NPS director from 1964 to 1972, developed the service center concept in 1965, bringing planning, design, and construction, and several other activities into two central professional offices. As originally conceived, the service center concept was designed to accomplish three objectives:

1. Combine planning, design, construction, and related activities into one office to provide continuity from new area study through master planning, design, and construction.
2. Achieve better utilization of professionals and funds to handle national program emphases and facilitate the shifting of personnel as program emphasis shifts.
3. Give some measure of separation between park and regional managers and professionals.

Accordingly, in February and March 1966, the design and construction offices in San Francisco and Philadelphia were converted to planning and service centers. On March 15 of that year, the National Capital Region's Design and Construction Office was consolidated with the Washington Office of Design and Construction to form a unit of the Washington Planning and Service Center.

On September 7, 1969, the office in Philadelphia was closed, and its responsibilities were transferred to the Washington Planning and Service Center. On October 22, the offices in San Francisco and Washington, DC., were redesignated the Western and Eastern Service Centers, respectively. Much like their parent Eastern and Western Offices of Design and Construction, the service centers were organized on a functional basis along professional lines. They were responsible for the following National Park Service programs:

- land and water rights acquisition
- water resources investigations
- pollution abatement involving land, air, and water
- new area studies
- environmental planning for preservation, use, and development (both park and concession), design, and supervision of construction of park facilities
- natural and historical research
- historic architecture
- archeological investigation and salvage
- contract administration
- administrative services
- professional services to meet park and regional requirements
- program development assistance for regional directors
- cost estimation for legislative and budgetary proposals

During these years, professional staffs also were retained to assist the regional directors and park superintendents in day-to-day park operations and maintenance programs. The regional professionals also served as staff to the regional directors on service center and Washington Office coordination.

The reorganized offices in Washington and San Francisco would not last long, however.

See appendix A for the official 1969 document.

The Western Service Center was located in the San Francisco area before the western and eastern centers merged in 1971 to become the Denver Service Center. Photo: Golden Gate National Recreation Area, 1984.

CHAPTER 3

THE DENVER SERVICE CENTER ARRIVES

Following closely on the heels of Mission 66, the nation began preparing for the US Bicentennial in 1976. A large number of parks and other NPS entities had a primary or secondary focus on the nation's birthday, and the offices of design and construction undertook a coordinated effort to prepare parks for the anticipated increase in visitation.

In October 1971, before the Park Service began preparations for the nation's Bicentennial, National Park Service Director George Hartzog decided to consolidate the Eastern Service Center in Washington, DC, with the Western Service Center in San Francisco and shift the operation to Denver. The ceiling on permanent, full-time employees for the entire National Park Service had been reduced (from 7,350 to 6,983), and Hartzog determined he would need to eliminate 223 positions to meet that change. Deeming that too great a reduction to maintain two service centers, his express solution was the consolidation. Eastern office and Western office employees were informed they still had a job with the Park Service and that job now existed in Denver, Colorado.

Letters regarding the consolidation are reproduced in appendix B.

The new Denver Service Center would have an authorized ceiling of 351 permanent, full-time positions. (All employment categories would total about 500 [Unrau 1999, p. 7].) The plan gave 660 planners, engineers, architects, landscape architects, and other professionals ten days to decide if they wanted to go and then one month to transfer. Although there was no formal Reduction in Force (RIF) (the process was called a Transfer of Function), those who transferred were not assured of holding their present grades, and on arrival in Denver, they might be subject to a reduction in force. As a result of those conditions, John Cramer, government affairs columnist for *The Washington Daily News*, called the National Park Service, "the government's rottenest employer."

Johannes E. N. Jensen was recruited into the Park Service by Director Hartzog as chief of the Construction Division. He was later appointed assistant director design and construction, then as associate director planning and development. He also served as associate director professional services, and finally as assistant director of service center operations in Denver. Through most of his years with the Park Service, he was a key advisor to the director.

At the top of its organizational structure for the new office was the assistant director, service center operations, a Washington Office position filled by Johannes E. N. Jensen, who had served as the NPS associate director, planning, and development since 1968. Duty stationed in Denver, Jensen was line supervisor of the directors of the Denver Service Center and the Harpers Ferry Center in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.

The Denver Service Center's chief was its director, Glenn O. Hendrix, a veteran NPS employee who had headed the Western Service Center since 1968.

Another Park Service veteran, landscape architect Donald F. Benson, was associate director and charged with sharing line supervision of the service center's component offices. The director's staff included three assistant directors: finance and control, programming, and organization development and manpower. The organizational structure provided for a unique staff unit designated Consultants, Architecture & Engineering, Planning & Design. This unit was responsible for quality control, systems analysis, project consultation, policy formulation, outreach activities, and project leadership. Under the line supervision of the associate director were five offices, each headed by a chief: Research and Consultative Services; Construction Services; Plans and Design Services; Graphic Services; and Surveys.

During these years, regional professional staffs were retained to assist the regional directors and park superintendents in day-to-day park operations and maintenance programs. The regional professionals also served as staff to the regional directors on service center and Washington Office coordination.

The major relocation was completed, and the Denver Service Center became an official office in the National Park Service organizational structure in November 1971.

(from L-R) Don Benson, Bob Budz, Glenn Hendrix, Cal Cooper, and Gerry Patten at an office party in the early 1970s. Hendrix was the first director of the Denver Service Center from 1971 when it was created until 1975.

Appendix C provides a complete list of DSC directors.

Joslins department store in the Villa Italia shopping center in Lakewood, Colorado.

Villa Italia shopping center, 1972.

Its new headquarters were in the empty second floor of a Joslins department store in the Villa Italia shopping center in Lakewood, Colorado (corner of Wadsworth Boulevard and Alameda where the Belmar shopping center currently is), a rapidly growing suburb west of Denver. The Denver metropolitan area was still riding the ripples of the post-World War II boom, a growth spurt fueled to a substantial degree by a federal government presence in the city and outlying areas so huge that the city was sometimes called "The Washington of the West." But the suburban sprawl of the early 1970s filled only a small fraction of the open space along the Front Range.

The high plains of Colorado historically presented a stark and jarring landscape to newcomers. For many NPS employees arriving from California's populous Bay Area or from the verdant landscapes of Pennsylvania, the open farming and grazing lands just outside of Denver must have been an unfamiliar sight. The city's downtown was still recovering from the wounds inflicted by an unsustainable approach to urban renewal. The entertainment and cultural life of the Front Range more closely resembled that of Salt Lake City or Omaha than San Francisco or Philadelphia. And the location of the new headquarters was decidedly inauspicious. In addition, the very early period of the service center reflected to some degree the qualities of an organization that was designing and reinventing itself day by day.

The Denver Service Center's most critical operational relationships were with the regional offices of the National Park Service. It was necessary for the DSC leadership to build an organization that would provide agency-wide services within an organization—the National Park Service—that was made of geographic "Regions." The solution that developed during a managerial meeting at Dulles International Airport was a "team manager" organization.

Its theoretical base was a management study prepared by James M. Kittleman and Associates of Chicago referred to as *The Kittleman Report* that was published in 1972.[7] The express purpose of the new service center was to provide "high-quality planning and design services" through a centralization of Park Service professional personnel.

7. Luzader, p. v-4. Later, Hartzog retained Kittleman personally as a part-time consultant to monitor and advise him on the implementation of the study and evolving management issues. *Oral History Interview with George B. Hartzog, Jr.,* William C. Everhart, Consultant (National Park Service 2007), page 27. Interviews conducted September 21, October 5, and November 3, 2005.

Functioning somewhat separate from day-to-day park management, "The Denver Service Center attacks problems objectively and conceptually with teams specifically selected for each job."[8]

In March 1972, DSC Director Hendrix wrote to the NPS regional directors regarding the use of Denver Service Center graphic designers on regional projects. The memo subtly staked out an area in which the Denver Service Center would exert substantial influence and control over the regions but sought to clarify the graphics services that the office could render to the regions "in order to prevent duplication of effort, to facilitate the flow of work to forestall delays, and to standardize formats."

Director Hendrix affirmed that, at the outset of a project, the regional office would prepare a preliminary planning document, including rough drawings and maps. Following approval of the draft by the regional director, the plan would be turned over to the service center. "Here," the director wrote, "the document is edited, its maps and drawings are cleaned up, artwork is supplied, changes are integrated, and the plan is readied for publication as a final document, for in-service use, or for public meetings or hearings."[9] By recognizing this division of responsibilities and procedures, the director believed that the Denver Service Center would be most effective in assisting the regions in obtaining good comprehensive plans.

This was one of a number of policy memos issued by the Denver Service Center meant to keep its distinctive organizational role and status clear in the early days of consolidation in Denver. Another memo, written shortly after this, outlined the accounting procedures for tracking DSC costs. Of interest here is that the memo described some changes in organizational codes for the DSC accounting system, including that the new organization code for the Denver Service Center would be 2000 and that the various organizational elements would be represented by their own unique four-digit organizational code. That org code and system are still in place today.

The Denver Service Center of the early and mid-1970s was entirely different from the organization we know today—from the adaptive use of the vacant second floor of the old Joslins department store to the early technologies that defined the working environment in the predigital world. The nature of the work was dramatically different as well.

Master Plan for Guadalupe Mountains National Park, 1976.

Transcribed excerpts from the June 4, 1973, memo are reproduced in appendix D.

8. Denver Service Center's Manager's Files, Book I. Memo: "Director, Denver Service Center to All Management Team Members and Resource Personnel," 21 January 1972.

9. Memorandum. To: Directors, Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, West, Midwest and Pacific Northwest Regions and National Capitol Parks. From Director, Denver Service Center. Subject: Service Center graphics assistance to the Regions. March 17, 1972. Denver Service Center. Organizational History files. 1972–1977. (WASO). Technical Information Center.

King Air C90 used by the Denver Service Center.

Numerous DSC employees from the period describe an organization with a more relaxed, informal style and atmosphere that was somewhat reflective of the fact that the offices consolidated in Denver[10] were still engaged in formalizing the lines of organization and internal operations. Given that nearly 100 percent of the office workforce had relocated from somewhere else, the Denver Service Center naturally established the framework for a social life to replace the ones left behind in Philadelphia and San Francisco.

The office actually had an airplane or at least access to a government-owned airplane:

> ***"As you may know, a 7-passenger Park Service plane has been purchased recently and is available for our use. Terry Hallahan, Mr. Jensen's secretary, will be the Service Center coordinator with the Colorado State Director's office regarding requests for the aircraft's use.***
>
> ***When you and/or members of your staff are interested in utilizing this aircraft, just complete one of the enclosed forms and forward to Terry, Area B (over Walgreen's) through me. The two items on the form by which an asterisk is noted need not be filled in. It will be easier for Terry to discuss this information with you by telephone. Arrangements, of course, will be confirmed. If the aircraft is not available, then you will be notified that commercial means of transportation will have to be used…."***
> **(Hendrix 1973)**

10. Actually, the office was then and still is located near the Federal Center in Lakewood, Colorado.

As the service center continued to settle into its new role and further stabilize its organization and operations, it outgrew the space above Joslins department store. The Denver Service Center needed a more professional and efficiently organized space to accommodate it. In 1974, the Denver Service Center moved from its space in Lakewood's Villa Italia shopping center into actual office space at 755 Parfet Street, farther west in Lakewood. The service center continued to grow during this period, and its esprit de corps, innovation in planning and design, and dedication to service in the parks continued to define the organization.

This enthusiasm for innovation led the Denver Service Center to propose sustainable solutions at an early date. For example, in one project the Denver Service Center worked with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Department of Energy to install solar energy solutions at Carlsbad Caverns, with mixed acceptance. The systems were not flawless and the technology immature, but these projects paved the way for the projects that were successful in the 1990s as well as the renewable energy projects that are institutionalized today.

As the Denver Service Center was relocating and gearing into the nation's Bicentennial plans, it was also continuing to develop its complex relationships with the Washington and regional offices. While the National Park Service had been fundamentally organized into geographic regions (each with its own imperatives), the Denver Service Center had been created as a functional organization, providing servicewide, multidisciplinary capabilities meant to respond to National Park Service needs.

Perhaps primarily as a result of such complexities, by mid-1974—deep into its work on the Bicentennial—the Denver Service Center became the subject of a Civil Service personnel management audit. As Sam Whittington, the longest-serving DSC director (2007–2015) observed in a recent interview, the Denver Service Center has often been given tremendous authority, which "causes it to be unpopular and victim to studies, audits, criticism, etc." That situation developed early on.

The findings of the audit were that hiring and promotional practices at the Denver Service Center did not ensure that personnel actions led to hiring and promoting the most highly qualified candidates. No one disputed the substance of the findings, but DSC management was limited in its ability to correct its personnel-management deficiencies. The Bicentennial programs were making extraordinary demands on DSC resources and the center was operating under the personnel ceiling that the Nixon administration had imposed upon all federal agencies.

The auditors recommended that the Denver Service Center obtain approval to recruit from all sources simultaneously, develop joint DSC and personnel office recruitment plans, and coordinate Equal Employment Opportunity actions in contact with minority and women's organizations while developing cooperative education and work-study programs.

In response, DSC management prepared an action plan to respond to the auditors' mandates and created a task force to study and clarify the Denver Service Center's organization components. The task force produced what later came to be referred to as the "Alternative #1 Strong Team Concept." Under the resultant reorganization, teams would be enlarged, made more diverse, and enjoy greater operating flexibility. That is, the intention was to make moving personnel among teams to meet programming changes simpler. And the hope was that both the timely performance of assignments and improved career opportunities would result.

The core of the organization would be the regional teams, each of which would include a planning, design, construction, and historic preservation section. Surveys, graphic services, and technical and scientific support activities would be provided to the regional teams as the need arose. Moreover, the task force called for the abolition of two of the Denver Service Center's autonomous functional units: Construction and Historical Preservation. Construction would be absorbed into the bi-regional teams to give them full responsibility and control over the construction programs. Assigning historic preservation personnel to the teams was also meant to strengthen the National Park Service's cultural preservation function and to foster the need to consider historic preservation on all projects rather than only historic preservation projects.

There was much controversy over this proposal, and following that year's regional directors' conference, a reorganization plan emerged that retained the geographic teams supported by the offices of 1) Contract Administration, 2) Quality Control and Compliance, and 3) Equal Employment Opportunity. Support would also come from four functional divisions: Professional Support, Graphic Services, Historic Preservation, and Program Control. Implementing that proposal involved a Reduction in Force, which generated several waves of personnel counteractions and appeals. In the end, the reorganization was completed, reviewed by the Civil Service Commission, and went into effect June 21, 1975.

The management-oriented structure of the Denver Service Center was established.

CHAPTER 4

THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE UNITED STATES, 1976

The American Bicentennial development program of the National Park Service had a total budget of approximately $100 million for the period between July 1, 1973, and June 30, 1976, most of which was reprogrammed from existing projects across the national park system. As impressive as that figure is, it represented a redirection of the Park Service budget, which caused other projects to be deferred. In the end, the figure was adjusted to $104 million; however, the actual comprehensive total for the nation's Bicentennial exceeds that number if all the planning, research, and design work accomplished before fiscal year (FY) 1974 were added.

In 1973, the Park Service director and DSC management issued notices that the Bicentennial projects were the top priorities servicewide and at the service center in particular. The service center was given the responsibility for executing much of the Bicentennial program and became the office where most of the high-pressure Bicentennial development activity occurred.

This project work occurred in the context of the rich wave of landmark environmental legislation in the 1960s and early 1970s that had provided an impetus behind the focus on research, analysis, documentation of park conditions, risks to park resources, and anticipated consequences of proposed federal actions. The Endangered Species Act, The Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as well as The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 compelled the federal government (as well as state and local agencies, if their projects involved the expenditure of federal funds) to analyze the implications of their proposed actions and identify the ways in which they could mitigate those implications. This provided increased impetus for more formal research and documentation. In addition, the requirements that arose from the National Environmental Policy Act led to substantive engagement with the public before initiating a federal action, which democratized and complicated this process.

The Denver Service Center became a leader in the implementation of the provisions outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act and in the subsequent production of environmental compliance documents. As this became a more and more substantial part of the service center's workload, and as state and local federal officials, activist groups, and members of the public became more informed about the power that the National Environmental Policy Act placed in their hands, work in compliance necessarily became more complex.

With that as a backdrop, four National Park Service regions—North Atlantic, Mid-Atlantic, Southeast, and National Capital—were materially involved in Bicentennial programming, which covered more than twenty park units. In addition, research, planning, design, and construction work, including major projects at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site, and Fort Larned National Historic Site, continued in the other regions engaging many DSC employees.

The Service Center undertook the Bicentennial development program with a serious personnel shortage in critical professional and technical skills, most notably on the Historic Preservation team, the Park Service's principal Bicentennial unit. As a result, considerable efforts were made to reassign personnel internally. In addition, new employees were enlisted by imaginative means within the tight framework of existing regulations and personnel ceilings. This effort included a variety of "other than permanent" positions such as "700 hour," one-year, career seasonal, less-than-full-time, term, etc. Some of these could be made only under the authority of the secretary of the interior based on the Bicentennial emergency.

Efforts were also made to recruit historical architects, restoration specialists, and historians from academia, from other state and federal agencies, and from the private sector. An increased number of contracts were written with architects, engineers, and other outside consultants.

For Bicentennial purposes, staffing for the North Atlantic/Mid-Atlantic team increased from about thirty to more than fifty-five employees. Even more dramatic was the expansion of the Historic Preservation team, which at the peak of its Bicentennial operation numbered about eighty employees, compared to about twenty-five in pre-Bicentennial days. More than half of those eighty professionals were employed in "other than permanent" job categories.

Clearly, the mandate to address the coming national celebration was powerful. An otherwise seldom-used contracting procedure saved valuable time and ensured maximum quality control by giving DSC historical architects and restoration specialists full authority to direct details of Bicentennial work. Under this procedure, a contract was let after negotiation with a limited number of preselected bidders, and a cost-plus-fixed-fee method replaced the fixed price contract.

The twenty-two national park system areas served for the Bicentennial

- Adams National Historic Site
- Chesapeake and Ohio National Historical Park
- Colonial National Historical Park
- Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine
- Fort Moultrie (Fort Sumter National Monument)
- Fort Necessity National Battlefield
- Fort Stanwix National Monument
- George Rogers Clark National Historical Park
- George Washington Birthplace National Monument
- Gloria Dei (Old Swedes') Church National Historic Site
- Guilford Courthouse National Military Park
- Hopewell Village National Historic Site
- Independence National Historical Park
- Kings Mountain National Military Park
- Minute Man National Historical Park
- Moores Creek National Battlefield
- Morristown National Historical Park
- National Capital Parks
- Salem Maritime National Historic Site
- Saratoga National Historical Park
- Statue of Liberty National Monument
- Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial

Note: The projects mounted in these twenty-two park system units for the American Revolution Bicentennial are covered in rich detail in *Landmarks of Liberty: A Report on the American Revolution Bicentennial Development Program of the National Park Service*, by Merrill J. Mattes (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, History Division of the National Park Service, 1989).

As part of the Bicentennial development program, project work was completed across the national park system, including Petrified Forest National Park.

Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine was part of the Bicentennial development program, 1975–1978.

The Liberty Bell Pavilion at Independence National Historical Park housed the Liberty Bell from January 1976 to October 2003.

During the three years of the official Bicentennial development program, more than 200 programmed packages, including almost 1,000 component parts, were undertaken by the service center in twenty-two areas of the national park system. The packages included historical and archeological research, preliminary design, master plans, environmental impact studies, construction planning, construction, interpretive plans, and cooperation with the Harpers Ferry Center for exhibit production.

As a development program addressing the parks' physical needs, the Bicentennial development program left the twenty-two parks with new or improved facilities such as visitor centers; stabilized, restored, or reconstructed historic buildings and features; and new or expanded interpretive facilities with updated exhibits. Many other types of park improvements were included as well, such as roads, trails, parking areas, utilities, security or fire-alarm systems, special illumination, recreational development, and facilities for people with disabilities.

The National Park Service as well as the Denver Service Center emerged from the Bicentennial period with a better understanding of the important role that the Denver Service Center could play in a period of celebration and related funding. There was a new respect for the Denver Service Center as a center of excellence.

CHAPTER 5

AFTER THE CELEBRATIONS

In 1936, when he was 23 years old, Gerald R. Ford was a seasonal park ranger in Yosemite. Forty years later, President Ford described that experience as "one of the greatest summers of my life" while presenting his proposal for the Bicentennial Heritage Land Act. The proposal would have spent $1.5 billion over ten years to double the acreage of land for national parks, recreation areas, and wildlife sanctuaries and increase Park Service personnel in the field by 1,000. His affection for and dedication to the national parks were significant.

Ford's Yellowstone speech

That bicentennial year, when he spoke at Old Faithful Lodge in Yellowstone National Park, Ford was running against Democrat Jimmy Carter, the former governor of Georgia. Carter leveraged the support of some of the remnants of the Democratic New Deal coalitions to forge a narrow victory. His presidency would continue the push for expansion of the national park system, using the direction outlined in the General Authorities Act passed on October 7, 1976, during Ford's presidency. Section 8 of the act states:

> ***The Secretary of the Interior is directed to investigate, study, and continually monitor the welfare of areas whose resources exhibit qualities of national significance and which may have potential for inclusion in the National Park System. At the beginning of each fiscal year, the Secretary shall transmit to the [Congress] comprehensive reports on each of those areas upon which studies have been completed. On this same date . . . the Secretary shall transmit a listing . . . of not less than twelve such areas which appear to be of national significance, and which may have potential for inclusion in the National Park System.***

NPS Director William Whalen (right) with Congressman Phillip Burton in 1978. Photo by Keith Jewell.

The new director of the National Park Service, William J. Whalen, had worked in the National Capital Parks[11] from 1965 to 1972 when he became superintendent of Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Whalen had a powerful political ally in Representative Phillip Burton, who chaired the House Subcommittee on National Parks and Insular Affairs. Burton played a substantial role in the passage of the General Authorities Act of 1970, which required the national park system be managed as a whole, not as constituent parts. He had also been the instrumental legislator in the creation of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in his home district. That bill was signed on the same day as legislation to create Gateway National Recreation Area in New York and New Jersey. The creation of those national recreation areas (and the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, now a national park) was effectively the beginning of the urban parks expansion of the role of the National Park Service.

The Denver Service Center had a lead role in planning for all the units of the Gateway National Recreation Area and established a project office in New York City. Many of the initiatives for urban parks, national recreation areas, national seashores, etc., had their origin during Hartzog's tenure as NPS director (1964–1972).

Representative Burton was also influential in passing the National Parks and Recreation Act, which President Carter signed into law on November 10, 1978. It was the largest park bill in the nation's history. The new bill included authorization for urban parks and a number of new area proposals that Representative Burton and his congressional allies supported.

11. National Capital Parks East is a unit consisting of several national resource and recreational park sites located in southeast Washington within the Anacostia River watershed. Whalen's experience at NCP placed him within the field of urban parks, which may have influenced his appointment as director of the Park Service in 1977.

However, not everyone was in favor of this sweeping piece of legislation. Critics called it a "park barrel bill," a term that would eventually be weaponized by advocates of small government, both inside and outside of Congress (Russell 1978). It should be noted here, though, that the creation of every unit managed by the National Park Service is fundamentally a political choice made either by the president or by the Congress. For the short term, the Carter administration moved toward a more aggressive resource protectionist stance and the creation of a far larger national park system that included historical areas and recreational areas.

One of the most significant land preservation acts signed into law by President Carter was the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980, which created most of the national parklands in Alaska and would provide considerable project work for the Denver Service Center.

For professionals in the Denver Service Center, this was in many ways the beginning of a golden era. By 1977, the DSC construction program was well-grounded, and the office was conducting some outreach efforts to celebrate and memorialize the built environment in parks.

In that year, three DSC employees—Ervin H. Zube, Joseph H. Crystal, and James F. Palmer—received a citation for a systemwide design evaluation of visitor centers in the national park system. Professional life at the Denver Service Center was indeed rewarding.[12] The volume of work generated by the 1978 Omnibus bill stretched DSC capacity to the limit, and there seemingly was no end of compelling projects.

There were also hints of the types of problems that would later pose substantial risks to the organization, however. As later DSC Director Denis Galvin recalled, while some of the work for the Bicentennial had been completed or was moving forward to completion, the program as a whole "was falling down—bad schedules, bad estimates, delays that led to congressional investigations. Bad news for DSC."

In 1980, the Denver Service Center issued its first annual report. DSC Director Galvin intended the annual reports to make the office more transparent. The annual reports were also an important marketing tool. As stated in its introduction, the first report (NPS 1980, p. 1) was intended as a summary of the quantitative project accomplishments of the Denver Service Center: "It does not attempt to reflect the quality or complexity of the work produced, but rather to document the production of the unit, to compare it with past years and with the industry standard, and to project the center's fiscal position within the bureau in coming years."

First Denver Service Center annual report, 1980.

12. For an in-depth treatment of National Park Service visitor centers (and a solid history of NPS design during Mission 66) *see* Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007). *See also,* Sarah Allaback, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type* (Washington, National Park Service, 2000).

The Denver Service Center drafting branch, located at the office of Parfet Street in Lakewood, Colorado, early 1970s.

According to the report, the obligation rate[13] at the Denver Service Center for FY 1980 was 69.5 percent, which represented $64.2 million. The authors of the report considered 70 to 80 percent to be a reasonable goal for obligation for the organization and cited as the annual average over the preceding four years to be 73 percent. The decline in obligation rates may have been a result of the adjustment to the move from the Villa Italia (Joslins) site to the new offices on Parfet Street, also in Lakewood, Colorado. However, the 1980 annual report also reported that "DSC staffing declined by 150 in the last 21 months" to a total of 682.[14] This represented a fairly significant drop in staff resources.

Equally troubling, the annual report stated that the total construction appropriation for the National Park Service began to decrease in 1980. The report went on to state that the construction appropriations that funded the Denver Service Center were not keeping pace with overall NPS appropriations:

> ***Continuation of this trend would lead to problems in maintaining the physical plants of the parks and in maintaining the professional capability to work on them. ... Yet, ironically, if substantial DSC staffing reductions result from reduced funding, the Service will find itself without experienced design and construction professionals when the cycle begins to swing upward again.*** **(NPS 1980, p. 31)**

13. "Obligation" refers to the funding commitment through contracts or other agreements; the "rate" of obligation is against annual appropriated funds for the projects.

14. Denis Galvin recalled that this decline was consistent with a larger trend. In 1978, there were approximately 800 employees at the Denver Service Center. When he returned in 1985, there were around 500 employees. As will be shown in other parts of this history, the personnel numbers at DSC fluctuated dramatically throughout the 1980s.

According to the report, the decline in workload that necessarily followed the reduced funding appropriations had been anticipated and necessary staffing reductions had begun in 1979. In an effort to mitigate the impact of these reductions on the workforce, DSC management had reduced the amount of contract architectural and engineering work. Despite these substantial cuts, however, the report concluded that

> ***the 1981–1982 level of the construction program will require further reductions in staff at the DSC. A projection of the recent attrition rate will meet the need for reductions through the end of 1982, when staffing levels at the Service Center will be around 500 if the current rate of attrition continues. If the 1983 construction program does not increase to the level of the late 1970s or if no new program or planning tasks are moved to the DSC, more drastic reductions may be required.*** **(pp. 31–32)**

The organization also reported that the number of women in the DSC workforce grew from 25.5 percent to 30 percent. However, most of the positions filled by women still were below the GS-11 level, and a substantial number of those were in part-time or temporary positions. Diversity in DSC staffing had also increased since 1979.

The DSC annual report for 1981 painted a somewhat more ominous picture for the organization as employment totals at the Denver Service Center continued to decline. With the end of the Bicentennial program, construction appropriations declined dramatically, reaching a ten-year low in 1981. Indeed, the appropriations for that year would have allowed the service center to operate only for seven months that year had it not been supplemented by almost one year of carry-over funding from fiscal year 1980.

The 1981 report summary also reflected a shift "away from conceptual planning" as the National Park Service moved "into an era of retrenchment with the products of the Denver Service Center concentrating on repair and rehabilitation" as opposed to new development in existing parks.

The opening of the Reagan Era would require belt tightening throughout the federal government. However, beginning in FY 1983, the expanding efforts of the Park Service Planning, Design, and Construction Program (which was the largest since the late 1970s), combined with funding from the Park Restoration and Improvement Program (PRIP) and the Federal Lands Highway Program (FLHP), would result in significant accomplishments for the Denver Service Center.

Denver Service Center employee briefing at the NPS Womens' Conference, early 1990s.

CHAPTER 6

THE DENVER SERVICE CENTER AND MORNING IN AMERICA

The year 1980 witnessed a seismic shift in American politics and an accompanying substantial shift in the operations and character of the National Park Service. Ronald Reagan rode into the White House in 1981, in part on his commitment to reduce the size and budget of the federal government. The Congressional Budget Office noted that the first budget resolution in 1982 proposed "large cuts in baseline revenues and a sharp reduction in federal spending from baseline levels." As a result, outlays fell to 19.2 percent of the gross national product, the lowest level since 1966.

The National Park Service almost immediately felt the federal government's refocus and resulting budget cuts. By the end of the year, employment in all categories at the Denver Service Center had fallen to 625, which was 23.7 percent below the peak in staff numbers in December 1978.

> ***It is expected that the work force will stabilize at slightly below 600 in FY 1982. Reductions in planning income and increases in income from design and construction will require a transition of the workforce in the next two years. To accomplish this, emphasis will be placed on finding field assignments [for DSC staff] and retraining individuals impacted by areas of declining income.*** **(NPS 1981, p. 37)**

Still, the FY 1982 program was significantly influenced by the implementation of the Park Restoration and Improvement Program (construction projects totaled $18.8 million in 1982). In addition, the Denver Service Center acted as designer and contracting officer for park and regional projects totaling $2.4 million and as designer only for projects worth another $2 million. The total PRIP funding for Denver Service Center was approximately $23 million, and $48 million was included in the regular line-item program. In addition, award rates increased in 1982 from what had been an all-time high in 1981.

The report noted that this was unusual because in past years when construction appropriations increased, the award rate decreased. Authors of the report attributed the continued increase to the national priority system, which allowed for more efficient completion of the multiyear design cycle by providing for program consistency.

The organization also completed a special study at the direction of the National Park System Advisory Board[15] that focused on comparing in-house DSC costs to the costs of private architectural/engineering firms. The study, based on the FY 1981 construction program, concluded that Denver Service Center in-house costs for architectural/engineering services and those in the private sector were comparable.

The Planning Division's production reflected the Denver Service Center's achievements in 1982. Planning products that were not directly associated with construction increased from 219 products in FY 1981 to 241 in FY 1982. The principal category of increase was in development concept plans.

The prominent position that the Denver Service Center occupied in the federal planning, design, and historic preservation fields in the early 1980s was illustrated during the National Endowment for the Arts design awards competition in 1984.

The Presidential Design Awards Program administered by the National Endowment for the Arts was the first government-wide program of awards for excellence in federal design. The Denver Service Center entered nine projects in the competition. Of the ninety-one Federal Design Achievement Awards that were given, six were received by the service center, and two of these were granted the prestigious Presidential Award for Design Excellence the following year. Those two projects were Franklin Court in Independence National Historical Park and the Linn Cove Viaduct on Blue Ridge Parkway. The four DSC projects receiving Federal Design Achievement Awards were: Jordan Pond House in Acadia National Park, Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park (general management plan [GMP]), the Lowell National Historical Park Visitor Center, and the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area general management plan.

In 1984, the Denver Service Center also received a Certificate of Commendation in Preservation from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for its restoration and preservation work on the Civil War Gunboat *Cairo* at Vicksburg National Military Park.

Civil War Gunboat *Cairo* at Vicksburg National Military Park.

Civil War Gunboat *Cairo* at Vicksburg National Military Park.

15. The National Park System Advisory Board consists of citizen advisors and was "chartered by Congress to help the National Park Service care for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage." The board was first authorized in 1935 under the Historic Sites, Buildings, and Antiquities Act to advise the NPS director and the secretary of the interior on matters relating to the park service, the national park system, and programs administered by the National Park Service, including the administration of the Act; the designation of national historic and natural landmarks; and the national historic significance of proposed national historic trails. https://www.nps.gov/resources/advisoryboardmembers.htm

That same year, the Denver Service Center conducted a professional awards competition juried by a panel of distinguished outside professionals. The DSC Manager's Award of Excellence was awarded to an exemplary planning project (Channel Islands National Park general management plan) and a unique international design project for a visitor center and museum (Asir National Park, Saudi Arabia). In addition, honor awards were issued to projects demonstrating superior professional accomplishment in solving a problem, and merit awards were given to projects deserving honorable mention for problem solving.

Projects that received honor awards included:

- Cleetwood Cove Toilet Facility, Crater Lake National Park (design)
- East Wing Stabilization, William Howard Taft National Historic Site (construction)
- Lowell Visitor Center, Lowell National Historical Park (historic preservation)
- Mosca Creek Comfort Station, Great Sand Dunes National Monument (design)
- Munising Falls, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore (construction)
- Redwood Information Center, Redwood National Park (design)
- Russian Bishop's House, Sitka National Historical Park (historic preservation)
- Michael F. Hart (graphic illustration)
- Ann Shewell (graphic illustration)

Projects that received merit awards included:

- General Management Plan, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (planning)
- Glacier Point Improvements, Yosemite National Park (design)
- Jordan Pond House, Acadia National Park (design)
- Lodgepole Site Development, Sequoia National Park (design)
- Old Faithful Inn, Yellowstone National Park (historic preservation)
- Old Faithful Development Concept Plan (planning)
- Phantom Ranch Sewage System, Grand Canyon National Park (design)
- Rio Grande Visitor Contact Station, Big Bend National Park (design)
- Santa Rosa Beach Facility, Gulf Islands National Seashore (design)
- Site Plan, Four Corners National Monument (planning)
- Visitor Entrance Facility, Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site (design)

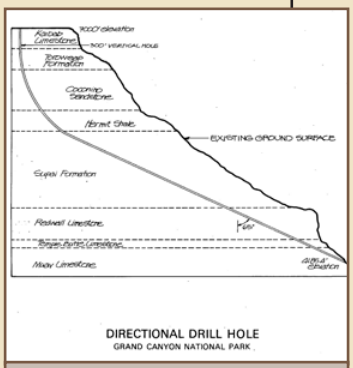
For awards and commendations received by the Denver Service Center from government commissions and professional organizations, see the Chronology section of this history.

In 1985, in accordance with the A-76 process,[16] the Denver Service Center completed a productivity review for architectural and engineering services. The review concluded that important cost savings would be associated with an organizational realignment. Accordingly, a reorganization at the end of FY 1985 realigned the Denver Service Center into three (rather than four) geographical planning and design teams, reduced staffing in one support unit, and abolished another small support unit that was absorbed elsewhere in the organization. The three new geographical teams were: Western (Alaska/Pacific Northwest/ Western), Central (Midwest/Rocky Mountain, Southwest), and Eastern (North Atlantic/Mid-Atlantic/National Capital/Southeast).

A major accomplishment of the DSC work program in FY 1985 was the innovative solution to the longstanding problem of supplying water to the major visitor facilities on the south rim at Grand Canyon National Park. The existing six-inch line to the south rim from the Indian Gardens pump station had been subject to damage from rock falls and slides where it traversed vertical cliffs. After considerable study, it was proposed that the portion of the line through the most difficult terrain should be routed through a subsurface directional drill hole. This routing was considered to be the most reliable, the least damaging to the environment, and the safest for construction.

Application of the sophisticated directional drilling process at Grand Canyon was unique, involving guidance of a drilling assembly from a point on the rim through eight geologic formations to a predetermined terminus at the base of the Muav limestone cliff. The drill hole was completed in October 1985 at a cost of $3 million.

That same month, Gerald D. Patten became manager of the service center and focused on several initiatives for DSC operations. He and Associate Manager Robert Shelley hired consultants and conducted workshops for DSC senior managers on such issues as creating a diverse workforce, office communications, and various management models, as well as how the Denver Service Center worked as a team. Patten gives Shelley credit for taking the lead in the effort. Together they made a number of organizational adjustments, including the institution of more regular communication between management and staff employees.



This drawing illustrates the sophisticated directional drilling process at Grand Canyon National Park used in 1985 to supply water to major visitor facilities.

16. Office of Management and Budget Circular A-76 was issued in 1966 during the administration of Lyndon B. Johnson. However, the underlying principles and concern that drove the drafting and implementation of the circular date back over three decades. Those principles were based on the assumption that the longstanding policy of the federal government had been to rely on the private sector for needed commercial services: "To ensure that the American people receive maximum value for their tax dollars, commercial activities should be subject to the forces of competition."

Rendering of Canyon Village Lodge at Yellowstone National Park, 1987.

They also created an advisory council consisting of park superintendents, a regional director, and the NPS associate director for Cultural Resources. The council met quarterly to review and critique DSC operations to focus on how the service center might better serve parks. At the time, there were many misconceptions about the role of the Denver Service Center in the execution of the service's planning, design and construction programs.[17]

The 1985 productivity review had found that major cost savings could be realized with the purchase and installation of a computer-assisted design and drafting (CADD) system. In addition, the review had mandated that a personal computer and appropriate software be made available to designers on each of the three teams. Under Patten's management, the DSC CADD system, consisting of four drafting workstations and three design workstations, was implemented in 1987. And that year saw the launch of a prototype project in three-dimensional computer simulation for replacement lodging design in Canyon Village at Yellowstone National Park. It took several years for the Park Service to embrace and use online technologies, but these DSC initiatives were forward-looking.

The National Park Service director in those years, William Penn Mott,[18] was an advocate of design principles specific to park and protected areas. In his judgment, the Park Service could do better, and he created a 12-Point Plan for enhanced resource protection, interpretation, and infrastructure improvement in the national parks. The Denver Service Center would play a prominent role in carrying out that plan.

17. The most troublesome misconception might have been that the Service Center dictated to superintendents what facilities they could have and when.

18. The NPS director in 1986 was William Penn Mott Jr. Mott had served as a landscape architect and planner for the National Park Service in the 1930s and later headed the California state park system under then-Governor Ronald Reagan from 1967 to 1975. "Mott sought a greater NPS role in educating the public about American history and environmental values. He also returned to a more expansionist posture, supporting the addition of Steamtown National Historic Site in Scranton, Pennsylvania, Great Basin National Park in Nevada (1986), Jimmy Carter National Historic Site in Georgia, and El Malpais National Monument in New Mexico in 1987, and a dozen more areas in 1988." Macintosh et al., *The National Parks: Shaping the System. The George Wright Forum*, Volume 35, Number 2, p. 60.

In August 1987, after more than thirteen years at its Parfet Street location, the Denver Service Center, along with the Rocky Mountain Regional Office, moved to larger office facilities in a newly constructed three-story, brick building on West Alameda Parkway near Green Mountain in Lakewood. In September, the new DSC offices were the setting for the first annual NPS design workshop, attended by more than 200 participants from parks, regional offices, the Harpers Ferry Center, the Washington Office, the US Forest Service, and the Denver Service Center. The workshop included more than thirty presentations by invited guest speakers from universities and the private sector as well as NPS design professionals.

Patten and Shelley initiated in-house design competitions and conducted numerous workshops aimed at enhancing the quality of DSC design.[19] The Denver Service Center also provided design assistance in 1986 for forty-one park road projects and final designs for scenic drives in Mount Rainier (Nisqually to Paradise Road) and Olympic (Sol Duc Valley Road) National Parks. In addition, final designs were completed for roads, utilities, and a wastewater treatment plant in Sequoia's Giant Forest.

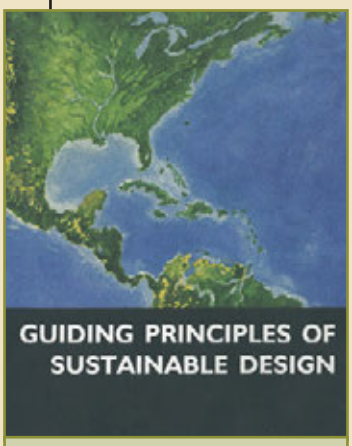
Planning highlights for 1986 included staff assistance for congressional briefings that were instrumental in establishing Great Basin National Park and creating a framework for intergovernmental planning projects in southwestern Pennsylvania. That framework would develop into an extensive interagency planning program known as America's Industrial Heritage Project. A special planning team was established to produce mineral management plans for the Alaska parks. In addition, the Denver Service Center prepared documents for the preservation and adaptive use of Chicago's Navy Pier and developed a management plan for the East St. Louis addition to the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial.

19. Mott himself was a participant in these endeavors.

In support of the director's commitment to expand the involvement of citizen groups, the Denver Service Center produced twelve publications designed to encourage public comments and a number of draft plans, environmental assessments, and environmental impact statements, most of which were circulated for public review.

In 1988, DSC personnel developed a standardized sign family and a park logo that would serve as an example to guide similar future work in other areas of the national park system. The first example of this was when the New River Gorge National River was selected by the NPS director as the park service area to receive a prototype sign system and a unique logo that would encompass the entire park.

Fiscal year 1989 brought further improvements in DSC technology. The Graphic Systems Division completed its conversion to a networked in-house desktop publishing system through which documents could be input, edited, formatted, and printed without ever leaving the system.



The Guiding Principles of Sustainable Design **received a merit award from the American Society of Landscape Architects in 1994.**

And during that year, DSC employees participated in several cultural resource workshops that were co-sponsored by the United States and Poland to deal with an array of planning issues and the conservation of cultural landscapes in that Eastern European nation as it began to emerge into the free world. In addition, DSC personnel represented the Park Service at professional conferences in the Philippines and Toulouse, France. In 1990, the Denver Service Center participated in the Beringian heritage reconnaissance survey. That project, which received an award from the American Society of Landscape Architects, was the first major initiative between the United States and the Soviet Union to jointly protect and conserve culturally significant areas in Siberia and Alaska.

Beginning in 1991, the Denver Service Center was a key participant in the Park Service effort to develop a sustainable park practices program. The DSC office of Professional and Employee Development helped to produce two documents in support of that program. The two documents—*Guiding Principles of Sustainable Design* and *Visual Quality of Built Environments in National Parks*—were well received. In 1994, the former received a merit award from the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Through the early 1990s, the office maintained its commitment to education/networking for sustainable practices by continuing a series of sustainable design workshops, including two American Institute of Architects video conferences on sustainability and the built environment. And as the National Park Service began moving toward a more collaborative framework for accomplishing the bureau's mission and goals during this period, the service center received increasing requests for support in conducting and managing meetings, conferences, and workshops.

In response, the service center began to develop an innovative meeting and facilitation services program that could be used by parks and NPS offices. Among other projects, the service center would provide public involvement facilitation and workshop design services to the NPS Office of Strategic Planning for implementing the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 throughout the Park Service.

The 1980s and early 1990s were years of growth, development, and diversification at the Denver Service Center. They were years in which service center programs were winning awards and commendations for design, construction, planning, and preservation. They were also years of extraordinary technological change and expansion. And the completion of the Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Site General Management Plan in 1995 was a reminder that they were years of important international partnerships. Along with the service center planners, the Palo Alto Battlefield planning team included representatives from several northern Mexican states, universities, museums, and Mexico's national cultural heritage protection agency.

If the times were professionally invigorating, changes in how the service center was viewed by Congress and by the public were coming.

The completion of the Palo Alto Battlefield General Management Plan in 1995 involved collaboration with representatives from several northern Mexican states, universities, museums, and Mexico's national cultural heritage protection agency. The Denver Service Center has partnered with and provided technical assistance to international countries ever since.

CHAPTER 7

TIME FOR REINVENTION

The midterm election of 1994 resulted in Republican control of Congress. That power shift reflected a political change that had been developing throughout the nation since the upheavals in 1968 that rocked American social structures. Soon after the 1994 election, the Denver Service Center found itself the focus of a political and public relations backlash.

Congressional add-on projects, known now as "earmarks," are likely as old as the constitutional form of government itself. Among the add-on projects undertaken in the 1990s was America's Industrial Heritage Project, an undertaking in Southwestern Pennsylvania to revitalize the economic base of the nine-county region through the promotion of tourism. Four existing national park units—the Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site, Fort Necessity National Battlefield, Friendship Hill National Historic Site, and Johnstown Flood National Memorial—would serve as the anchors around which other regional historic sites and landmarks would be organized in order to depict the contribution of the region to the nation's industrial growth. The NPS sites and other thematically related regional sites were to be connected by a 600-mile car tour route along existing public roads.

America's Industrial Heritage Project was the brainchild of Representative John P. Murtha of Pennsylvania's Twelfth Congressional District, located in southwestern Pennsylvania, one of the areas hardest hit during the industrial decline in the decades following World War II.[20] To implement the ambitious initiatives charted for America's Industrial Heritage Project, the National Park Service designated a separate team at the Denver Service Center, the Western Pennsylvania Partnerships (WPP) branch.

20. Murtha was revered among Democrats—and even some Republicans—for his skill in using the power of the federal purse to make deals. Most of those appropriations came in defense and military research contracts he steered to companies based in his district or with small offices there. He became a symbol of the controversial congressional practice of "earmarking," the process by which lawmakers can add federal money to the budget to give no-bid contracts to pet projects and companies of their choosing. Murtha was firmly unapologetic of the practice, saying it was his duty to help his district to create jobs and US troops to gain new research and tools to help them in battle. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/08/AR2010020802352.html

At this point, the main NPS building near the Denver Federal Center was filled to capacity with DSC, Rocky Mountain Region, Harpers Ferry Center, and other Washington Support Office (WASO) (headquarters) employees. Consequently, the WPP branch was stationed at the Academy Place office park in south Lakewood. By government standards, the office space at Academy Place was pretty lavish. The branch provided new Herman Miller furniture and computers for all employees as this was the era when personal computers were first distributed widely in the federal government. Travel budgets were generous because the leadership of America's Industrial Heritage Project felt strongly that all the employees in the branch needed an orientation to the Pennsylvania region to properly understand the scale of the undertaking and the significance of the region's history, landscape, and cultural resources.

The WPP branch continued its work from 1991 until 1993, but despite its relatively remote location, the project did not avoid scrutiny and some resentment. In May 1993, the Government Accounting Office (GAO) was directed to assess the direction and accountability of the project. The Government Accounting Office found that, although the Park Service was authorized to operate and maintain its America's Industrial Heritage Project projects using federally appropriated funds, it was uncertain who would be responsible for the future management, operation, and maintenance of the projects. As a result, the commission recommended establishing a not-for-profit corporation to address future management, even though no final decision had been made on how to sustain projects for the long term. Following the GAO report, the Western Pennsylvania Partnerships was relocated from the Academy Place offices and returned to the Alameda building. But the view that government was the problem rather than the solution to the nation's problems continued to shape domestic policy through the decade.

The Western Pennsylvania Partnerships Branch was created to implement initiatives from America's Industrial Heritage Project in the 1990s. During this era, the branch worked on several projects at Steamtown National Historic Site.

Reinventing Government

President Bill Clinton was a southerner who brought a more conservative face to the party and a dramatic departure from the New Deal policies that had shaped the Democratic Party since the 1930s. He vowed to "reinvent government" to provide improved response and service to the American people. In March 1993, President Clinton declared, "Our goal is to make the entire federal government less expensive and more efficient, and to change the culture of our national bureaucracy away from complacency and entitlement toward initiative and empowerment." To demonstrate the administration's commitment, he appointed his vice president, Al Gore, to lead this ambitious effort.

In October 1994, the Denver Service Center was selected as a Department of the Interior reinvention laboratory. The DSC lab was composed of six DSC employees, three park superintendents, an associate regional director, and a facilitator from the Bureau of Reclamation. In addition, as a prototype office within the Park Service for the implementation of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA 1993),[21] the Denver Service Center was expected to develop and test a performance-based management system.[22]

It is important to note that the Government Performance and Results Act was being implemented on many levels within the Park Service. Overall, the NPS Planning office formulated the core NPS strategy in *Creating Our Future: A Strategic Plan for the National Park Service* (NPS 1994). At least thirty "lead field areas"[23] and program offices had begun developing plans for management and operation based on GPRA principles and reflecting the mission goals of the Strategic Plan.

The Denver Service Center took a lead position in carrying out the Government Performance and Results Act. Copies of formats and working documents were shared with requesting parks and system support offices and with facilitators working with park groups. Although field areas and other offices prepared their plans using different terms, the documents from the Denver Service Center provided a process to follow that proved useful in understanding GPRA tenets.

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21. See Use of Strategic Planning and Reinvention and the Implementation of the Government Performance and Results Act: A GPRA Case Study for the Denver Service Center, National Park Service, Department of the Interior. May 13, 1996.
22. Performance management links program activities to goal setting and budgeting before the fact and to performance measurement after the fact.
23. At the time of the reinvention, field areas (parks, monuments, recreation areas, historical sites, etc.) made up a cluster group. According to the GPRA case study, "Cluster groups number in size from 10 to 35 field units. Each cluster group is supported from a systems support office that works for the cluster group and reports to one of the seven field directors. Each field director reports to the Washington D.C. headquarters office." (Use of Strategic Planning and Reinvention and the Implementation of the Government Performance and Results Act, p. 1)." Field areas" is no longer a term in common use within the National Park Service.

It was necessary for the team doing the GPRA work to coordinate with the DSC reinvention team, whose charge was to conduct a review of DSC planning, design, and construction documents with the intent to "reengineer the Denver Service Center review process to provide parks and other clients with timely, cost-effective delivery of products that satisfy customer requirements."[24] The Reinvention Laboratory team comprised professionals from various disciplines at the Denver Service Center, including: Leslie Starr Hart, a DSC planner and chief of the Office of Professional and Employee Development, who served as the Reinvention Laboratory team chair; Todd Alexander, a landscape architect; Douglas Braithwaite, chief, Branch of Specifications; Michael Donnelly, the assistant manager of the DSC Eastern team; Kit Tracy Mullen, a senior environmental compliance specialist for natural resources from the Central team; and Judy Shafer, a senior compliance specialist for cultural resources, also from the Central team. A management advisory group oversaw the work of the lab team.[25]

As a result of their *Reinvention Plan*,[26] the DSC's organizational structure was changed from a geographical team organization, which had been used for more than twenty years, to an organization with an emphasis on project management and professional disciplines. The new organization consisted of six functional groups, each headed by a chief: Management Services, Resource Planning, Landscape Architecture, Engineering, Architecture, and Contracting.

On March 12, 1996, the service center's reengineering laboratory received the vice president's Hammer Award at a Denver Federal Center ceremony. That award was Al Gore's answer to the $600 hammer controversy from the 1980s.[27] It was given in recognition of work that embraced the principles of Gore's national performance review program for improvement of the federal government through reengineering and reinvention.

The DSC reinvention team conducted a review of DSC planning, design, and construction documents to reengineer the DSC review process. The team received Vice President Al Gore's Hammer Award in 1996.

The Hammer Award was given in recognition of work that embraced the principles of Vice President Al Gore's national performance review program for improvement of the federal government.

24. Reinvention Laboratory Report. Denver Service Center. United States Department of the Interior. National Park Service, p. 1.

25. Members of the advisory group included Ann Badgley, Chief of Staff to the NPS Director; Charles P. Clapper, Assistant NPS Director for Design and Construction and Denver Service Center Operations; John Cook, Regional Director, the NPS Rocky Mountain Region (now essentially the Intermountain Region); Joseph Doddridge, Assistant to the Assistant Secretary, Fish Wildlife, and Parks, Department of the Interior; Denis Galvin, Associate Director, Planning and Development, National Park Service; Jody Zall Kusek, Director of Organizational Planning and Development, Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior; and Katherine H. Stevenson, Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, Mid-Atlantic Region, National Park Service. The NPS officials who signed off on the final document included Hart, Clapper, NPS Director Roger Kennedy, and Tom Collier, the NPS Chief of Staff.

26. Reinvention Plan: Meeting Today's Challenges and Tomorrow's Needs, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, May 1995.

27. That hammer was something of a myth, but the controversy had significant political impact.

The DSC lab had recommended seventeen actions ranging from modification of internal work processes to elimination of regulatory encumbrances that would have far-reaching application for the Park Service and the Department of the Interior as well as for federal business practices in general. The Hammer Award commended the lab for its efforts to streamline the review process for planning, design, and construction documents and thus to provide parks and other clients with timely, cost-effective delivery of products that satisfied customer requirements.

The reinvention efforts resulted in significant decrease in personnel at the service center. The total of 570 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees in FY 1996 was a decrease of seventy-three from the previous year, and the service center had to continue its hiring freeze during the entire year. Other offices in the National Park Service were also affected by downsizing during this period.

The service center personnel continued an active planning, design, and construction work program. On June 22, 1996, a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by local, state, and federal officials, members of Congress, and Vice President Gore[28] was held on the Natchez Trace Parkway near Nashville to dedicate and open the northern terminus of the parkway in Tennessee. Construction had included the renowned double-arched bridge over Tennessee State Highway 96 near Franklin. That structure incorporated unique state-of-the-art engineering design and construction techniques and was the first precast, post-tensioned arch-supported bridge structure in North America. In 1997, the service center and the Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division received a Presidential Design Award for their work on this significant project.

In addition, through 1996 and 1997, the Denver Service Center took the lead in several ongoing servicewide initiatives aimed at improving efficiencies and providing assistance to other units and central offices in the national park system.

In March 1996, the National Leadership Council of the Park Service issued a policy paper entitled "Servicewide Development Strategy: The Next Decade" to guide the line-item construction program in response to "National Parks for the Twenty-first Century: The Vail Agenda." A Development Advisory Board[29] was created to ensure that the objectives of the development strategy were met. The Denver Advisory Board's initial focus was the creation of a new selection and ranking process for projects in the Line-Item Construction Program that would include a form of value assessment (cost vs. benefit).

28. Before being elected vice president, Al Gore was a US representative from Tennessee (1977–1985), and from 1985 to 1993 served as a senator from that state.

29. In 2000, the Development Advisory Board was renamed the Investment Review Board.

Construction projects were then subject to a "validation" review by the advisory board following schematic design to ensure that they would produce the advantages anticipated when they were placed on the priority list at the same or lower cost. Based on its initial review of projects in August 1997, the Development Advisory Board recommended mandatory value assessments during schematic design for all FY 2000 projects. And in October 1997, the NPS director requested that the Development Advisory Board review all ongoing or scheduled projects in the Line-Item Construction Program.

The Development Advisory Board's project reviews and support of value assessment were a major influence in bringing the estimated costs of NPS construction projects down. The effects of the review process were immediate. The Denver Service Center estimated that resultant cost avoidance was approximately $2.6 million in FY 1996, $16.2 million in FY 1997, and $32.4 million in FY 1998.

In short, the NPS value analysis program based at the Denver Service Center became a focus of activity toward the end of FY 1997 in the effort to ensure that the cost of a project was no greater than necessary to meet the mandate of that project. Various stakeholders with diverse interests were included in the value analysis process, and value analysis was increasingly used servicewide to ensure that projects met program requirements. DSC project staff were trained in value analysis processes and used expert staff to facilitate the project value analysis efforts; in addition, value analysis provided documentation of decisions that would prove useful during the design and construction process.

That year, the Denver Service Center played a key role in facility design and construction projects, including seven photovoltaic systems that were completed in several parks. The Planning Division worked with other NPS offices, the Forest Service, the Idaho state historic preservation officer, and three tribes to finalize a general management plan for Nez Perce National Historical Park and Big Hole National Battlefield. Under the direction of the Department of the Interior, DSC staff studied 700,000 acres in the designated Everglades Agricultural Area Land Acquisition to determine the environmental effects of acquiring up to 50,000 acres of croplands and converting them to ecosystem restoration project sites in South Florida. Environmental impact statements were produced regarding removal of two dams and the restoration of native fish habitats in the Elwha River Valley in Olympic National Park. In addition, work was begun on the Washington memorial honoring President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The reinvention efforts at the Denver Service Center were well underway in October 1997, and the service center was heavily workloaded with important projects. Despite all these efforts, everything changed.

CHAPTER 8

SOMETHING'S HAPPENING HERE

The Delaware Water Gap and Its Aftermath

Perhaps not surprising, one of the projects *not* highlighted in the 1997 annual report was the construction of a restroom facility in a relatively remote section of Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. In early October 1997, reporter Frank Greve published a story for the Knight Ridder News Service titled, "Agency defends pricey privy. Park Service builds $333,000 outhouse."[30] The restroom facility that Greve highlighted had been designed by the Denver Service Center, and he reported that its construction costs were "typically expensive for Park Service work." The damning nature of this article had an impact on the agency that is difficult to exaggerate.

The fallout from the story rocked the agency and triggered development of a strategy to explain and justify the Delaware Gap outhouse. David Barna, the chief of communications for the Park Service, faxed the story to all of the regional offices and wrote in an email stating that, "We expect a flood of calls today." His follow-up email the next day had the subject line, "Frank Greve" and alerted a list of NPS officials, including Deputy Director Galvin and Charlie Clapper, the DSC director, that Greve had called the Thomas Stone National Historic Site in Maryland—and the Denver Service Center—to ask about costs of a comfort station.

It was already clear that Greve's story presented a substantial problem for the Park Service and that the agency would need to find a way to establish some level of control over the narrative regarding construction.

On October 29, 1997, a subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations held a hearing on Park Service Housing and Construction. Members of the three panels appearing before the subcommittee included:

30. The full Knight Ridder article is available at https://theplumber.com/the-opulent-outhouse/

- » Inspector General of the Department of the Interior
- » Associate Director for the Government Accounting Office
- » Representatives of the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the US Forest Service
- » Deputy Director of the Bureau of Land Management
- » Robert Stanton Director of the National Park Service
- » Denis Galvin, NPS Deputy Director
- » Charlie Clapper, Assistant NPS Director of the National Park Service for the Denver Service Center

Breaking with his own custom as chair of the Interior Subcommittee, Representative Ralph Regula (R-OH) chose to make opening remarks, "because this is an oversight hearing and not a traditional appropriations hearing, I believe it is both appropriate and will be useful to set the stage for today's hearing." Regula summarized the negative comments he had heard in his district regarding "gold-plated construction" by the National Park Service. "People," he said, "were very unhappy that the National Park Service was spending nearly $600,000 per unit on housing for its employees in Yosemite, and to add insult to injury the Park Service was attempting to defend and justify these costs." The transcript of Regula's remarks notes that because the Park Service had been "sheltered from the effects of belt tightening" Congress had imposed on other agencies, in Regula's opinion, "the Park Service needs a little attitude adjustment."

The chairman acknowledged that the public loves the national parks, but, he said, "to continue down this road of disinterest or acceptance is foolhardy and irresponsible."[31] He asserted that this was not the first time the committee had questioned the Park Service about the construction program, and he urged the agency to make improvements. He cited a 1990 report that revealed that 90 percent of NPS projects for which funds were appropriated cost more than estimated and an equal percentage of projects failed to meet their original schedules. Despite the fact that blown budgets and schedule slippages had been causes for concern for over twelve years, the chairman concluded,

> ***I am not sanguine that the Park Service, despite our many admonitions over the years, cares or even recognizes there is a problem. There is, and it must be addressed or the Park Service risks losing its base of support which is the American taxpayer.***

31. "Committee on Appropriations. Subcommittee on the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies. Transcript of Hearing on Park Service Housing and Construction." October 29, 1997.

Regula concluded his opening remarks by noting that while the Park Service employed 500 people at the Denver Service Center, the Bureau of Land Management had twenty-six and the Fish and Wildlife Service fifteen. The Forest Service, he said, which had both more acreage and more units than the Park Service, used no central construction management center. And he emphasized that while many of these agencies used standard designs, the dozens of comfort stations built by the Park Service in recent years had been custom-designed and custom-built. As the service center was not base-budgeted, but rather depended on a percentage of construction project cost, the chairman asserted that there was no incentive for cost savings at the Denver Service Center.

> ***There is simply no sense of limits, no attempt to focus on lower cost alternatives and in today's climate of tight budgets with the land management agencies identifying billions of dollars of unmet needs, we simply cannot tolerate this mindset.***

The chairman's harsh opening remarks set the tone on Capitol Hill for what proved to be a difficult experience for the Denver Service Center. One public official testifying at the hearing was Wilma A. Lewis, the inspector general of the Department of the Interior. She provided testimony on a 1996 report her office had issued following a review requested by Colorado Congressman Scott McInnes of housing costs at Grand Canyon and Yosemite National Parks:

> ***Our audit on construction of employee housing at Grand Canyon and Yosemite National Parks revealed that the total estimated cost of planning, designing, and developing infrastructure (which includes erecting roads, utilities, and building sites) and constructing 23 single-family houses at Grand Canyon National Park and 34 apartments and 19 single-family houses at Yosemite National Park was $29.2 million.***[32]

32. This and subsequent quotations are from the US Department of the Interior. Office of Inspector General. Testimony of Wilma A. Lewis. Inspector General, US Department of the Interior on Audit of Employee Housing at Grand Canyon and Yosemite National Parks Before the Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies. Committee on Appropriations. US House of Representatives, October 29, 1997.

Inspector General Lewis asserted that while the average cost for the Park Service to construct a single-family home was $390,000 at Grand Canyon and $584,000 at Yosemite, the report had estimated the total cost to construct an 1,800 square-foot, three-bedroom house in the private sector was at least $158,000 less than the Park Service's average cost near Grand Canyon National Park and at least $334,000 less near Yosemite.

To further her point, Inspector General Lewis stated that 1,200- to 1,800-square-foot homes near Grand Canyon National Park were selling for about $215,000 less than the Park Service's construction costs ($284,000 less near Yosemite).

She concluded her opening remarks by saying that while her office had not conducted any audits specifically targeting the NPS decision-making process, several other audits had revealed that

> ***the de-centralization of park management, without adequate headquarters oversight and control of park operations, has led to the inconsistent implementation of Service-wide policies and procedures in the areas of facility construction; fee collections; and the recovery of costs for emergency medical and search and rescue activities, maintenance, and utilities services.***

Significantly, Inspector General Lewis's auditors also found that the former park superintendent had decided to build fifty-nine single-family units despite the fact that officials at the Denver Service Center and the Pacific West regional office had recommended up to 114 homes composed of single- and multi-family units. As a result, she said, "Park officials estimated that fifty permanent and one-hundred seasonal employees at the Park would still be living in deficient housing at the completions of this housing construction."

It is instructive that the Denver Service Center had argued against some of the "gold-plating" on the designs that contributed to bringing the entire program before the committee. However, the accumulated animus against the Denver Service Center in the agency made it an easy target and one that relatively few in the National Park Service were prepared to go out on a limb to defend.

The inspector general's team's conclusion was that Yosemite's critical need for seasonal employee housing could be fully addressed by adding nineteen single family homes and thirty-four one- and two-bedroom apartments. Inspector General Lewis's testimony was already damning enough, but she continued by citing NPS testimony before the same subcommittee regarding the high housing construction costs in fiscal years 1994 and 1995. According to the inspector general, the agency had argued that the use of nonstandard and energy-efficient materials in the homes, apartment units, and related infrastructure that were added to the project during planning and design also pushed costs higher:

> ***The Park Service provided us with a list of items, such as solid core doors, solar water heaters, commercial-grade floor coverings, high-quality floor coverings, high-quality and extra windows, extra insulation, four alternate means of cooling, and an enhanced planting plan that were used in the constructing the housing.***

She testified that National Park Service officials had told the inspector general investigating team that the use of these higher cost items was necessary for a number of reasons, including, durability, long-term maintenance savings, energy efficiency, noise control in apartments, and "landscape enhancements." Lewis went on to say, however, that neither she nor her team was provided with any documentation or cost analyses to quantify and validate the NPS claims about long-term cost benefits to balance or compensate for the initial up-front higher costs.[33] In fact, she said, "…we found reports and documents that questioned the use of some of these materials."

A subsequent section of the inspector general's transcribed testimony points to the Denver Service Center as a major culprit in driving costs upward. In addition to the use of nonstandard and energy efficient materials, she said, the DSC's costs for planning, designing, and supervising construction were $8.7 million, which significantly contributed to the high costs of housing at the parks.

33. On the other end of the spectrum, a project at Colorado National Monument that preceded the controversies at Grand Canyon and Yosemite involved modifying designs for prefabricated houses. "They bought three Boise Cascade houses. There were no real concerns about [the] designs' consistency with historic landscapes." Interview with former DSC Director Dan Wenk, March 1, 2017.

Lewis stated that her office had provided the Park Service with a preliminary draft of the report compiled by her staff. In reply eleven days later, she said, the National Park Service had argued that the IG report "artificially enlarged" the costs of construction for housing at the two parks. Perhaps after the recent years of success in implementing the National Park Service's construction work, the Denver Service Center believed itself immune to criticism or had fallen prey to what has been termed "the disease of victory,"[34] assuming that its long record of success was essentially a guarantee for continued success in the future. In any case, the authors of the DSC response asserted that the per-unit housing costs actually were comparable to those in the private sector and that, far from gold-plating, the housing the agency was building "modest types of housing ... [at] a reasonable level of National Park Service investment."

Inspector General Lewis succinctly dismissed the defense: "We believe that the Park Service's comments were without merit."

The not-so-subtle message in the inspector general's and the General Accounting Office's remarks was that the National Park Service could not be trusted to take on the challenge of getting its own house in order. It was the General Accounting Office's apparent position that the appropriations committee would need to ride herd on the agency to ensure that the perceived extravagance in the construction program be cleaned up and a program set in place to ensure the taxpayers' money be spent in a fiscally responsible way. The National Park Service would be on a very short fiscal leash for the foreseeable future.

Robert Stanton, the newly appointed director of the National Park Service, was the next to speak before the committee. He promised to personally review all construction projects before the Park Service issued bid announcements. And he announced that he had directed the service to canvas the extent of the need for park housing and the availability of housing in the private sector. He also promised his support for an independent review "of the construction planning, contracting, and oversight functions of the Denver Service Center" to determine "the right mix of architectural, engineering and management review services."[35]

34. This term from Neil Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 1988) p. 285.

35. This and the following quotations are from US Department of the Interior. Statement by Robert Stanton, Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Before the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, United States House of Representatives, Concerning the National Park Service's Housing and Construction Programs. October 29, 1997. p. 1.

But Director Stanton also made a point of stating how design and construction of facilities fit within the mission of the National Park Service:

> ***In addition to being functional, our facilities are designed to be harmonious with park resources, to be unobtrusive, and to blend with the surrounding environment. Our facilities must also be energy efficient, and as accessible as possible to all segments of our population.***

The director then asserted the Park Service's commitment to quality and acknowledged the imperative to, "achieve the proper balance between quality and cost." Then he outlined the specific actions he intended for the Park Service to take:

- Implementing a new priority-setting system
- Employing the processes of value analysis
- Incorporating best business practices from the private sector
- Establishing new ways of inspecting and supervising construction projects
- Downsizing and restructuring to balance cost with quality

He concluded with this statement:

> ***The National Park System contains facilities that have priceless value, such as the Washington Monument, the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial Arch, and the Statue of Liberty. It also includes designs that, over time, have become classic — Skyline Drive, Old Faithful Inn, and the Quarry Visitor Center at Dinosaur National Monument. Collectively, these places illustrate a history of commitment to quality. This commitment needs always to be weighed against the value obtained through the expenditure of limited funds. I will work with you to maintain the proper balance of these considerations.***[36.]

36. While today's Denver Service Center would in many ways be unrecognizable to those who only knew the organization as it was before 1997, without the implementation of the fundamental changes that were soon to be recommended, it is likely the Denver Service Center would have ceased to exist nearly two decades ago.

Given the rapidly growing anti-government fervor, the National Park Service's construction program ultimately became national news out of all scale to the size and cost of the project. The Denver Service Center soon found itself to be the National Park Service's public face for cost overruns and administrative ineffectiveness, which to the public at that time seemed endemic in the federal government.

The cost of constructing a restroom near Raymondskill Falls in Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area received widespread national media attention.

CHAPTER 9

THE NAPA REPORT AND ITS AFTERMATH

The National Academy of Public Administration submitted a report called "Strengthening the National Park Service Construction Program" to Congress in 1998. The implementation of this report's recommendations fundamentally changed the way the Denver Service Center does business.

The political and public relations fallout was severe enough that the National Park Service was forced to reevaluate its entire design and construction program, but the responsibility for conducting this re-examination would not be left to the National Park Service or the Department of the Interior. At that political moment, their credibility was suspect enough that independent scrutiny appeared essential and proved, indeed, to be unavoidable.

On June 16, 1998, a panel of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) submitted a report to Congress entitled, "Strengthening the National Park Service Construction Program." National Academy of Public Administration is a not-for-profit organization chartered by Congress to advise government leaders in managing their challenges toward efficiency and accountability. Prepared in response to congressional concerns, the NAPA report delivered eleven findings on the status of the current NPS construction program and what the NAPA team identified as deficiencies in the operations at Denver Service Center.

1. The Denver Service Center's design and construction practices resulted in excessive costs.
2. The Denver Service Center needed to develop a more effective approach to working partnerships with architectural and engineering (A/E) firms.
3. Developing in-depth knowledge of local construction conditions and requirements would lead to better and less expensive designs.
4. The Denver Service Center needed to adopt standard construction specifications to contain construction costs.

5. The Denver Service Center should integrate skills in cost estimation, alternative contract delivery systems, and construction oversight at the contracting stage. Creating formal partnerships with construction contractors would enable resolution of issues at a working level and help to avoid claims and litigation on large projects.
6. A single individual—most likely the park superintendent—should be designated responsible and accountable for each project and provided with the resources and authority to discharge his or her responsibility.
7. The Denver Service Center should develop a comprehensive management system that would permit each project to be tracked from its initiation through completion of construction.
8. The Park Service as a whole would benefit from reviews by outsiders to evaluate the justifications of line-item projects "from the standpoints of cost and functional suitability."
9. Outsourcing the majority of the design activity would provide a more stable basis for staffing technical support at the Denver Service Center.
10. Base funding and greater use of private contractors would require the National Park Service to use estimating factors "the normal" percentages that other public agencies used for line-item construction projects.
11. The Park Service should adopt the cost-estimation model that was being used by the US military, which was based on updates from the American Association of Home Builders Research Center and took into account the causes of the variations in housing costs.

The findings of the NAPA team left little doubt that its members saw the Denver Service Center as a damaged organization—one that, in the aftermath of the Delaware Water Gap controversy and other planning and construction difficulties, had caused trouble for the National Park Service and was not worth saving or defending. The Denver Service Center would have to be the lamb sacrificed to quell the indignation of Congress and a public outraged by a federal agency that had been portrayed as indifferent, if not contemptuous of taxpayers and politicians alike.

The construction program could not wait for the development of a new design and construction office, nor could management expect the regional offices, with their far smaller numbers of professionals, to take on the loads. The NAPA team recommended both. Their report would keep the Denver Service Center in its form and function but would also reinvent it. The team envisioned nothing less than a fundamental, systemic reengineering of the Denver Service Center, one that might allow the service center to continue implementing the large NPS construction program with a minimum of organizational disruption. Eventually it worked, but the process of getting there was frustrating for the agency and traumatic for the remaining employees of the Denver Service Center. This downsizing mirrored events that caused much trauma and resulted in the loss of scientists from the National Park Service and elimination or moving of WASO offices from Washington, DC, to parks, regions, and Denver/Fort Collins.

To further this reengineering of the Denver Service Center, the NAPA study followed each of its findings with specific recommendations intended as corrections to the organization's work processes, including:

1. Contract out approximately 90 percent of the design work and all construction supervision and inspection services while handling only 10 percent of the design work in-house.
2. Improve the Denver Service Center's management of the A/E firms performing design activities.
3. Use A/E firms with solid reputations that have experience in the general locale of each project.
4. Adopt standardized design and construction practices and obtain professional services to prepare standard design drawings and specifications.
5. Make planning and management of contracts a critical and major function at the Denver Service Center and improve the Denver Service Center's capability to plan and manage construction contracts.
6. Assign responsibility and accountability for line-item construction projects to the park superintendents.
7. Establish an NPS project management control system to provide visibility of project status, and establish a small office of project management professionals in the Office of the Associate Director of Professional Services at NPS headquarters to manage the system.
8. Establish an external review group to assess line-item construction projects for functional suitability and cost-effectiveness.
9. Base fund DSC activities that support the general management planning and line-item predesign and project management activities.
10. Use the following estimating factors to develop the line-item construction program: design, 10 percent of net construction cost; construction supervision, 8 percent of net construction cost; and contingency, 10 percent of net construction cost.
11. To control housing costs, compare the estimated costs with the Tri Services Military Family Housing Cost Model. Require that the park superintendent justify any additional costs and obtain approval before construction begins.

Finally, the NAPA report made note of a problematic consistency in the NPS organizational culture: the belief that the park system is unique and there is only one right approach to Park Service responsibilities. "The Park Service," they noted, "comes closer to being a tribal clan than a government agency."

Fortunately, the NAPA team acknowledged that such a belief is understandable as most managers have long careers with the National Park Service that include work at several parks and assignments in regional and support offices. The NAPA team also understood that this culture created in those managers "a strong dedication to preserving the natural, cultural, and historic resources entrusted to the NPS" and the desire to improve the parks and enhance visitor's experiences:

> ***This dedication has not gone unappreciated. The NPS has enjoyed strong, long-term support from the general public, Congress, and most preservationists. That support has reinforced the common beliefs that underpin NPS decision-making. The strong, unifying culture of the NPS is a valuable asset in managing a highly decentralized organization, in that it leads to uniform values being applied in response to park problems.***

But the NAPA team felt that the downside of such a strong culture was a resistance to input from "outsiders." Moreover, as was obvious in their findings, the team felt that the organizational culture contributed "to the construction of facilities whose costs the NPS views as perfectly reasonable but the public sees as extravagant."

Strikingly, the report noted that projects added by Congress might not receive "sufficient review to uncover such problems." This reference implicitly recognized the problematic nature of congressional "earmarks," even though it was written in a period that witnessed a substantial decrease in congressional add-ons to the NPS budget and construction program.

All in all, the NAPA study expressed a genuine recognition of and appreciation for the strong commitment and *esprit de corps* of National Park Service employees, including the employees in central program offices like the Denver Service Center. However, the authors of the study believed that a smaller DSC workforce could preserve that spirit just as well as a larger one, perhaps even better.

Finding 9 of the NAPA report concluded that the new Denver Service Center, reconfigured as primarily project management-focused, would require 250 to 300 employees. This was bad news for the 507 permanent employees who remained in the service center after the precipitous drop in full-time equivalent employees over the previous three years. As part of Al Gore's reinvention process and following recommendations from the service center's own Reinvention Laboratory, DSC Director Charlie Clapper had streamlined the operation and trimmed it by more than 300 people after taking over in 1994. That is, employee numbers had already dropped by nearly 32 percent. Now the organization was faced with reducing employee numbers by a similar, if not greater percentage in a far shorter period of time. This would have to be accomplished by the process known euphemistically as a RIF or a "reduction in force."

The restructuring and downsizing of the Denver Service Center came quickly following the completion and release of the NAPA report and was done while the recent controversies were still in the public eye. The Denver Post reported the following on page one:

> ***The government agency responsible for building a $334,000 toilet is now under intense scrutiny and is bracing for a major shakeup. . . . After hearing complaints about costly projects, an expert panel is expected to recommend reducing the center's jobs to private enterprise and making other changes.***[37]

Some former park service officials pushed back against the onslaught of criticism. James Ridenour, NPS director during the George H. W. Bush administration, argued that Congress skimps on vital but unexciting responsibilities such as maintenance while lawmakers "stuff the land-acquisition and construction accounts with more parks, heritage centers, recreation areas, national rivers, national battlefields, and other obligations than can be developed intelligently."[38] In the former director's view, these actions resulted in a "thinning of the [NPS] blood" by diverting NPS funds to a growing number of park service units at the expense of existing parks.

Such moral support was encouraging to a degree, but it was not enough to ease the pervading sense of doom among the center's employees and across the bureau.

37. *Denver Post*, May 14, 1998, p. 1B. Along with the other dreadful consequences of the Delaware Water Gap project, it also unleashed an apparently irresistible inclination for bad puns.

38. Quoted in "Pork Thrives in National Park Funding." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 26, 1997. 'Like the military, the parks make fine pet projects for legislators with clout on Capitol Hill.'

NPS Director Robert Stanton released a statement announcing his commitment to a NAPA study that recommended cutting DSC staff by half, contracting out more design work, and giving park superintendents more responsibility for construction projects. He stated that the study's recommendations "point the way for us to trim excessive costs." It may not yet have been clear how the staff reduction would be accomplished, but doing so was unavoidable if the office was to remain open.

The negative press coverage was relentless and played extremely well in an environment when the public was already distrustful of the government. Of course, the design and construction debacles that nearly sank the Denver Service Center could not be limited to the organization. The fallout stuck to the entire National Park Service as well. This was even more problematic because, while Congress could distinguish between the National Park Service and the national parks, the public often could not.

Thus, the urgency to rectify the public relations black eye overrode any concerns about the long-term impacts of deep cuts at the DSC. On November 4, 1997, John Cook, the Intermountain Regional Director, issued a memo to "All Intermountain Employees" with the subject line "Image and Credibility." His message exhorted NPS employees to do something to stem the flood tide of attacks on the agency's integrity and credibility.

> ***As most everyone knows, the National Park Service has recently been subjected to some severe criticism over our high cost of construction. Some of the articles challenge our very ability to perform our serious stewardship responsibilities for our National heritage.***
>
> ***We must now repair the damage – not with excuses, accusations, finger pointing, etc., but with POSITIVE, HONEST, ACTION!***
>
> ***I challenge each and every employee in the Intermountain Region to join with us and restore our Service credibility and image.***
>
> ***It will take us all but working TOGETHER we can do it.***
>
> ***Thank you very much, John E. Cook***[39]

39. Memorandum, "Straight Talk 97-2." (This appears immediately below the date and is the official file name for the memo.) Intermountain Regional Director John E. Cook to all Intermountain employees, November 4, 1997. IMR Deputy Director Rick Frost files.

In an attempt to describe a strategy that would help the agency get out from under the shadows, one NPS professional drafted an informal, unsigned memo during this period titled "Some thoughts on the DSC mess."

> ***... our message isn't getting through thoroughly, and ... the context for these stories has been lacking. Some of the suggestions put forward [have] included 'offer ourselves for questioning', 'present our side more thoroughly and on our own terms', which ultimately would 'give us the opportunity to provide more context and detail.' ...we might also further develop our message, including the idea that parks ARE special places, and cheap facilities that might belong in a state or BLM facility may NOT belong at a Glacier or a Grand Canyon, if for no other reason than the difficulty of building in pristine areas and the high level of visitation.***

It is entirely too easy to second-guess and criticize the observations of well-intentioned people tasked with finding a way to manage all that was threatening to consume the Denver Service Center. But the employees did not realize that the issue had long ceased being an administrative problem. It had morphed into a substantial political problem, and to limit the damage there had to be a demonstration of corrective action.

Under DSC Director Charlie Clapper and Vice President Gore's reinvention program, the service center was already attempting to address the cost and project management issues and was making good progress when the Delaware Water Gap project hit Congress and the press. "One of the beliefs that DSC had," Clapper recalled, "was that only people in-house could really design a park service facility, could really design a visitor center, restore a historic structure, despite being a thousand miles away and having never worked in a park." That is, DSC employees genuinely believed they could accomplish Park Service responsibilities better than a local architectural/engineering firm. Still, Clapper said, "One of the things I was struck by was that if DSC employees were allowed to participate and afforded the opportunity to help shape the new approaches and strategies that would shape the organization in the future." Indeed, a number of DSC employees, both supervisory and nonsupervisory personnel, were at the time engaged in the development of the response to the NAPA report and the reorganization plan for the Denver Service Center.

Early in 1998, a group of employees sought the assistance of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), a labor union affiliated with the AFL-CIO. The creation of a labor union at the Denver Service Center would reflect a trend that had shaped federal employment to some degree over the previous four decades,[40] but it may also have been a significant jolt to the National Park Service, with its roots in a military tradition of a strong chain of command and commitment to an organizational mission. Nonetheless, it was the employees' right to organize, and with the assistance of representatives and organizers from AFGE's District 11 and organizers in Washington, the union was established in 1998 and a collective bargaining agreement signed with DSC management and the NPS directorate. There was, after all, a strong sense among many employees that the Denver Service Center was marked for closure. Of course, many of these employees expressed their confidence in the Denver Service Center's viability and indeed its future. The union wanted to be part of building that future.

While for a time it appeared increasingly likely that the entire Denver Service Center would follow in their wake, the NAPA report may have saved the organization from being eliminated from the NPS organizational chart. Former Design and Construction Division Chief Randy Copeland believes that the NAPA report was a genuinely good thing: "It gave the NPS discipline… better accountability, less arbitrary decisions, less favoritism," he said.

Former DSC Director Charlie Clapper concurred with this assessment. Regarding the NAPA team's focus on the Denver Service Center, he recalled that,

> ***They took a real look at it…. [They were] excellent people and they took it very, very seriously. They had knowledge of what it meant to be a professional organization. They asked the right questions. They listened. Had we had anyone else we might not have survived….***

40. Federal employees were barred from forming labor unions until 1962 when President John F. Kennedy signed Executive Order 10988 granting them the rights to organize and bargain collectively. This right was confirmed in legislation with the passage of the 1978 Federal Labor Relations Act supported and passed by President Jimmy Carter. With the gradual decline of labor in the private sector since the early 1980s, public-sector unions at the federal, state, and local levels have increasingly been the driving force in organized labor.

From 1998 to 2002, the Denver Service Center published "annual performance plans" that effectively detailed what the organization proposed to do in the future. The performance plans appear to adhere very closely to the goals identified for the National Park Service and the Denver Service Center under the government reinvention process overseen in the Clinton Administration by Vice President Al Gore.

The strategic plan embedded within the 1998 performance plan identified a series of mission goals for the Denver Service Center that were to be implemented by the end of FY 2002. The goals were:

1. DSC products and services promote the NPS mission by preserving and protecting the natural and cultural resources, enhancing visitor experiences, and demonstrating leadership in sustainable park operations and facility design.
2. DSC products and services are delivered on time and within competitive and budgeted cost parameters established when approved by Congress.
3. DSC customers' stated expectations for quality in products and services are met or exceeded.
4. The Denver Service Center is effectively managed to support the NPS mission and servicewide priorities and meets requests for external assistance.

An existential struggle can unleash reservoirs of energy, creativity, and adaptability that years of complacency have allowed to go dormant. The grudging victories and the lessons learned in the challenging period at the Denver Service Center following the NAPA report would create success in the short term and ultimately lead to the establishment of a business model that proved to be the most sustainable in the organization's history.

CHAPTER 10

REALIGNING THE DENVER SERVICE CENTER

As a result of implementing the NAPA recommendations, a restructured Denver Service Center was established on June 20, 1999, with an authorized ceiling of 260 full-time equivalent positions. Under the new organizational structure, project management would be strengthened, and the amount of professional and technical services being contracted out would be increased substantially.

Director's Order No. 2, Park Planning,[41] along with a new general management planning model that delineated a more streamlined and cost-effective approach to plan production, would enable the Denver Service Center to produce more plans at lower cost with reduced staff. Some planning services that were being conducted in-house might also be contracted out. Indeed, what functions to outsource and what to perform in house is a perennial question for the National Park Service.

The mission statement and key strategic objectives for the restructured Denver Service Center reflected the new realities of its political environment:

> ***We are the National Park Service's centralized planning, design, and construction project management office providing environmentally responsible products jointly with private industry.***

For DSC Director Charles Clapper's July 2, 1999, speech on how the Denver Service Center would proceed following staff reductions, see appendix E.

41. The Directives System is the basic source from which NPS employees can obtain knowledge about the laws, regulations, and policies that govern our activities, and is the mechanism by which the Service complies with the Federal Records Act and Department of the Interior requirements that bureaus document and convey bureau policies, procedures, and programs; authority for the approval of policies and procedures; and review procedures to avoid issuing conflicting policies and procedures. (Director's Order No. 1, National Park Service Directives System, November 14, 2008)

To implement the mission of the restructured office, three strategic objectives were adopted to guide the direction of the service center. These were:

1. to transition the organization to subcontracting most design work and all management work to outside vendors,
2. to implement project management cost-control systems, and
3. to meet or reduce project cost parameters for planning, design, and construction.

That mission was further strengthened under the George W. Bush administration following the 2000 election. Numerous leaders in the new administration were from the private sector, and some observers felt that it was their overall intent to create a closer relationship between government and business.

The 2002 "Program Review" for the Denver Service Center included a section titled, "The President's Management Agenda." It asserted that the service center was working to respond to "The president's vision for government reform [which] is driven by three principles — government should be citizen centered, results oriented, and market based." The review committed the Denver Service Center to meeting those principles based on the president's five initiatives:

- strategic management of human capital
- competitive sourcing
- improve financial performance
- expand electronic government
- budget and performance integration

The administration resurrected the A-76 process in evaluating government functions in an effort to ensure that the government was not in competition with the private sector.

Although similar issues had been raised before in evaluating the Denver Service Center, this action presented a substantial challenge as most of the center's functions were services that could be found in the private sector. To further the complications, since the A-76 competitive sourcing study posed changes to working conditions, the union had standing to participate in the conduct of the study. Thus, DSC management agreed to place two union members with strong design and construction background on the study team. At least one manager from that period noted that the need to negotiate may have slowed the process just enough that the Denver Service Center had the time it needed to get back on its feet.[42]

42. Interview with Raymond Todd, current DSC director, 2017.

The A-76 competition was conducted over much of 2002 and into 2003. The service center prevailed in this competition, but that required a further adjustment in its business model. In 2003, the Denver Service Center initiated its realignment to the 260 FTE employees that National Academy of Public Administration had recommended, and the annual report for that year (the first since 1997) made clear that the organization had fundamentally reinvented itself:

> ***The change to business line divisions from the former geographically based interdisciplinary teams was necessary to eliminate the competition for resources, both human and financial. In this new organization each business line [has] had dedicated staff and budget to accomplish the program of the business line and does not have to compete against priorities in other program areas.***

The NAPA study allowed the Denver Service Center to conduct 10 percent of design work using in-house staff. The bulk of work was to be contracted out to the private sector, from predesign to post-construction. A substantial percentage of Planning Program work and occasional work in the Transportation Division was still done in-house, but the service center was now committed to functioning primarily as a project management and contracting office. The General Overview section of the 2003 annual report was effectively a new mission statement for the organization:

> ***The Denver Service Center, along with its consultants and partners in the private sector, share in the National Park Service's overall commitment to protect America's natural and cultural resources and provide for visitor enjoyment in an efficient and cost-effective manner.*** **(NPS 2003, p. 1)**

Under the section headed, "DSC Financial Status," the 2003 annual report addressed the diverse funding streams that were vital to the organization's function, both in terms of its internal operations and the service-based program areas:

> ***In addition to our appropriated base funding for the line-item construction program, the Denver Service Center receives funding to provide direct support from a number of sources including the general management planning program, the Federal Lands Highway Program, park repair/rehabilitation maintenance projects, fee-demonstration projects, and other refundable and reimbursable programs from the National Park Service and other federal entities.***

The figure accompanying this financial summary showed increases in expenditures across all DSC funding lines, especially in the Federal Lands Highway program.[43] The program's funding for FY 2003 increased by 300 percent over that for FY 2002. Overall, total DSC expenditures for 2003 increased by $12 million over the previous fiscal year.

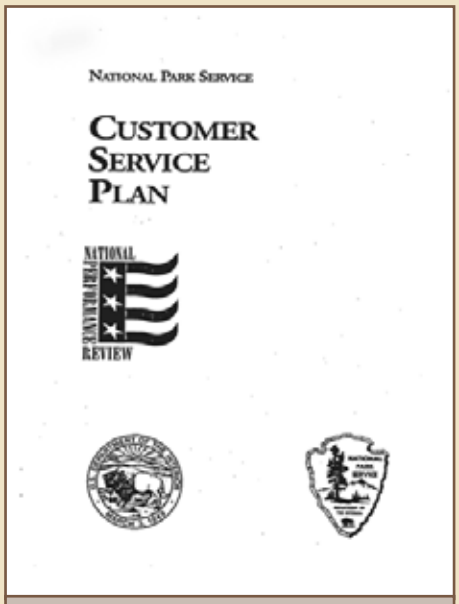
The annual report for 2003 references the organization's accomplishments in 2002, an indicator that the Denver Service Center had made measurable strides in its recovery during the years following the NAPA report and the resultant reduction in force:

> ***Building on its success from fiscal year 2002, the Denver Service Center's line-item construction (LIC) program awarded more contracts and at a higher dollar rate than at any time during the past five years. These accomplishments were made at the same time that DSC professional staff were undergoing both the performance work statement of an A-76 competitive sourcing study and the realignment of the DSC organization.*** **(NPS 2003, p. 12).**

43. Known more informally as the "FLHP," this program provides funding for construction and improvements to roads and highways in and through units of the national park system.

Marketing, customer service, cost-effective business practices, human and financial resources, diverse funding streams, value analysis, all terms that could at the time be found in common usage in the private sector, now became part of Park Service vernacular. With the completion of the A-76 study and the organizational realignment, the Denver Service Center became subject to market forces as well as governmental shifts between moderate and conservative administrations. The service center faced revenue fluctuations in the form of congressional budget appropriations and in departmental and bureau funding priorities. And it was now more dependent on organizational promotion and marketing to identify and secure new "customers" and sources of revenue. Among funding sources for design and construction activities, the report calls out work for the Fish and Wildlife Service among more mainstream NPS work. The search for projects and funding increasingly took the Denver Service Center outside the Park Service into other DOI bureaus and toward agencies outside the department.

The emphasis on "customers" underscored the service center's position in the operations of the National Park Service. The report emphasized that the organization needed to be cognizant of its bottom line or as close to that as could be found in the public sector.



The NPS Customer Service Plan was created in 1995 as a pledge to the American people that the National Park Service would strive to provide excellence in service and fulfill the NPS mission.

CHAPTER 11

ARRA, STORMS, AND PARTNERS— THE DENVER SERVICE CENTER STEPS UP TO HELP

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 produced an influx of funding to the National Park Service to decrease its maintenance backlog. The Denver Service Center increased its capacity and capabilities to rise to the challenge.

In 2009, having inherited an economy in deep recession, President Barack Obama focused first on domestic issues. His initiatives included an ambitious infrastructure improvement proposal addressing a pressing national need and taking a concrete policy action to help the stagnant economy. There was consensus among politicians and economists that the nation's infrastructure was in a dismal state of disrepair, from roads and bridges to port facilities, schools, and other public assets. This consensus resulted in the passage of a major piece of domestic legislation, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

An important piece of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 was designated for repairing and upgrading the infrastructure in the national park system. Certainly, a fix for the built environment of the national parks was long overdue. By 2009, the estimated maintenance backlog for the agency had topped $13 billion. The intended goal of the National Park Service's ARRA program was to obligate funds for a substantial rehabilitation of NPS facilities, from roads and trails to visitor centers, maintenance facilities, and administrative buildings.

In the four-year period between 2008 and 2011, the Design and Construction Division of the Denver Service Center managed 1,346 projects and obligated a staggering $5.4 billion in construction funds. The associated A/E design costs were $126 million (NPS 2011, pp. 14-15). The obligation rates for Design and Construction project funding averaged more than 80 percent for that four-year period. In FY 2011, the Design and Construction division managed 284 projects valued at more than $1.3 billion.

Samuel Q. Whittington, DSC director from 2007 to 2016, was the longest-serving director of the service center. By 2016, under his direction, the Denver Service Center had its largest workload to date in one year: $1 billion in construction and $1.75 billion in total project workload. This was partially a result of Whittington's rigorous pursuit of partnership projects and the practice of supporting project manager/client assignments that replicated wider business practices.

Sure that higher profile projects would help instill confidence in the service center, Whittington supported reopening the Statue of Liberty, pursued repair work at the Washington Monument and the National Mall Plan, all of which, he says, faced political challenges. In Whittington's view, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 helped the Denver Service Center to turn a corner regarding park and region confidence in the office to get the projects done.

Perhaps most significant, this era saw the completion of the largest dam removal project in the history of the United States and the second-largest ecosystem restoration project in the history of the National Park Service. The plan and projection for the Elwha River Restoration project at Olympic National Park in the state of Washington were that seven salmon species and more than seventy miles of river habitat would be restored.

The Denver Service Center had been working with the NPS Pacific West Regional office and Olympic National Park on the management of the Elwha River Restoration Program since 2007. The overall cost of the program totaled $325 million and included approximately fifty individual projects and agreements, including the construction of two nearby water treatment facilities, the protection of private homes from flooding, improved treatment for industrial water users, a new tribal fish hatchery, the removal of dams, the management of sediment displacement, revegetation, and fish restorations. It was exactly the type of project management challenge for which the Denver Service Center had evolved.

Overall, the Denver Service Center had one of its largest, most complex, programs that year. Careful management of budget and fiscal systems and processes enabled the Denver Service Center to achieve nearly 100 percent utilization of its funding from all sources while remaining within available funds. In FY 2011, DSC operational budgets totaled $44.8 million, excluding construction contract obligations. This included $19.5 million in base expenditures, $7.4 million for ARRA project management and contracting support, and 17.8 million in negotiated project funding from varying fund sources (NPS 2011, p. 44). Indeed, the Denver Service Center was completing "the largest three-year span of work in its history" even as it was completing its American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 projects.

The crown of the Statue of Liberty was reopened for a July 4, 2009, celebration after being closed following the 9/11 attacks in 2001. The reopening of the crown was a significant event and required life safety improvements to be completed on a tight deadline of less than 70 days. The Denver Service Center managed the contracting for all aspects of the project.

The Washington Monument was repaired as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The Denver Service Center's enormous success in completing the lion's share of the ARRA projects demonstrated its fundamental role as the go-to office for large-scale, systemwide programs. Optimism was high. From the FY 2011 Annual Report:

> ***We are proactively seeking involvement with partnership projects where our professional and technical expertise could benefit the park, project, and partners…. We look forward to working with parks and partners on projects in FY 2012 and beyond…. We will continue our commitment to customer service and will strive to remain flexible and proactive as we support the programs of the National Park Service.***

In October 2012, a late-season post-tropical cyclone that would become Hurricane Sandy when its maximum sustained winds reached 74 miles per hour, swept through the Caribbean and up the East Coast of the United States. After passing through Jamaica, Cuba, and the Bahamas, the storm gained strength again to become a Category 1 hurricane before turning north toward the US coast.

The press dubbed the massive storm "Superstorm Sandy" after it made landfall on the coasts of New Jersey and New York. Sandy inundated subway stations and tunnels as it drove record storm surges into the streets of New York City. Manhattan skyscrapers swayed in the near-hurricane force winds, and the surf in New York's Harbor was topped by a record 32.5-foot wave.

Sandy's track resulted in a worst-case scenario for storm surge for coastal regions from New Jersey north to Connecticut, including New York City and Long Island. Unfortunately, the storm surge occurred near the time of high tide along the Atlantic Coast, which contributed to record tide levels.

The superstorm inflicted substantial damage on national parks in the Northeast Region: the Statue of Liberty, Gateway National Recreation Area, Morristown National Historical Park, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, and other NPS units on the eastern seaboard, as well as other federally protected sites on the East Coast. The forest landscape of New Jersey's Morristown National Historic Park, a Revolutionary War-related site that protects the site of two encampments of the Continental Army, was profoundly altered by the hurricane as it swept inland. The storm blew down hundreds of trees and opened dozens of new clearings in the forest canopy. According to Robert Masson, the Morristown chief of resources, "There were ten gap clearings in the forest before the hurricane, and fifty-five after the storm passed."[44]

44. Interview with Robert Masson, Morristown NHP Chief of Resources, May 1, 2018.

Superstorm Sandy ravaged the Northeastern United States in October 2012. National parks, like the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, sustained damage from the storm. The Denver Service Center managed more than $200 million in storm recovery work in 2013.

By 2013, the Denver Service Center was managing more than sixty projects valued at more than $200 million in the region impacted by the storm. Immediate recovery efforts were made to reopen affected units to the public, and the Denver Service Center began long-term recovery efforts.

With Denver Service Center leadership and persistence, the Statue of Liberty was ready to open by Independence Day, only nine months after Sandy made landfall with devastating impacts and flooding on Liberty Island. Interior Secretary Sally Jewell spoke at the reopening ceremony: "Today, Lady Liberty… stands as a sign of the resilience of the region; an area so badly battered by Hurricane Sandy nine months ago, but that is on the rebound thanks to the sacrifices and dedication of so many people."

Service center personnel also contributed substantially to efforts to reopen the beaches, boat ramps, sports fields, and other public areas at Gateway National Recreation Area. DSC project managers and specialists focused on "rehabilitation efforts at the Sandy Hook unit, Miller Field, Fort Wadsworth, Great Kills Park, the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Floyd Bennett Field, Frank Charles Park, and Hamilton Beach."

Call to Action

In 2011, as the National Park Service began to consider its upcoming Centennial (in 2016), the agency had issued a "Call to Action" that outlined thirty-nine action items intended to guide the agency in preparing for its "next 100 years of stewardship and engagement."

In 2014, DSC management and staff focused their efforts on a number of those action items, including the following.

Call to Action #1: Fill in the Blanks. This item called for the Park Service to submit a comprehensive national park system plan to Congress that would delineate the ecological regions, cultural themes, and stories of diverse communities that were not then protected. This would be the first system plan since 1972.

The Denver Service Center led the effort to create a national park system plan for Call to Action #1. The DSC Planning Division conducted an NPS-wide internal scoping effort, including more than 700 NPS employees from parks, regions, and programs at open houses, and another 5,000 internal comments were received in the Planning, Environment and Public Comment process (PEPC). The Denver Service Center hosted and facilitated two in-person work sessions for the steering committee. Denver Service Center also drafted the final plan.

***A Call to Action* was released ahead of the National Park Service Centennial in 2016.**

Call to Action #24: Invest Wisely. The Denver Service Center considered itself a leader in accessibility in an effort to connect all people to parks. The service center had created and, at regional request, was implementing accessibility self-evaluation and transition plans. These plans were meant to provide a practical approach to removing accessibility barriers by identifying and prioritizing key visitor experiences and investing wisely in those areas.

Call to Action #32: Play It Safe. The Denver Service Center was working to improve its construction management safety processes. This new state-of-the-art safety program followed the principles of NPS Operational Leadership.

Call to Action #34: Team Buy-in. As the largest contracting office in the National Park Service, the Denver Service Center would strive to improve the government standard for teamwork between contracting and its customers by using an interdisciplinary team approach for all contracting actions.

Clearly, the Denver Service Center had come a long way in its nearly fifteen-year self-reinvention and had its focus soundly on the future. The following is from the introduction to the 2014 annual report:

> ***The Service Center is ready to assist with any Centennial-related construction activities, including NPS Centennial Challenge, climate change resiliency projects, deferred maintenance, transportation, and other signature projects or programs. Focusing on the future of the National Park Service and the public we serve through the Centennial Initiative honors the success of our past as we continue to protect and preserve for future generations.*** **(NPS 2014, p. 1)**

CHAPTER 12

A SUDDEN CHANGE IN THE NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

In 2011, leaders of six federal agencies—the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, the US Forest Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the US Army Corps of Engineers—chartered the Interagency Visitor Use Management (VUM) Council "to enhance best practices, interagency consistency, cost-effectiveness, and the defensibility of decisions" related to visitor use in the nation's lands and waters.

This presaged a period of rapid growth in the number of visitors to the national parks. Over the five or so years that preceded the NPS centennial, some parks saw increases as high as 60 percent, and in the centennial year of 2016, more than 330 million people visited the parks.

In May 2017, the National Leadership Council determined that timely, technical support and guidance for parks would continue to be a high priority regarding park planning, visitor use management, commercial services planning, and congestion management. A national VUM working group was formed for one year to better integrate relevant efforts across parks, regions, directorates, and programs. DSC Director Ray Todd was named to lead the Working Group, which developed the NPS VUM landing page and a VUM toolkit for the national parks. DSC staff participated on the Working Group as well.

Visitor numbers were still running high in 2019 when 327 million people entered the national parks—9 million more than in 2018. This made visitor use management one of the highest priority planning needs for the National Park Service. In July of that year, the council released its "Framework" for agency planning and decision making. The Framework was meant to address the requirements of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978, which had mandated that the National Park Service complete general management plans that include "identification and implementation commitments for visitor capacities" for all areas of the system. But more immediately, the Framework was intended to enhance consistency in VUM for managed lands and waters across the six agencies of the council.

The Framework established four major elements for analyzing and managing visitor use:

1. "Build the foundation." Understand why a project is needed and use that understanding to develop the project approach.
2. "Define VUM direction." Describe the conditions to be achieved or maintained and how conditions will be tracked.
3. "Identify management strategies." Identify strategies to manage visitor use to achieve or maintain desired conditions.
4. "Implement, monitor, evaluate, and adjust." Implement management strategies and actions and adjust based on monitoring and evaluation.

The Denver Service Center took this to heart and noted in the DSC Annual Report for 2017 that the mission of the council and the Framework was "to increase awareness of and commitment to proactive, professional, and science-based visitor use management on federally managed lands and waters." This was sure to have a significant effect on the planning and management functions of the Denver Service Center.

Other pressures were soon to be applied, as well. At the end of August 2017 the secretary of the interior issued a memo requiring the Park Service to complete environmental impact statements (EISs) that were not to exceed 150 pages for more standard planning efforts or 300 pages for unusually complex projects.[45] To ensure timely completion of environmental impact statements (and consistent with the timelines established for major infrastructure projects in Executive Order 13807[46]) each final environmental impact statement was to be completed within one year from the issuance of the notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement. The secretary's memo imposed other requirements as well, including:

- the initial timeline be developed by the lead bureau before issuing the notice of intent;
- an updated timeline be prepared as needed during the development of the environmental impact statement;
- timelines exceeding the target by more than three months had to be approved by the appropriate assistant secretary; and
- if the bureaus served as co-leads, each responsible assistant secretary had to approve any deviations from the polices.

45. Memorandum from the Secretary of the Interior. Order 3355, "Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure Projects." August 31, 2017.

46. This executive order signed by President Donald J. Trump, like the secretary's order, was officially titled, "Presidential Executive Order on Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure."

The memo went on to establish targets for page and time limitations in the preparation of environmental assessments (EAs),[47] and established a series of guidelines to assist DOI bureaus in streamlining the review of environmental impact statements and environmental assessments.

At the same time, like his predecessors, President Donald J. Trump had also campaigned on a need to improve the nation's infrastructure. While the focus was to be on roads, bridges, rail, and communications, the administration also intended to address deficiencies in federal facilities, including the National Park Service. The NPS maintenance backlog had been an issue since the Reagan administration and for far longer if one includes the Mission 66 initiative. The Denver Service Center by necessity would be at the center of any efforts to plan and implement a large-scale effort to address the bureau's maintenance priorities.

See Appendix F: 2017 David Bernhardt Memorandum Regarding Order No. 3355

The 2017 annual report made the first public mention of the maintenance backlog and the need for the Denver Service Center to focus on rehabilitating and preserving historic sites and structures "to tell the story of our country, enabling visitors to enjoy their national parks by enhancing access and recreational opportunities." The report cites as an example a $3.2 million project at Big Bend National Park to replace the Panther Junction sewage treatment plant, providing a safe and functioning facility for more than 380,000 visitors each year. That year, the Denver Service Center was also supporting Mammoth Cave National Park with a $9.6 million investment to reconstruct 15.5 miles of unstable trails along the Grand Avenue Tour.

The National Park Service continues to use the NAPA guidelines in its design and construction program and has adopted them for other programs, including hurricane recovery programs. In 2019, the National Park Service asked the National Academy of Public Administration to review its process again to ensure that after the first NAPA review twenty years earlier, the agency was applying consistent, up-to-date, best practices for its design and construction program. The new study addressed the following:

- design and construction costs
- design and construction process and contracting methods
- use of best management practices

47. "Within 30 days, each bureau head shall provide to the Deputy Secretary through its supervising Assistant Secretary a proposal for target page limitations and time deadlines for the preparation of environmental assessments. In developing its proposal, each bureau should consider guidance from CEQ on the page length of environmental assessments." Memorandum from the Secretary of the Interior. Order 3355, p.2.

Major Construction Program Management Costs

The study was completed in June 2020; this second NAPA report, "*Assessment and Analysis of the NPS Construction Program*," was released within the National Park Service on September 2, 2020, providing ten findings and thirteen recommendations.

In April 2021, the NPS website would address the issue of deferred maintenance, noting that at that time more than $1.92 billion worth of repairs or maintenance on roads, buildings, utility systems, and other facilities had been postponed for more than one year because of budget constraints. On August 4, 2020, President Donald Trump signed the Great American Outdoor Act, bipartisan legislation that expands equitable and accessible recreational opportunities and addresses long-overdue infrastructure improvements and modernization needs on public lands managed by the National Park Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Indian Education schools. For the National Park Service, this legislation provides an opportunity to reduce the maintenance backlog, protect critical resources, expand recreational opportunities, and focus on long-term sustainable operations.

This landmark conservation legislation combined two major initiatives: providing permanent funding for the existing Land and Water Conservation Fund and establishing the National Parks and Public Lands Legacy Restoration Fund (LRF). The National Park Service was designated to receive 70 percent of the Legacy Restoration Fund each year, and the Denver Service Center was assigned as the main project-execution office for projects funded through the Legacy Restoration Fund.

On the day the Great American Outdoor Act was signed, the office of David L. Bernhardt, then secretary of the interior, released a statement announcing that to commemorate the signing, August 4 would be designated "Great American Outdoors Day," a fee-free day each year at all lands managed by the Interior Department. One year later, on June 1, 2021, President Joe Biden declared June to be Great American Outdoors Month and promised to speed up implementation of the Act and its mandate to invest in conservation projects on public lands across the country.

But most significant here, the Great American Outdoor Act was projected to direct as much as $1.9 billion a year for five years to provide needed maintenance for critical facilities and infrastructure in our national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, recreation areas, and American Indian Schools.[48] This constitutes the largest infrastructure program since Mission 66. The Denver Service Center will be the primary project execution office for the program.

48. "S.3422 Great American Outdoors Act," Congress, Accessed March 25, 2020, https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/3422

In 2020, the Denver Service Center was managing 193 ongoing hurricane recovery projects, like this one at Everglades National Park. The half-mile boardwalk trail at West Lake was damaged by Hurricane Irma in 2017.

Funding challenges for hurricane and natural disaster recovery projects and restoration of the Everglades ecosystem loomed big in the DSC construction program in 2020. Indeed, the Design and Construction Division managed 193 park-funded, partnership, and ongoing hurricane recovery projects that year because of damage done to the parks by hurricanes Sandy, Harvey, Irma, and Maria, and the 2018 disaster program projects. The Transportation Division contributed significantly to disaster recovery programs, including managing ERFO-funded projects, both DSC-delivered and in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration. The Transportation Division also managed thirty-two contracts for restoration of disturbed lands, wetland mitigation, and exotic species controls. The projects included seed collection of forty native plant species to be used to revegetate and restore disturbed park lands in fourteen states and four NPS regions.

In addition, in 2020 the Denver Service Center awarded a $30.8 million construction contract to repair the historic Ellis Island seawall at the Statue of Liberty National Monument, a significant engineering upgrade addressing projected changes in tide levels and extreme weather conditions.

On December 4, 2020, the Department of the Interior held a formal reopening of the Arlington Memorial Bridge in Washington, DC, following a $227 million rehabilitation and improvement project begun in the summer of 2018. As one of the largest transportation projects in NPS history, the rehabilitation of this bridge gave new life to the ceremonial entrance to the US Capitol while respecting its character, history, and national significance.

The CityArchRiver project is a $380 million partnership project to renovate the arch grounds, facilities, and exhibits at Gateway Arch National Park in St. Louis, Missouri (formerly Jefferson National Expansion Memorial). It is the largest public-private partnership in the history of the National Park Service. Eleven of thirteen major projects on NPS property had been completed by 2021, including the Museum and Visitor Center, the South Park Grounds, the North Park Grounds, the North Gateway project, Luther Ely Smith Square, the Ranger Station, and the Overlook Stair project. (The Old Courthouse renovation will be complete by mid-2022.)

And 2020 saw the completion of the Tower of Voices, the 93-foot-tall concrete memorial that serves as both a visual and an audible reminder of the heroism of the forty passengers and crew members of United Flight 93 in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. In early September of 2020, the eight original tower chimes—which were not operating in accordance with design expectations—were removed, and forty new chimes manufactured to the highest quality were placed in the tower, integrating them to the mechanical design to optimize performance and affect.

Then came the pandemic year of 2020 and the whole world turned upside down. In addition to the maintenance backlog, the Denver Service Center had a full plate of planning, transportation and design and construction projects—these projects were usually supported by lots of travel to the park sites to support park and contractor staff at those locations. But by necessity, the COVID-19 pandemic changed the way the Denver Service Center would operate.

Because of significant innovations in technology that had been supported by the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service and the Denver Service Center—namely Project Server, O365 and Microsoft Teams—and the fact that the Denver Service Center had for years matured a central information structure for sharing project information and tracking projects, the Denver Service Center's project accomplishments did not suffer. Employees may have struggled with work life, isolation, and other issues, but they were able to manage projects and communicate with park staff to keep the projects going. The Denver Service Center had used virtual technologies for more than twenty years in an effort to save travel funding; now those technologies were widely and instantly available for regional and park work-session meetings enabling staff to keep safe and at home.

During the pandemic's first fifteen months, the Planning Division hosted ninety virtual public and stakeholder meetings across fifteen park planning efforts and congressionally authorized special resource studies. These included town-hall style public meetings, focus group calls, and meetings with tribal representatives, local and state governments, recreational groups, and organizations serving minority disability and LGBTQ+ communities.

The Park Service, Park Planning, Facilities and Lands, and DSC management led and participated in wellness sessions (sometimes weekly) and held communication sessions to answer employee questions about the COVID-19 pandemic, vaccines, workplace safety, project travel, and more. Management and the American Federation of Government Employees met to determine safe approaches to office reorganization for a safe return to the physical workspace.

Finally, according to the 2020 Annual Report, the Denver Service Center is leading the strategic planning process for the upcoming 250th anniversary of the founding of the nation (2026).

In November 2021, the Denver Service Center celebrated 50 years of service, a significant milestone and a testament to the center's flexibility and resiliency over time.

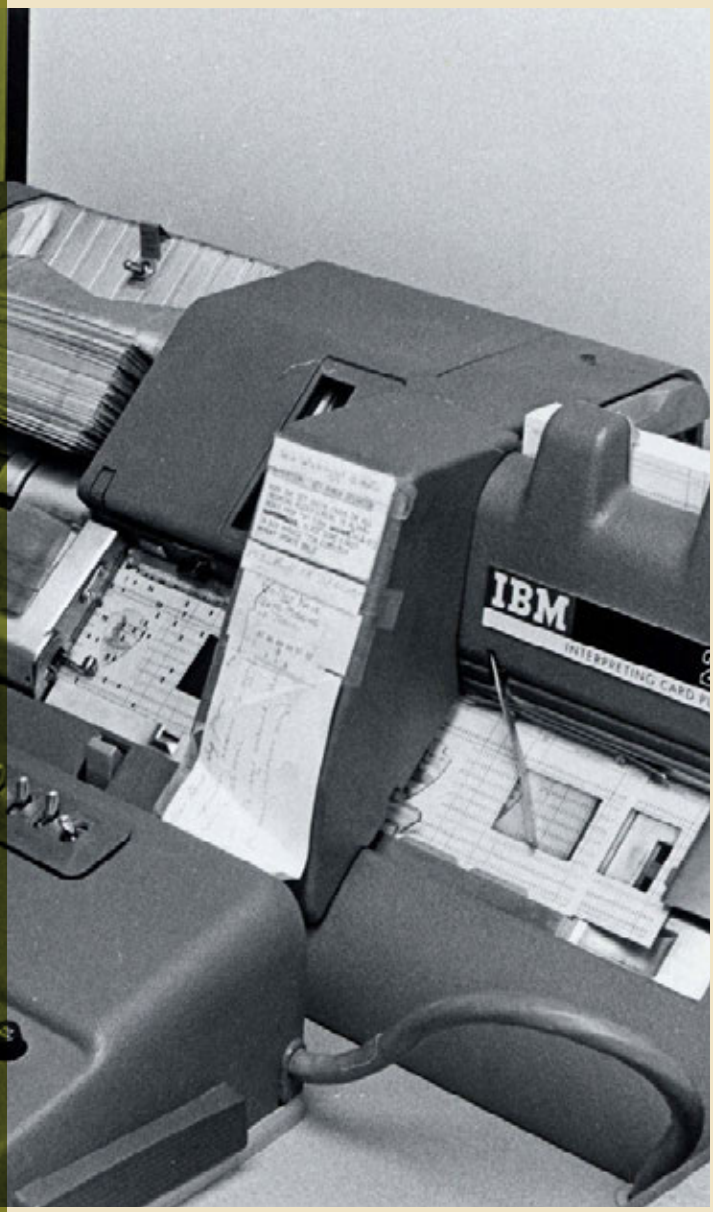
In 2021, the Denver Service Center celebrates fifty years of contributions to the mission of the National Park Service. Established in 1971, the Denver Service Center has moved locations, adapted to the priorities of ten administrations, and developed its processes into the flexible, resilient organization it is today.

The Denver Service Center continues to collaborate with parks and partners to accomplish remarkable work at iconic, historic places across the country. The management and staff remain committed to climate resiliency through leadership and construction support—especially so following the effects of the natural disasters that have affected the nation's parks.

The Denver Service Center plans to expand its historic preservation capabilities and to restore sites that celebrate diversity and inclusion, such as the Martin Luther King Jr. birth home in Georgia and the Charles Young House at Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers National Monument in Ohio.

The National Park Service Organic Act of 1916 directed the National Park Service to "conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." The Denver Service Center has contributed to this mission for the past fifty years and looks forward to continuing to provide sustainable projects across the national park system in the future.

The following sections provide an overview for each of the divisions that are a part of the Denver Service Center.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PART TWO:
PROGRAM OVERVIEWS

DENVER SERVICE CENTER PROGRAM OVERVIEWS

The Planning Division

Even beyond the relocation to a centralized service center in Denver, the 1970s were a transitional time for the National Park Service. The ambitious design and construction effort for the semicentennial of the National Park Service, which was known as Mission 66, had been the largest developmental initiative in the history of the bureau. And Mission 66 had been succeeded by a large-scale program to commemorate the nation's Bicentennial. The Denver Service Center was created midway through those preparations and had to come to speed quickly.

Fortunately, according to administrative specialist Kathy Ziegenfus, the result was "a lot of growth in DSC . . . lots of pride, esprit du corps, excitement." The newly arrived Denver Service Center was, she said, "a cadre of talented people."

A wave of landmark environmental legislation in the 1960s and early 1970s had provided much of the impetus behind a greater focus on research, analysis, and documentation of park conditions, risks to park resources, and anticipated consequences of proposed federal actions. The Endangered Species Act, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and others compelled the federal government to analyze the implications of their proposed actions and identify the ways in which they would mitigate those implications wherever possible.

By 1980, the Denver Service Center had produced more than 1,680 reports related to the planning and design process. And during the period between FY 1973 and the end of FY 1981, more than five hundred of these documents were related to general management plans.

Beyond this, the FY 1983 planning, design, and construction program was the largest program since the late 1970s. Over that same period, visitation to the parks had steadily grown. More and more cultural and urban sites had also been introduced to the system, and many of those sites included historic structures that required substantial rehabilitation to protect them and make them visitor ready. By 1986, planning highlights related to NPS Director William Penn Mott's twelve-point plan included plans that were instrumental in creating Great Basin National Park and intergovernmental planning projects in East St. Louis, Chicago, and southwestern Pennsylvania.

In 1988, a comprehensive management plan was completed for Steamtown National Historic Site that blended resource preservation and visitor use needs. The plan included opportunities for hands-on experiences (including rigging a steam-era train). According to the 1988 report, the greatest increases in planning activity were in cultural resource documents and wilderness environmental impact statements. The Planning Division produced thirteen of the latter that year when there had been none in 1987.

In 1991, the DSC Planning Program recorded a substantial shift in the diversity of project types. The program worked on a total of 186 planning-related projects in FY 1991 in eleven different categories focusing on both natural and cultural resources. These projects ranged from general management plans, to development concept plans, to river and trails studies, to historic resource studies, to transportation plans. The projects were spread fairly evenly across the three geographic teams that preceded the business-line organization structure.

In 1992, the Denver Service Center completed the Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum management plan for America's Industrial Heritage Project through partnerships among the National Park Service, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Preservation Commission, and the private museum. Other major planning projects that year included a Visitor Use Management Workshop for the Grand Canyon General Management Plan, which brought together an eclectic combination of experts involved in workshops that included the Walt Disney Company, the National Parks and Conservation Association, Penn State University, Grand Canyon National Park Lodges, the Smithsonian Institution, Texas A&M University, the University of Vermont, the National Aquarium of Baltimore, representatives of several national park areas, and many other experts.

Yosemite's master plan team from left to right (top row): Dr. Robert Schiller, biologist; Ann Bowman, public involvement and media relations; and John Reynolds, team captain. Bottom row: Donald Fox, park landscape architect; Betty Janes, sociologist; and Thomas Fake, landscape architect. Not pictured are Yosemite Superintendent Leslie Arnberger and Graphics Specialist Marilyn Treabess.

In June 1998, the National Park Service and the Planning Leadership Group (PLG) introduced a new planning model for the agency: "A Standardized Approach to Scoping and Scheduling GMPs." This new model was intended in part to address the backlog in the general management planning program and the backlog in park general management planning, consistent with goals that had been outlined in the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993. The developers of the new planning model anticipated that this approach for project scheduling and cost estimating would pay appreciable dividends in three ways:

- Individual project teams would be able to draw on experience gained through multiple projects.
- Standardization would enable the Denver Service Center to improve the coordination of multiple projects, increasing staff productivity and efficiency.
- The WASO Division of Park Planning and Special Studies would be able to improve coordination of funding for multiple projects servicewide.

By 2004, the American Planning Association (APA) (Federal Planning Division) cited the Denver Service Center with its 2004 Award for Outstanding Collaborative Planning Project for the Cane River National Heritage Area Management Plan. That was the third APA award the Denver Service Center had received over the previous four years. And the Intermountain Region alone requested estimates for seventeen potential planning starts.

By 2012, another notable development was the evolution of a new planning framework for the agency. The DSC Planning Division, as part of the Planning Leadership Group, supported development of the new framework (which was initiated in 2011) along with the subsequent update to agency policy and revisions to planning guidance. The NPS Planning Program transitioned from preparing traditional stand-alone general management plans to a more responsive and flexible planning framework to meet park planning needs while also fulfilling legal and policy requirements. The new framework is focused on creating and leveraging a park planning portfolio (an assemblage of different planning products) as the primary means to guide park management and decision making, as well as satisfy law and policy.

A critical component of the new planning framework is a stand-alone "foundation document," which is defined by NPS policies as the first leg in the overall general management planning process. Foundation documents include: the park's purpose and significance statements; interpretive themes; a comprehensive inventory of the park's "fundamental resources" as well as other important natural and cultural resources whose protection and management were part of the park's mission; the park's enabling legislation, special mandates, and administrative commitments; related federal laws, regulations, and executive orders; an assessment of the park's planning and data needs; and a comprehensive park atlas.

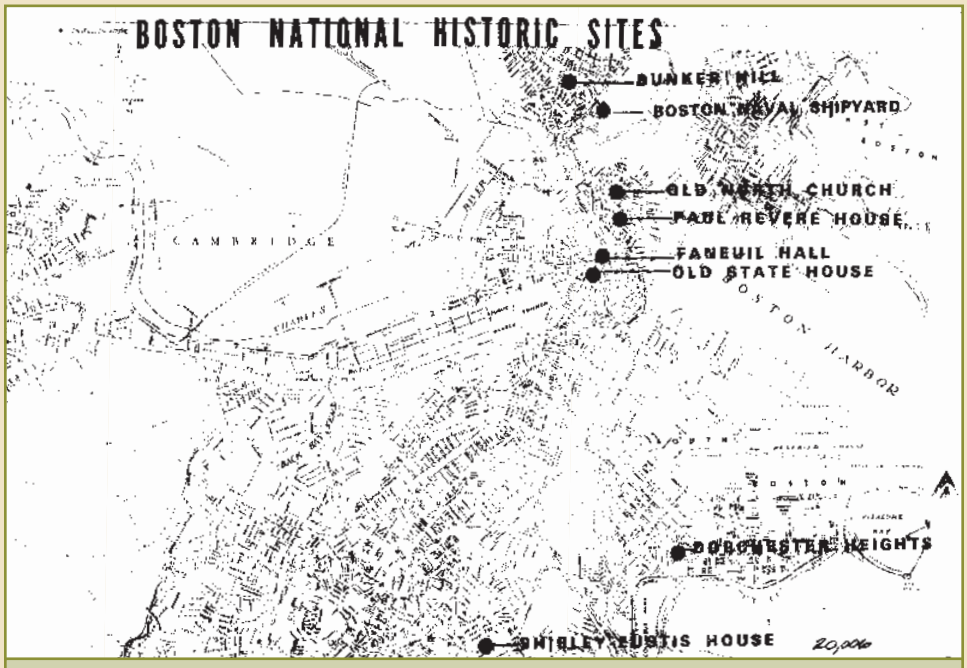
The Denver Service Center under the directorship of Samuel Whittington had the leading role in coordinating and facilitating production of foundation documents for every national park unit by the NPS Centennial. This included everything from compiling data to leading workshops to editing and publication of draft and final documents.

The DSC Planning Division has been instrumental in providing leadership and guidance for new types of planning products as part of this new framework and more diverse planning portfolio. This includes supporting national working groups and guidance development for foundation documents, self-evaluation and transition plans, resource stewardship strategies, visitor use management plans, strategic facility investment plans, strategic plans, and special resource studies, among others. More recently, the Planning Division has supported the development of guidance on stand-alone general management plans as now envisioned under the new planning framework. The division has also had the opportunity to share NPS planning processes with other countries such as Greenland, Palau, Canada, and China, along with extensive collaborations in Brazil to facilitate updates to their planning framework for protected areas.

The DSC Planning Division continues to be in high demand for servicewide planning expertise for parks, regions, and program offices across the national park system. Year after year, the division manages more than 200 planning projects across a diverse portfolio of products—many of which are high priorities for the agency and of national significance, including the NPS System Plan, the National Museum of the American Latino Report to Congress, the Buffalo Soldiers Study, the NPS Campground Modernization Strategy, and the NPS Strategic Framework for the nation's Semiquincentennial Commemoration.

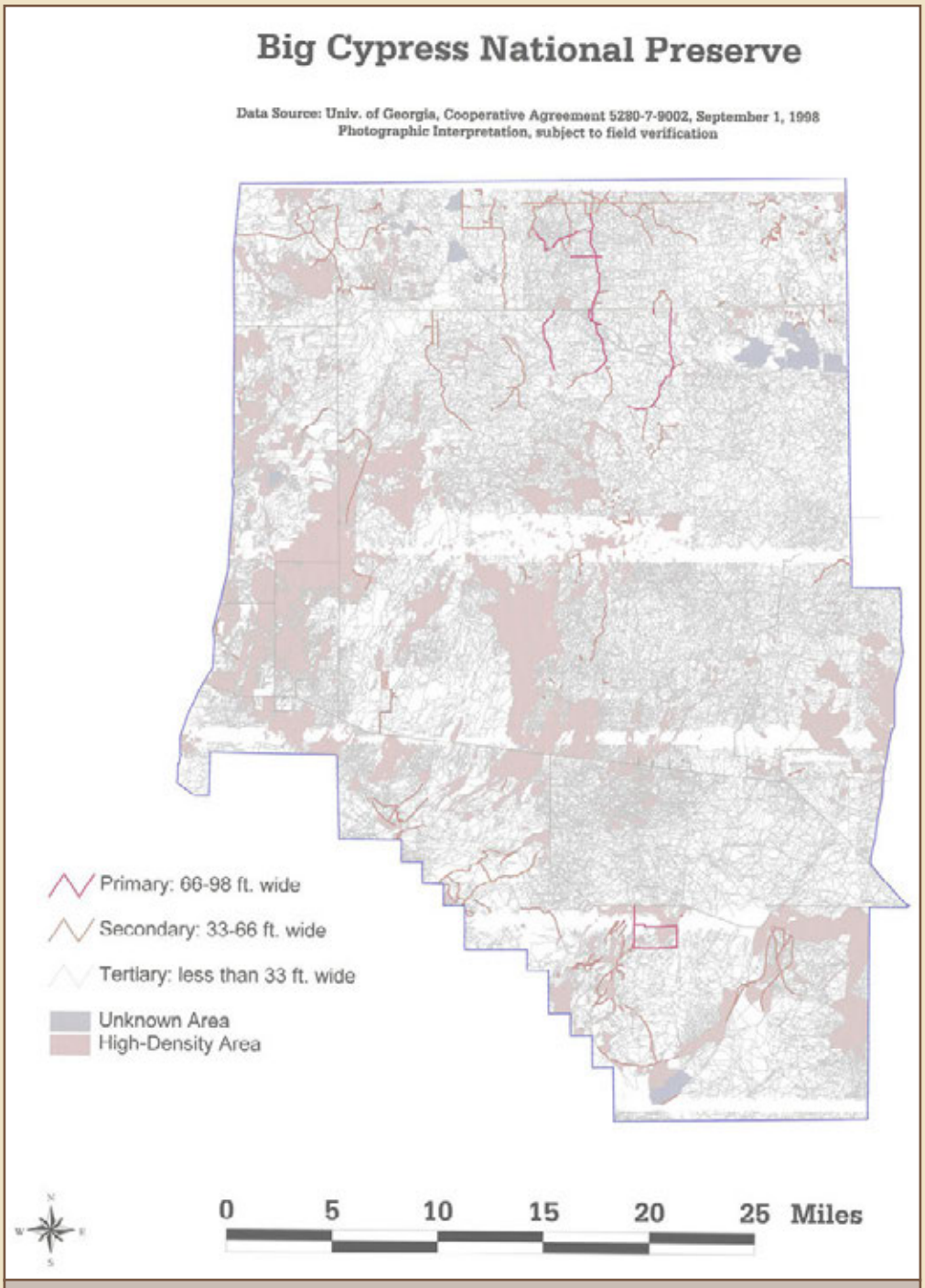
Chris Church, Chief, Planning Division
Kerri Cahill, Branch Chief, Planning Division
Dr. Tom Thomas, Project Manager, Planning Division (retired)

Planning Division Highlights

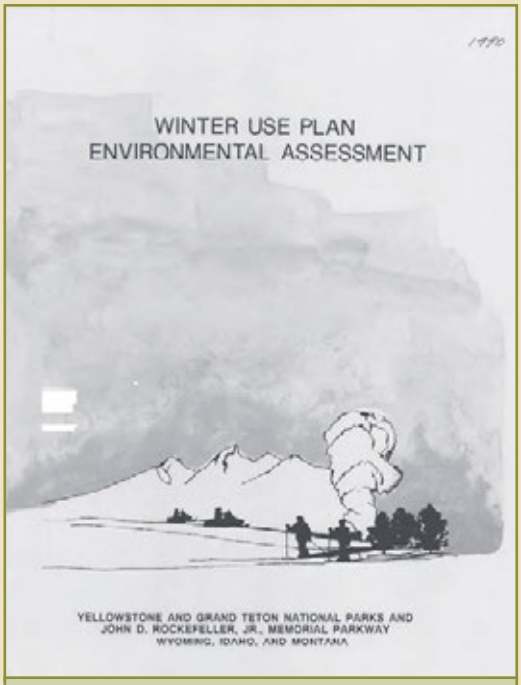


In the 1970s, the Denver Service Center embarked on a master planning process for Boston National Historical Park. This plan set the foundation for the interpretation of historic events in Boston when the park was established October 1, 1974.

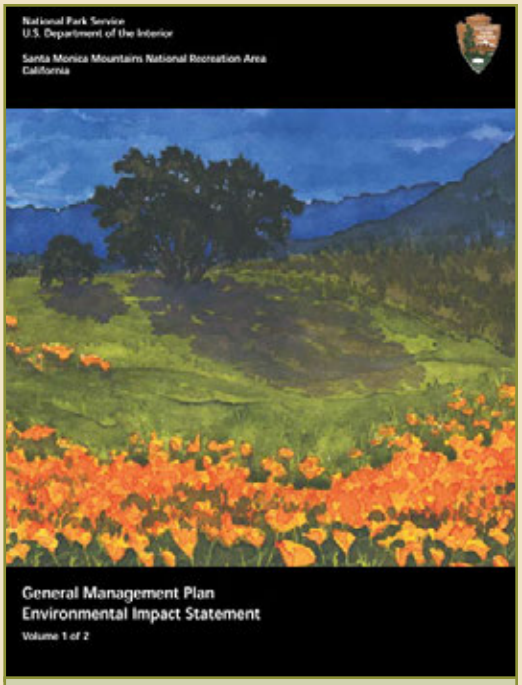
The Denver Service Center was involved with master planning at Guadalupe Mountains National Park when it was established September 30, 1972. This historic photo features the Wallace Pratt Cabin, which was built between 1931 and 1932.



One of the first projects in the national park system to integrate Geographic Information Systems (GIS) into its planning efforts was Big Cypress National Preserve in the 1990s. The planning team identified and mapped significant vegetation types, habitat for threatened or endangered species, and cultural resources. Once this information was digitized and maps were created, the team established planning units and management zones, identified planning objectives, and assessed impacts, including those from oil and gas operations.



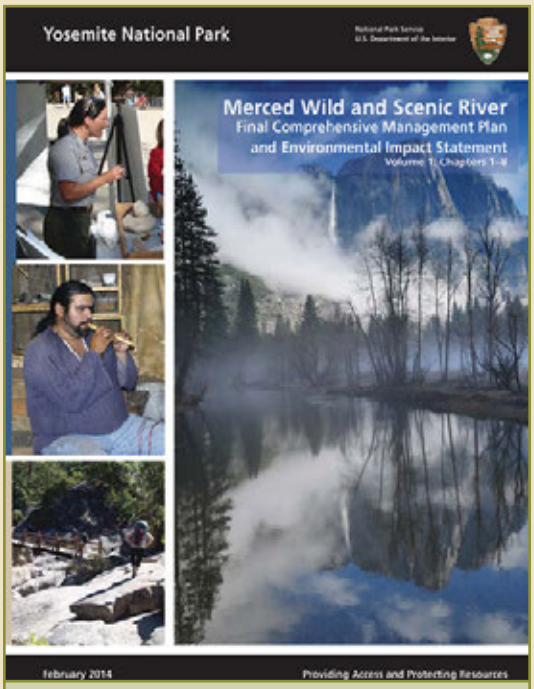
The *Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks and John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway Winter Use Environmental Assessment* was one of the first comprehensive plans for multiple parks within the national park system. The plan established a visitor use management process to be implemented if winter use exceeded the projected forecasts. The plan was released in 1990.



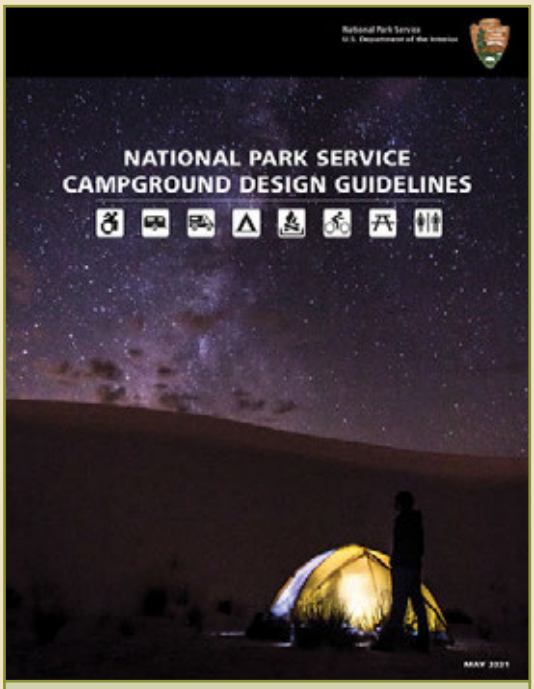
The Denver Service Center completed an updated general management plan for Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area in 2002.

In 2010, the Denver Service Center completed the National Mall Plan, a comprehensive plan to guide decision making and rehabilitation of the National Mall.

The Denver Service Center completed a general management plan for Aztec Ruins National Monument in 1989. The plan guided the park's development and management decisions until a new plan was completed in 2010.



The Denver Service Center developed its first wild and scenic river plan focusing on the Merced Wild and Scenic River at Yosemite National Park. The final plan, released in February 2014, protects the Merced River's free-flowing condition and the unique values that have made the celebrated river worthy of special protection under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and currently functions as its guiding document.



The NPS Campground Design Guidelines document is the first of its kind within the national park system. The document was finalized in May 2021 and guides future campground designs to consider current and future visitor needs, with a focus on diversity and inclusion of user groups and recreation opportunities through universal design principles and goals.

The Transportation Division

A decade following Woodrow Wilson's signing of the Organic Act creating the National Park Service, an agreement was signed with the eight-year-old Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) "Relating to the survey, construction, and improvement of roads and trails in the national parks and national monuments."[49] Thus began a relationship between the National Park Service and what is now the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that has continued to this day. That agreement, subsequent agreements, and practice have stressed collaboration and cooperation among the agencies and use of standards in road design and construction. NPS landscape "Engineers" (i.e., landscape architects) would be assigned to work with BPR engineers, and funding would come through the NPS budget.

A 1944 agreement included more specific language regarding responsibilities for each agency, including a requirement that all park master plans contain a park road system plan. A "Surveys and Plans" section of the agreement included descriptions of the responsibilities of both agencies:

> ***The size of drainage structures, the elevation of grade lines across water courses, the depth of surfacing, the character and size of foundations, structural design of bridges, and all phases of the proposed improvement which affect the integrity of the proposed construction are features for which the Administration (PRA) shall be primarily responsible.***

In addition, "The architectural design of bridges and other structures, including retaining walls and guard walls, rate and shape of slopes in cuts and fills, the landscape development of the right-of-way, the location and design of parking areas and overlooks are features for which the Landscape Architect shall be primarily responsible."[50] Those responsibilities still describe the relationship today and have influenced administrative organizations in the Washington Office and the Denver Service Center.

Since 1926, National Park Service landscape architects working with the Federal Highway Administration have accomplished outstanding work through many acronymic funding programs. One of the most beneficial and satisfying programs has been the Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads or ERFO Program. Nearly every year this program is utilized to repair park roads when natural disasters strike, thereby minimizing disruption of visitor visits.

49. The National Park Service and the Bureau of Public Roads, Memorandum of Agreement, 1926, p 1.

50. National Park Service and Public Roads Administration, Interbureau Agreement, 1944, pp. 5–6.

The following years were particularly significant in the organization and functioning of the Transportation Program:

1971–1980. When the Denver Service Center was created in 1971, the Division of Design was responsible for liaising with the Federal Highway Administration. At that time, the newly created National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 required all projects using federal funds have a thorough environmental impact assessment/statement. The Office of Research Service, where park planning was performed and environmental impact statements were prepared, is thought to have handled both transportation planning and environmental compliance. However, review of FHWA construction documents, construction inspection, and field supervision occurred in the Office of Construction Services. This arrangement appears to have existed until about 1975.

Strongly influenced by the Bicentennial Celebration, the Denver Service Center was then organized into five teams based on regional orientation. At this time, each team contained functional divisions of planning, design, and construction and some had historic preservation as well. The teams were the Mid-Atlantic/North Atlantic; Southeast/Southwest; National Capital; Western/Pacific Northwest; and the Midwest/Rocky Mountains. The Branch of Roads and Trails within the Professional Support Division contained only a handful of employees, including engineers and landscape architects. They coordinated road projects in-house, including environmental documentation, and liaised with the Federal Highway Administration. During this period, funding for all types of transportation projects came mostly through NPS Line-Item Construction Budget.

In 1980, most employees from the Branch of Roads and Trails were reassigned to each of four geographically focused teams. A small number of staff remained in the Professional Support Division to provide assistance to the teams.

1983. The Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982, established the Federal Lands Highway Program, allowing extensive use of highway trust funds in the National Park Service for the first time. The 1983 line-item requests to Congress had included a significant amount of road work, but Congress deferred these funds and allowed the Park Service, working cooperatively with the Federal Highway Administration, to use FLHP trust funds for this work (NPS 1983, p. 1). Along with increased project funding came the need for more staff. Staff increased from one individual per team and a few employees in Professional Support to additional landscape architects, transportation planners, and horticulturalists on each team. This was a period when the Revegetation Program really took root and a strong relationship with Natural Resources and Conservation Service was formed to provide sufficient native seeds and plant material to revegetate soil disturbed by road construction.

1986. The Denver Service Center designated several design-assistance teams to evaluate road design projects and ensure that park road systems enhanced the visitor experience (NPS 1986, p. 6). However, the annual report for that year also indicated that the agency was once again attempting to come to grips with the unintended consequences of the decades-long effort to promote automobile traffic in the parks: "At the request of the Director, the Denver Service Center initiated a servicewide bus study to examine the effects of bus transportation within units of the national park system and to identify the optimum levels of service to visitors"(NPS 1986, p. 6).

1994. A Final Grand Canyon National Park General Management Plan/ Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/EIS) and Record of Decision was completed. The GMP/EIS and Record of Decision was of special interest because it committed the Park Service to implementing a mandatory public transportation system during peak visitation months. It is important to note, as the report did, that the project received intense scrutiny from the environmental community as well as from many gateway communities, which derive a significant amount of their livelihood from the tourist dollars generated by the parks.

2003. A reorganization was completed this year and for the first time, the Denver Service Center was aligned into business-line divisions: Design and Construction, Transportation, Planning, Information Management, and Contracting Services. The Transportation Division enjoyed a banner year with a nearly perfect 99 percent obligation rate of available funds in two major programs, the Park Roads and Parkways Program and the Alternative Transportation Program (ATP). The mission of the ATP program was to preserve and protect resources while providing safe and enjoyable access to, from, and within park units by using sustainable, appropriate, and integrated transportation solutions (NPS 2002, p. 14). The specific undertakings for the two programs included the road work of the Park Roads and Parkways Program, the revegetation program, and the program to implement the Alternative Transportation Program.

The newly realigned Transportation Division included a road branch specifically created to provide support for the Park Roads and Parkways Program. Division staff participated in approximately 140 PRP Program projects and completed scoping for an additional sixty-two projects that were scheduled for the following three years. In addition, the program obligated a total of thirty-six projects across four regions for a total of $25,013,566.

The division's Native Plants and Revegetation program took advantage of its partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Plant Materials Centers to provide assistance to twelve national parks with deliveries of nearly 1,500 pounds of native seed, more than 31,000 transplants, and assistance to encourage the establishment of 128 park indigenous species.[51] The division also made a major contribution to the Alternative Transportation Program by expanding service in transportation planning, design, construction, community partnerships, feasibility studies, and natural and cultural resource compliance. Thirty ATP projects were managed in parks across the national park system, with the division playing a leadership role.

2011. As described in the annual report, the Transportation Division realigned organizationally in FY 2011 to better serve regions and parks: "The three branches within the division are now aligned to the regions they support with the Revegetation and Compliance Groups shared across branches."

That year, the Transportation Division participated in the NPS Transportation Management Program, the Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands Program, the Park Roads and Parkways Program, and Long-Range Transportation Planning.

2012. In FY 2012, the Transportation Division—in cooperation with the Washington-based program management office, the regional offices, and the Federal Highway Administration—created a partnership training program to address the unique history of one of the oldest interagency partnerships in the federal government.

2014. As described in the annual report, in 2014, the Transportation Division led and managed the development of a sustainable transportation tool, known as the Innovative and Sustainable Transportation Evaluation Process. This process addresses the National Park Service's unique regulatory framework, mission, and transportation goals. The process encourages the use of sustainable transportation techniques; educates and allows sharing of best sustainable practices, techniques, and ideas; measures a project's progress, and tracks and records sustainable transportation achievements; and challenges teams to focus on sustainable outcomes and share ideas beyond the National Park Service.

That year, the Transportation Division provided NPS representation on the Transportation Research Board Committee on Transportation Needs of National Parks and Public Lands (ADA40).[52]

51. DSC Program Review, 2002. These included 40 grasses, 13 forbs, 54 shrubs, and 21 trees.

52. The Transportation Research Board is a division of the National Academies of Sciences, which serves as an independent adviser to the federal government and others on scientific and technical questions of importance.

2015–2023. The National Park Service has been supporting the restoration of the Everglades, one of the largest conservation projects undertaken in the United States, through a collaborative effort between the National Park Service and the US Army Corps of Engineers. The National Park Service and the Denver Service Center have worked with the Federal Highway Administration; Florida Department of Transportation; and other state, local, and tribal groups through the Central Everglades Planning Project to coordinate these efforts. Infrastructure improvements began in 2009 by raising sections of the Tamiami Trail roadway cutting through the Everglades. The Denver Service Center has worked on three projects to provide an additional 6.5 miles of bridging to allow water to flow into the park. In 2014, a one-mile bridge was completed, then 2.3 miles of western bridges were completed in 2019. The final phase is currently underway with full project completion expected in early 2023. The resulting increased water volumes and improved flow distribution are expected to promote conditions conducive to the survival of myriad species of fish and wildlife.

Today the Transportation Division is ready and able to plan, design, construct, and revegetate varied transportation facilities in potentially all 420+ units of the national park system. This complex and challenging work is accomplished by multidisciplinary professional teams of landscape architects, engineers, transportation planners, biologists, archeologists, and ecologists providing project management services in an office setting and construction inspection and oversight in the field on park and parkway sites throughout the national park system.

Larry Walling, FASLA , Chief Transportation Division (Retired)
Kristie Franzmann, Chief, Transportation Division
Seth Greenwell, Branch Chief, Transportation Division (Retired)
Jerry Lorenz, Chief, Branch of Roads and Trails, Western Team (Retired)
Cal Cooper, Deputy Director (Retired)
Howard Wagner, Chief, Branch of Roads and Trails, Central Team (Retired)

Transportation Division Highlights

The road reconstruction and paving of North Shore Road at Virgin Islands National Park was a major project for the Denver Service Center in the early 1970s.

The Denver Service Center embarked on a restoration of the Sequoia Giant Forest at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks in the 1980s. The 20-year project was an unprecedented restoration effort and set the standard in the National Park Service for removing facilities from environmentally sensitive areas. The project received a professional award from the American Society of Landscape Architects in 2007.

The Denver Service Center contracted and managed the design and construction of the Canyon View Information Plaza at Grand Canyon National Park in the 1990s. This plaza was one of the first of its kind as an all inclusive shuttle bus stop. The DSC Transportation Division has been a leader for the National Park Service in finding solutions to alleviate traffic congestion at parks.

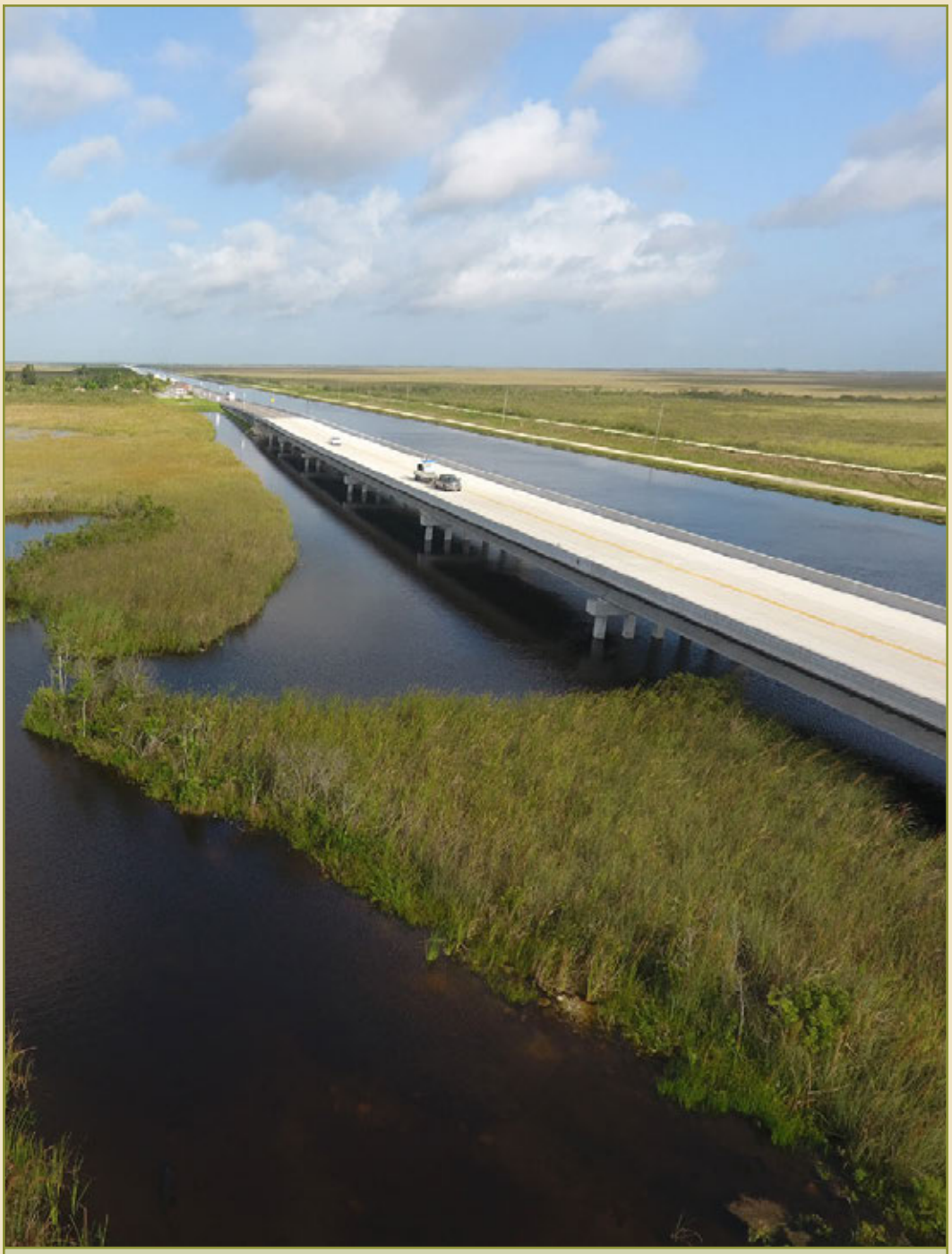
The Canyon View Information Plaza focused on accessibility both inside and outside to provide the best visitor experience for all visitors at Grand Canyon National Park.

The Denver Service Center completed a project in 1994 to construct the first precast segmental double arch bridge in the United States located over Route 96 in Tennessee as part of Natchez Trace National Parkway.

The Denver Service Center Transportation Division is a leader in sustainable solutions within the National Park Service. In the late 1990s, Zion National Park implemented a shuttle system to reduce traffic congestion and pollution by using propane-powered shuttle buses to transport visitors within the park.

The rehabilitation of the bridges on Foothills Parkway in Great Smoky Mountains National Park was a multi-decade effort to construct ten bridges to complete the 1.6-mile "missing link" of the parkway. The contract for Bridges 9 and 10 (the first two bridges constructed) was awarded in February 1999. The project was a partnership between the DSC Transportation Division and the Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division of the Federal Highway Administration.

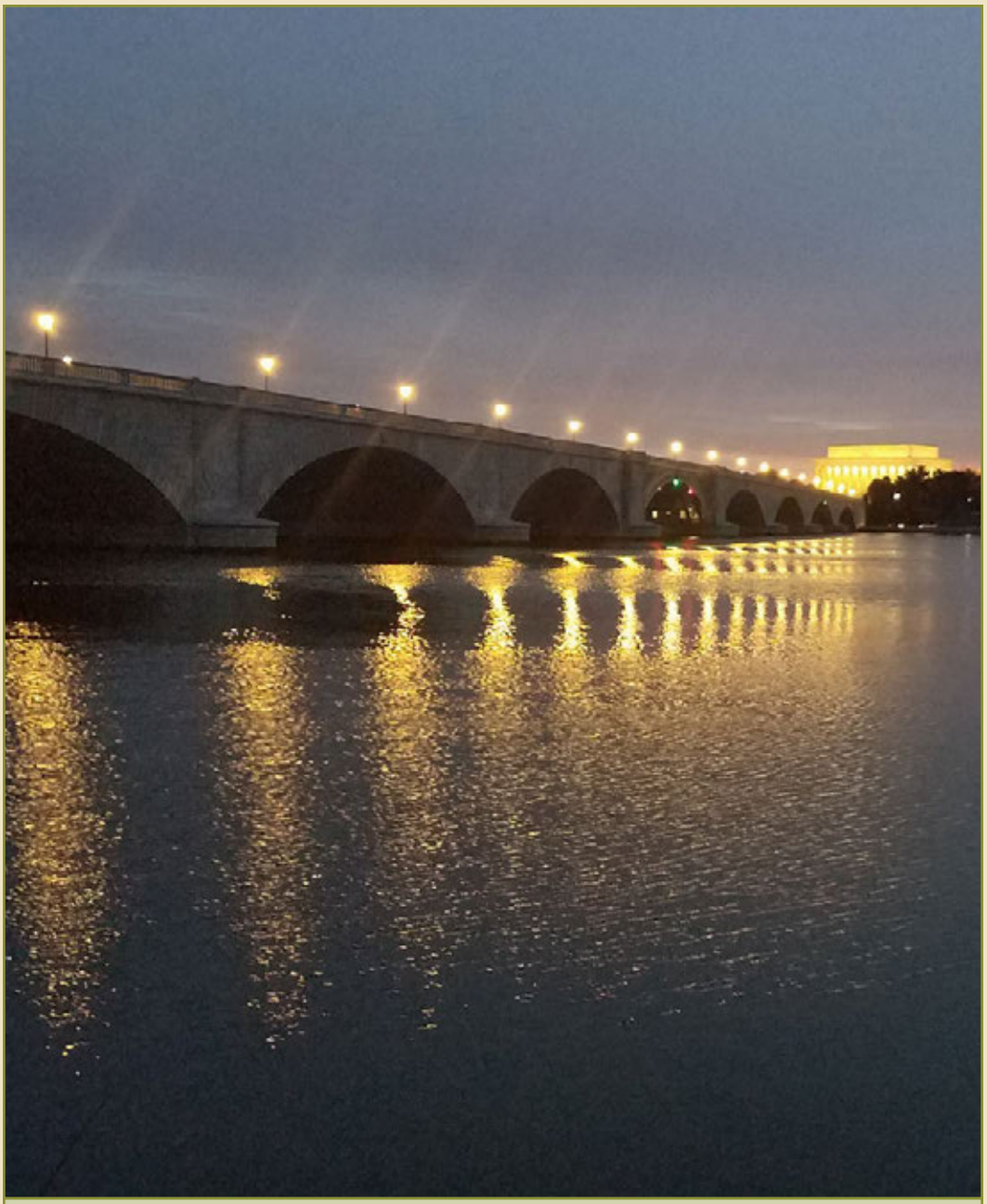
The "missing link" at Foothills Parkway was completed in 2018 at Great Smoky Mountains National Park.



The National Park Service has partnered with the Federal Highway Administration and the Florida Department of Transportation to complete the Tamiami Trail Next Steps Project. This project is part of the overall restoration of the Everglades, the largest restoration project in the history of the United States. The Tamiami Trail is a 264-mile roadway, originally completed in 1928, to connect the growing cities of Tampa and Miami. The Tamiami Trail is one of the primary barriers to the flow of water through the ecosystem and needs to be corrected to restore natural marsh connectivity.

The Denver Service Center worked on a project funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to demolish and rehabilitate the site at the Schoodic Center campus at Acadia National Park. The project consisted of the removal of 69,518 square feet of unneeded buildings, the rehabilitation of three buildings for use as classrooms and laboratories, and the rehabilitation of the site to create a safe and attractive campus setting for learners of all ages. In addition, the building demolition and rehabilitation substantially reduced energy demand and demonstrated sustainable energy practices to the public. Deferred maintenance costs were reduced by the removal of approximately one-third of the total building area on-site.

Within Channel Islands National Park, Scorpion Valley on Santa Cruz Island is the most visited destination within the park. Public access is only available by boat. The DSC Transportation Division completed a project in 2020 to replace the temporary pier with a new accessible pier that accommodates various water depths for safe embarkation.



The Arlington Memorial Bridge project at George Washington Memorial Parkway was one of the largest bridge projects ever undertaken by the National Park Service. The National Park Service partnered with the Federal Highway Administration to rehabilitate the bridge while maintaining access for vehicles during the construction by shifting traffic patterns.

Arlington Memorial Bridge now has a fixed span while maintaining the aesthetics and some features of the existing drawbridge. In addition to rehabilitating the bridge's structural elements, the project rehabilitated historic elements, including thousands of granite balustrades and benches.

The Historic Preservation Team and the Historic Architecture Branch, 1971–1978

The Organization and Early Leaders. While preservation of historic structures continued sporadically across the United States in the 1960s, the movement was still in its infancy before it expanded significantly in the 1970s and beyond. The National Park Service was a leader in historic preservation and established parks, organizations, programs, and projects that recognized, documented, and preserved historic structures across the nation. In 1971, when the NPS Eastern and Western Service Centers were consolidated, the new Denver Service Center included the Historic Preservation Team (HPT). The team consisted of staff of historians, archeologists, historical architects, and exhibit specialists who researched, planned, designed, and constructed projects throughout the nation. They also contributed to professional organizations nationally and internationally to further the historic preservation movement.

When the Denver Service Center was formed, the first HPT manager was Merrill Mattes, who was a historian. The history branch chief was Dr. John Luzader; the archeology branch chief was Will Logan; and the functional historic architecture (HA) branch chief was Burr Coryell, who served in the position remotely while remaining in Philadelphia. In September 1973, Vernon Smith arrived from San Francisco as the permanent historic architecture branch chief. He was the catalyst who increased branch staff and organized it into three sections led by Harold LaFleur, Bob Simmons, and George Thorson. Approximately twenty-five to thirty-five historical architects, technicians, and exhibit specialists worked in the branch developing historic structure reports and design and construction documents and completing preservation construction projects. Among those early employees was legendary Frank Gerner, one of the earliest licensed architects in California who mentored many young and aspiring historical architects with his free-flowing drawings, perspectives, and lectures of column orders. Merrill Ann Wilson was one of a few who had a historic preservation degree, and she provided welcome diversity in the historic architecture profession during this time. And Jim Askins, Gordie Whittington, and Tom Armstrong were exhibit specialists with hands-on restoration expertise. They provided invaluable real-world expertise in the construction trades. The four geographical teams provided engineering and construction support to the HA branch.

The HPT team continued its function as a single entity until 1978, when the team was divided into the four DSC geographical teams. Vernon Smith accepted a position in Washington, DC, and departed the Denver Service Center in late 1978.

The Program and Projects. The 1970s were a fertile time for the Historical Preservation Team. Some called it the "Golden Era," when preservation as a specialty thrived, responsibility centered on in-house capability, and the role and duty of a historical architect centered on investigation, research, and application. It cultivated a rich treasure of close and collaborative working relationships and honed skills needed to complete complex, yet rewarding, projects. During this period, design was accomplished by traditional means and methods using manual equipment, including drafting tables, T-squares/parallel rules, adjustable triangles, lead holders, erasing shields/electric erasers, Rapidograph ink pens, mylar sheets, and IBM typewriters with magnetic card readers. Completed drawings were works of art. The calculators we use today had just been invented, and computer-aided design was a future development that many architects and engineers welcomed and forever ended ink marks on hands and stains on clothes.

Fieldwork was an essential task that presented its own challenges. Hazards loomed large as structures were frequently unoccupied and without utilities. Access to remote sites required snowshoeing or snowmobiles. Investigations to gather data included scaling ladders, climbing roofs, crawling in under-floor spaces and attics, opening wall cavities, tapping or boring wood members to determine soundness, and taking wood and paint samples for identification. Together with reports from historians and archeologists, the gathered data were analyzed for completion of historic structure reports. Design could then proceed followed by the construction phase.

The major program that launched the DSC historic preservation team and program was the US Bicentennial. To prepare for the celebration, projects were identified in the early 1970s so that construction could be completed prior to 1976. Bicentennial projects were included in twenty-two national park system areas; see Merrill Mattes's book, *Landmarks of Liberty: A Report on the American Revolution Bicentennial Development Program of the National Park Service*.

The work of these and other preservation projects created an e*sprit de corps* and produced strong bonds and life-long commitments to historic preservation, to the National Park Service, and to coworkers. The DSC Historic Preservation Team took its responsibility seriously as "the keeper of the nation's jewels" for future generations.

Terry Wong, Structural Engineer/Historical Architect (Retired)
Ken Bennett, Historical Architect (Retired)
Chris Jones, Historical Architect (Retired)

The Radio and Spectrum Management Division

Developed as an experimental broadcast medium at Yellowstone National Park in the early 1970s, Information Radio Stations and the technology they use matured from frail, tube-type transmitter equipment and audiotapes to reliable, solid-state transmitter equipment with digital audio that could be recorded/rerecorded from a distant location via dial-up connection.

Originally, the NPS radio program was led by personnel in Washington who handled the program's licensing aspects and by staff in San Francisco who dealt with its technical aspects, including conducting field tests of new technology. In mid-November 1971, the program became part of the newly established Denver Service Center.

In the Washington Office, Sam Hoover had been responsible for the licensing aspects of the radio systems of the National Park Service. With the move, he retired and his duties were taken on by J. Marvin Stump. Coming from San Francisco was Ralph R. McFadden, who had been the technical lead of the radio engineering program. Frank P. Weed, who was a graduate electronics engineer, took on management of the radio program shortly after McFadden retired in early 1972. Weed directed the entire program from Denver with field support by regional radio technicians. That continued until November 2003, at which point the program was returned to the Washington Office and is now located in the Radio and Spectrum Management Division, Information Resources Directorate.

Today, the National Park Service has broadcast units in operation throughout the service.

Frank P. Weed, Chief of Telecommunications Engineering (Retired)

The Publications / Graphics Branch (Now part of the Planning Division but originally part of the Graphics Division)

In the 1970s and 1980s, this branch operated under the Graphics Division, along with Mapping, Micrographics, Editing, and Drafting. During that time most work was done in-house with traditional artistic tools, including pen, ink, pencil, etc. By the 1990s, there were significant developments that had a huge impact on the Publications Branch. First, in the 1990s, the advancement of technology moved the work from drafting tables to desktop computers. This required the division to meet assignment deadlines while learning graphic computer programs and converting ongoing projects to new and evolving electronic formats. Then, the 1999 Reduction In Force reduced the number of visual information specialists from twelve to three, the writer/editors from seven to two, and the composing typesetters from three to one. The Visual Simulation Department (consisting of three), which had been created in 1994, was eliminated; visual simulation and similar computer tools were institutionalized and used as part of almost every project.

The Publications staffs' primary duties were to produce documents, such as general management plans, development concept plans, and environmental assessments, working for the DSC planners. For graphics, this work consisted of layout and design, drawings/paintings/sketches, and artistic conceptual maps. Writer/editors edited and rewrote the planners' input. Through the years, the work branched out to clients outside of the Denver Service Center. This included high-profile projects such as the White House Gardens and Grounds book (working with the White House liaison), which was produced every four years and presented to the US President at the beginning of each term. Publications staff also produced a White House Comprehensive Design Plan and the White House 200th Anniversary poster. Publications staff have designed and produced the DSC annual reports and NPS annual reports for many years; designed many park logos and other government agency logos, including the logo for the National Park Service's 75th anniversary; the Take Pride in America campaign logo, and the "Stewardship for America with Integrity & Excellence" logo for the Department of the Interior.

Among the many notable projects, the Publications Branch created a series of poster-sized, computer-generated illustrations for the National Mall (with the WASO planner); painted a large mural for Gateway National Recreation Area; created a series of pen and ink drawings for the Western Pennsylvania Region; produced the quarterly Park Science magazine for ten years; designed the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration and Sustainability Integrated Plan; and designed the National Museum of the American Latino Commission First Year Report to the US President and Congress.

Original art created for Gateway National Recreation Area. Watercolor paintings by Phil Thys.

When the Publications Branch moved to the Planning Division as the Publications Team, efforts shifted more towards supporting the national planning community through the collaboration of the Planning Division with Park Planning and Special Studies. In the early 2010s, Publications support for civic engagement and public workshops were key for various environmental assessments, environmental impact statements. Publications also collaborated with and supported the planning community when many planning programs were created, including the Foundation Documents, Resource Stewardship Strategies, and Self-Evaluation and Transition Planning Documents programs. As a result, the use of industry standard software from Adobe helped develop templated document designs that lent to the efficiency, consistency, and branding of the documents across each program.

Among the many notable projects in recent years, the Publications team edited and laid out a document for each of the 400 plus units, with substantial completion by the centennial in 2016, under the Foundation Document program; supported the Planning Division's international efforts, like with ICMBIO, the national park system in Brazil, by providing many document layouts and templates; edited, laid out, and printed the refresh of the National Park Service System Plan document in 2017; and edited and laid out various high profile publications for the Planning for Climate Change, Campground Modernization, Facility Investment Strategies, and Special Resource Studies programs.

The Publications team continues to offer editing and graphic design services for digital and printed materials for a wide variety of projects, parks, regions, and programs, including reports/plans for the planning community and custom projects that span from logo development to reports for executive orders to the current efforts around the NPS America 250 initiative. The team also leads the way in ensuring digital documents are not only compliant with Section 508 standards but are more accessible to all (see Planning Division section).

Glenda Heronema, Visual Information Specialist (Retired)
Philip Viray, Supervisory Visual Information Specialist

Contracting Services

The Denver Service Center had a contracting component from its beginning. The amount of work contracted out varied through the years, as well as did the type of work based on the project. The strength of the contracting group allowed DSC technical staff and professionals to supplement their workforce without competing with FTE ceilings, and professional staff became adept at managing architects and engineering projects as well as construction. Throughout the years, the Contracting Division was flexible in its organization too, and when it made sense, it mirrored the other groups to better provide technical and customer service to internal customers. Because of its expertise, it was able to offer specialized services to other NPS offices and also became known for hiring 8A and other minority contractors for NPS work. The DSC Contracting Services Division is the largest contracting office in the National Park Service and specializes in contracting for design and construction.

Around 2003, the Park Service established the Washington Contracting Office at Academy Place in Lakewood, CO, and some leadership and staff of Contracting Services for the Denver Service Center left to work in that new organization.

As a result of these staff changes, a new division chief was hired for the DSC contracting office and expanded the management team to two branch chiefs, one for the Eastern United States and one for the Western United States, and a data and compliance team leader. This geographic affiliation lined up with the geographic structure of the Design and Construction Division, which provided Contracting Services with its biggest workload. During this time, the number of contracting officers doubled as well as did the number of contracting specialists. In 2005, the team would be called on to serve the Elwha River Restoration Program.

To support the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the contracting office expanded again. The management team grew by two operational branch chiefs, and the total division staff increased to nearly seventy employees and contractors. In ensuing years, the office would handle contracts for the Hurricane Sandy Recovery Program (2013), the City Arch River Program (2014), and the HIM (Harvey-Irma-Maria) Hurricane Program (beginning in 2018).

To support the Great American Outdoors Act/Legacy Restoration Fund, Contracting Services is again expanding and realigning in 2021. The management team has increased to seven branch chiefs, and the number of DSC employees and contractor staff will likely increase. Through all of the divisional changes, the DSC Contracting Services Division remains committed to collaboration and teamwork in delivering contracting expertise, acquisition solutions, and sound business advice.

Lori Irish, Chief, Contracting Division

Design and Construction

In the late 1980s, the Denver Service Center transitioned to a three-team organizational structure (East, Central, and West), aligned with the NPS Regional offices. Each team had its own planning, design, and construction groups, which were broken down into subsections based on disciplines—landscape architecture, architecture, historical architecture, civil engineering, mechanical and electrical engineering, etc.

Each of these teams was managed autonomously. Some even created specialized groups. For example, the Eastern team created the WPP group, which was located outside of the Denver Service Center at Academy Place. This group specialized in Western Pennsylvania heritage corridor planning, design, and construction.

The construction groups consisted of landscape architects, architects, engineers, and project supervisors who worked in each park to oversee construction activities.The discipline of landscape architecture has always served as a cornerstone at the Denver Service Center. At one point, the service center was the largest single employer of professional landscape architects in the country. Many former and current landscape architects at the Denver Service Center have been nominated and elected as Fellows within the American Society of Landscape Architecture. This honor has rarely been bestowed on other public-sector landscape architects.

Throughout the 1980s and into the early 1990s, the three-team structure was internally and routinely scrutinized in an effort to find the most efficient and flexible organization to best serve the parks and regions in successfully delivering projects on time and within budget. Unfortunately, communications and workload-sharing across professions caused professional difficulties that led to “Black Friday” (many of the rank and file referred to it as “Stupid Friday”) when a directive was delivered by upper management that for the following Monday morning design chiefs would become construction chiefs and vice versa.

That exercise provided upper DSC management with a glimpse of how better to manage a design and construction organization. Blurring or eliminating organizational boundaries was imperative to moving the Denver Service Center forward in serving the parks and regions efficiently and effectively.

In the mid-1990s, the Denver Service Center began testing a project management organization. A pilot program was initiated as a recommendation from an internal reinventing government work group. The Denver Service Center also brought in private business specialists in change management, project management, and organizational and team theory. CH2M Hill was one of the companies who assisted the Denver Service Center with this transition.

By 1995, the Denver Service Center had completely transitioned to this new project management approach. The team organization structure was abandoned, and a new project management group was formed. Project managers were generally assigned to a specific park and were responsible for all DSC work in that park whether it was a design, construction, planning, or a transportation project. The project managers were supported by in-house (and in some cases A/E) teams of interdisciplinary professionals.

In the late 1990s, the Denver Service Center was studied by the National Academy of Public Administration with regard to NPS organizational needs and efficiency. As a result of the NAPA study and implementation, a significant reduction in force occurred in spring 1999. Many employees were able to find jobs in parks and regions because of National Park Service and Department of the Interior support for these employees. Many left the National Park Service, however, and many were reassigned into new positions. The mandate for improving design and construction processed included that the Denver Service Center would contract out all design and construction and construction management work, and employees would manage those contracts throughout the life cycle of a project.

Beginning in 2000, the recommendations of a NAPA report were implemented. This solidified the DSC project management organizational structure and resulted in using A/E firms rather than in-house staff for all design and construction-management work.

Over time, the new project management approach would be fully embraced by the Denver Service Center and prove so successful that all project managers, including their supervisors and managers, would be required to be certified through the Project Management Institute. This requirement would become a tremendous boon as the service center competed for project work from the parks and regions.

This precipitated yet another DSC reorganization. In the early 2000s, the Denver Service Center was reconfigured to its current organizational structure comprising the divisions of Design and Construction (D&C), Contracting, Transportation, Planning, and Information Management. The original D&C Division was managed by one division chief; however, in 2005, the division was split into an east and a west division to address the heavy and growing workload. This organizational structure worked well for many years. In 2013, these two offices were recombined into a single division, and it remains as one division but is managed by two geographically assigned division chiefs. Outsourcing of design services through A/E Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity contracts (managed by DSC project managers) remains the current practice. Project specialists and project managers supported by contracting specialists, contracting officers, and discipline specialists in the Technical Branch are the core team members delivering projects from predesign through construction, warranty, and closeout.

Generally, each project specialist or project manager works on a combination of projects (typically between six and ten) that are concurrently in design and construction.

Expertise from A/Es, park/regional staff, and other in-house staff support all the requirements for successful completion.

The core team uses internal workflow processes, samples, templates, and other tools—along with the external workflow the A/E firms use—to ensure project delivery is successful. This project delivery process also includes multilevel project scrutiny from the Development Advisory Board responsible for ensuring that appropriated project funds are expended efficiently and effectively.

Today, D&C work efforts focus on the Line-Item Construction Program, Partnership Projects, Park Direct Charge Projects, and other programs. In mid-March 2021, the Great American Outdoor Act was signed into law and is providing $1.3 billion in funding per year over five years to reduce the deferred maintenance backlog in the National Park Service through the Legacy Restoration Fund. This landmark conservation legislation will provide needed maintenance for critical facilities and infrastructure in our national parks. Today, the Design and Construction Division is taking the lead on project delivery/execution of the LRF program.

Throughout its existence, the Design and Construction Division of the Denver Service Center has responded to the needs of the National Park Service. Successfully completing a wide variety of projects on time and within budget resulting from deferred maintenance, enhancing visitor enjoyment, fires, earthquakes, hurricanes, and terrorist attacks has been the hallmark of the division.

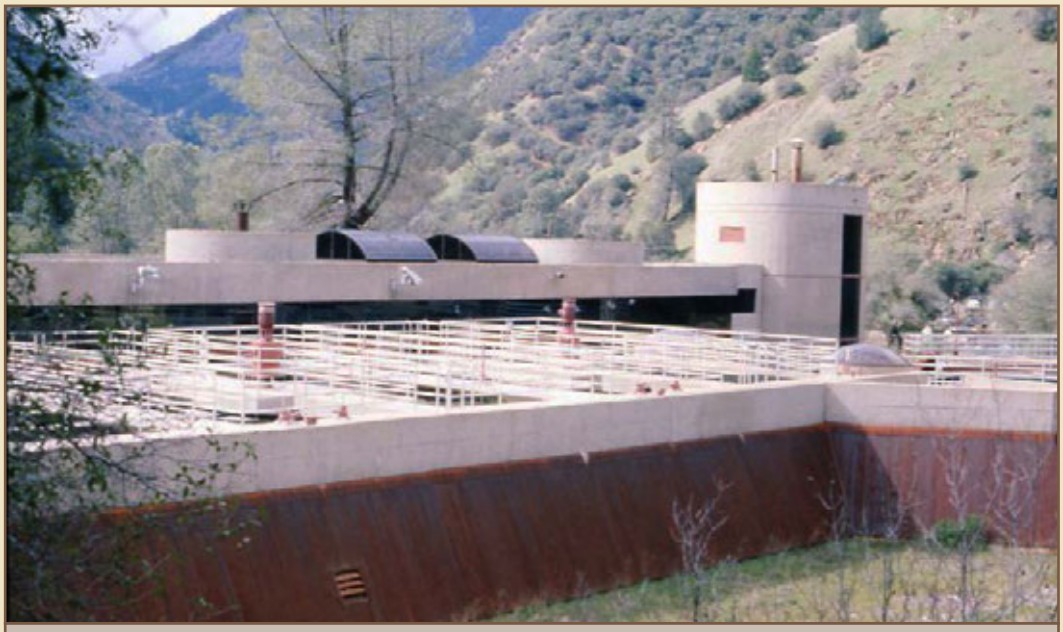
Many of these projects have won professional awards from industry peers, been at the forefront of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), and received recognition from the parks and regions as well as from the visiting public. This has included projects such as the FDR Memorial, the Flight 93 Memorial, projects at the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Reflecting Pool, the Statue of Liberty, the Jefferson Expansion Memorial, and numerous visitor centers and historical structure restorations.

Design and Construction Division professionals have always been, and continue to be, committed and dedicated to the specific role they serve in preserving and protecting NPS resources for this and all future generations.

Jodie Peterson, Chief, Design and Construction Division—West
Todd Alexander, Chief, Design and Construction Division—East
Dave Aitken, Chief, Design and Construction Division, (Retired)
Randy Copeland, Chief, Design and Construction Division (Retired)

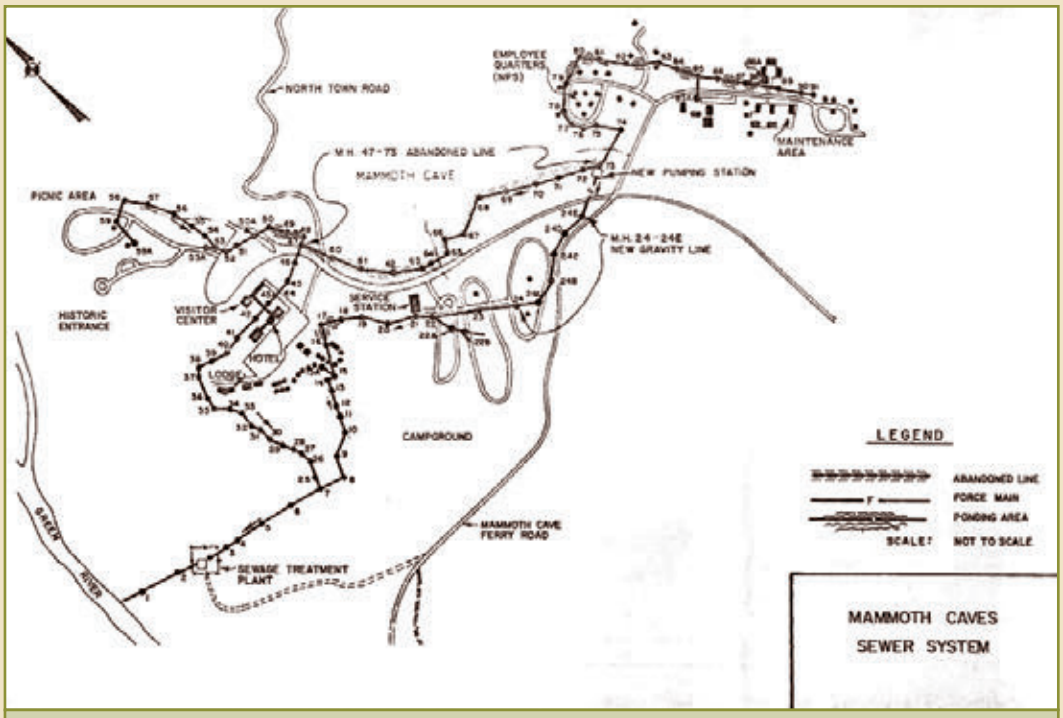
In the 1980s, the Denver Service Center completed a major restoration of buildings in Skagway, Alaska, part of Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park. The Mascot Saloon Group building was restored as the visitor interpretation center.

The Moore Cabin, pictured here, was restored for visitor interpretation at Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park.



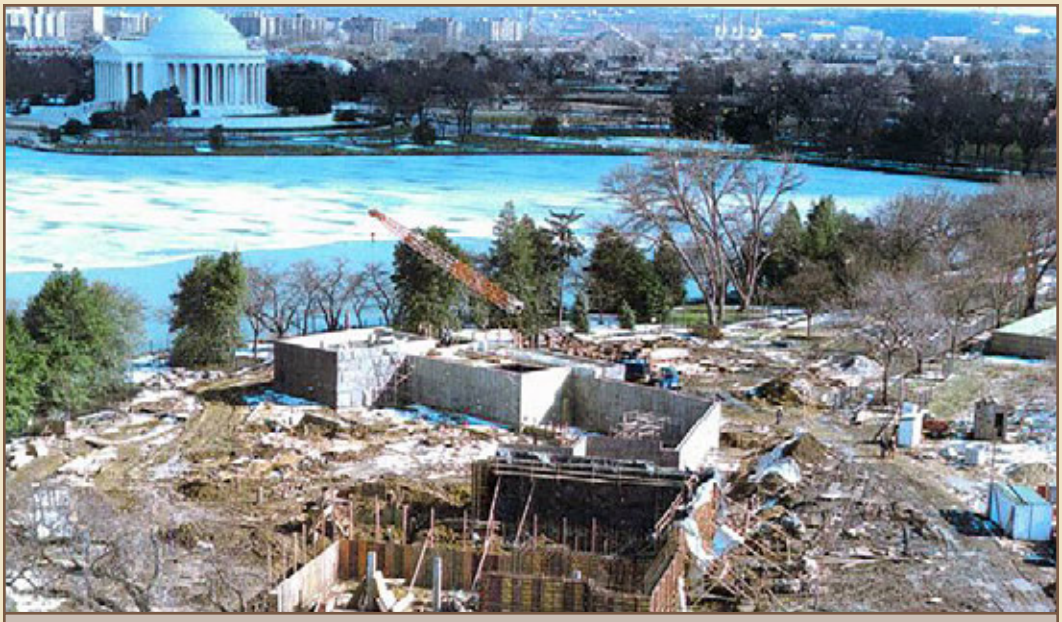
In the 1970s, the Denver Service Center completed a project to provide a sewer treatment system to El Portal, California, a gateway to Yosemite National Park and a critical area for employee housing.

In 1983, the Denver Service Center completed a restoration of the Boott Cotton Mills at Lowell National Historic Park. The Boott Cotton Mills serves as the park's museum and interprets the industrial past at Lowell, the first planned industrial city in the United States.



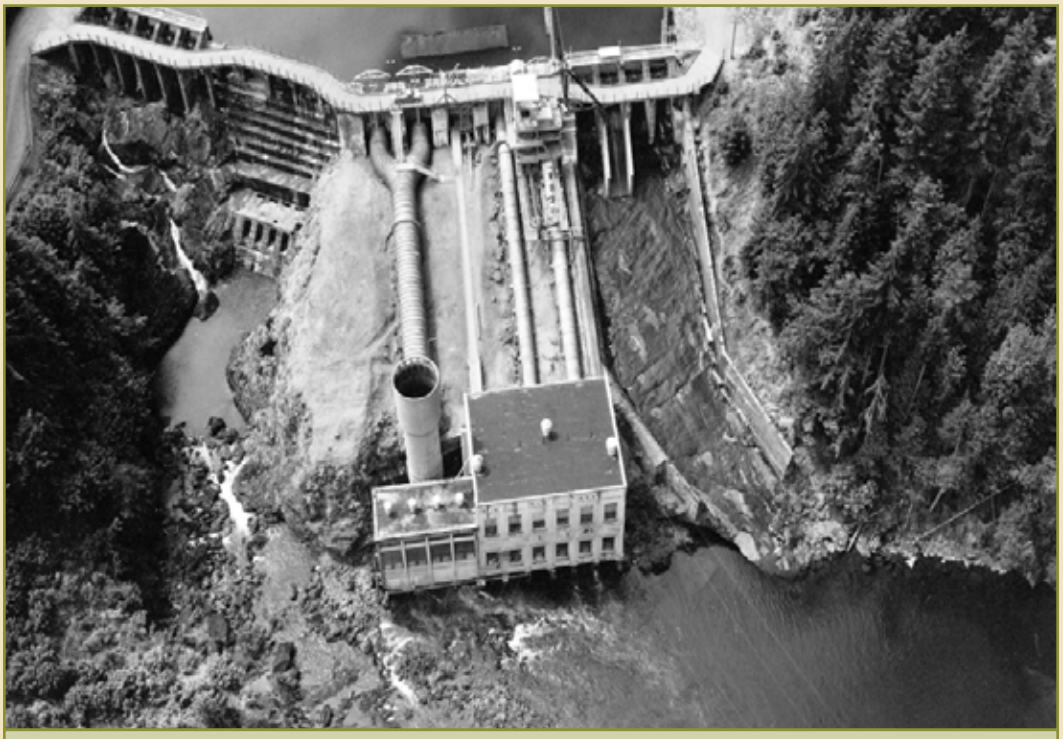
In the 1980s, the Denver Service Center managed a project to tie the Mammoth Cave sewer system to three other cities. This project was critical to protecting the vast karst system of Western Kentucky.

In 1985, the Denver Service Center began construction to rehabilitate the Immigration Museum, which is part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument at Ellis Island.



The Denver Service Center managed the design and construction of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial in Washington, DC. The project was completed on schedule and under budget, and the memorial was dedicated on May 2, 1997.

The Denver Service Center managed a project in 1999 to relocate the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse 2,900 feet in 23 days. The lighthouse now stands 1,500 feet from the seashore, its original distance from the sea. The Double Keeper's Quarters, the Principal Keeper's Quarters, the dwelling cisterns, and the oil house were all relocated with the lighthouse.



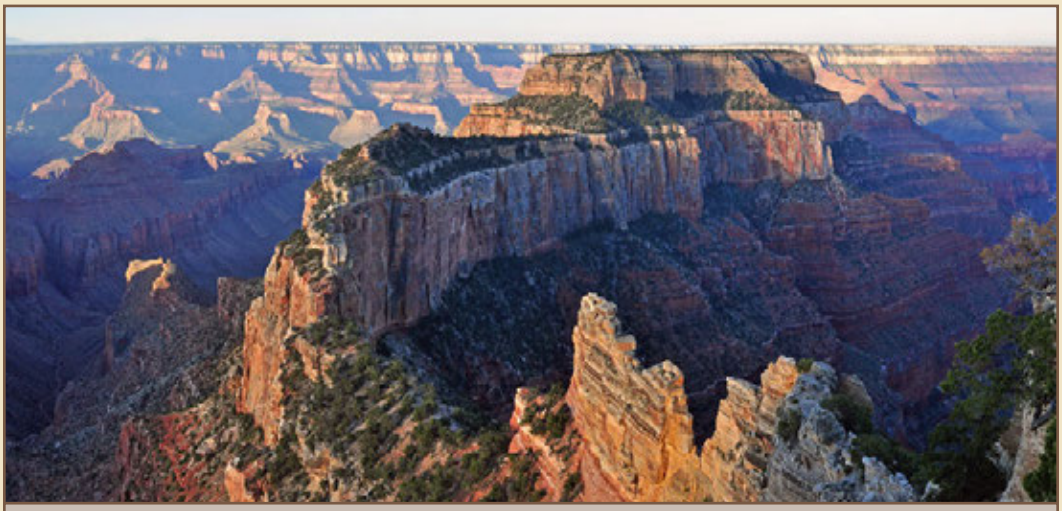
The Elwha River Restoration at Olympic National Park was the largest dam removal project in the United States and the second largest ecosystem restoration project in the history of the United States. The Denver Service Center began managing the project in 2007, and dam removal began in 2011. Demolition of the Elwha Dam (pictured here) and the Glines Canyon Dam was completed in 2014.

The $380 million CityArchRiver project consisted of multiple components around Gateway Arch National Park aimed to revitalize the Gateway Arch park grounds, Arch Visitor Center, Museum at the Gateway Arch, St. Louis Riverfront, Luther Ely Smith Square, and Kiener Plaza. The Denver Service Center worked with the Gateway Arch Park Foundation (formerly CityArchRiver Foundation), Great Rivers Greenway, the Missouri Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, Gateway Arch National Park (formerly Jefferson National Expansion Memorial), and the NPS Midwest Regional Office to manage the components of the overall project. The first of these projects, the $13.5 million renovation of the south grounds of the Gateway Arch, broke ground in late September 2014, and the final component of the project, the renovation of the Old Courthouse, began in late 2021. The CityArchRiver project is the largest public-private partnership in the history of the National Park Service.

After the terrorist attacks on America on September 11, 2001, the National Park Service began a project in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, to commemorate the heroic passengers and crew of Flight 93. After a design competition, construction work began to create a memorial worthy of the sacred site. The Denver Service Center contracted and managed the design and construction of the memorial in cooperation with the National Park Foundation, Families of Flight 93, Friends of Flight 93, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Flight 93 Advisory Commission, the Flight 93 National Memorial site, the NPS Northeast Regional Office, and many other stakeholders.

During the Flight 93 National Memorial dedication ceremony on September 11, 2011, then Vice President Joe Biden and Dr. Jill Biden led a group of US dignitaries, including former President Bill Clinton and former President George W. Bush and former first lady Laura Bush, along the Wall of Names.

A major rehabilitation of Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial, began in 2018 and was reopened to the public in June 2021. The project stabilized the exterior and restored the interior while paying close attention to conserving the historic objects and acquiring antiques and reproductions to complete the renovations. The new visitor experience at the Arlington House interprets the history of the Custis and Lee families along with the more than 100 enslaved people who labored on the plantation. This rehabilitation project was made possible through a $12.35 million donation to the National Park Foundation by philanthropist David M. Rubenstein.



In 2020, the Denver Service Center began managing a project to replace the 12.5-mile transcanyon waterline at Grand Canyon National Park. This project is divided into two phases: phase one includes construction of a water treatment plant, and phase two includes replacing the existing waterline and upgrading the electrical service between Phantom Ranch and Indian Garden from a single phase line to a three phase line. The project will greatly enhance the visitor experience and access to clean, safe drinking water.

Construction

Traditionally, most Park Service jobs in construction were at parks inspecting the day-to-day work of contractors. It involved coordinating the construction work with park staff and operations, inspecting the contractor's work to ensure that drawings and specifications were followed, resolving the inevitable problems that seemed to occur every day, estimating and negotiating claims, processing contractors' pay estimates, and providing a myriad of other services. Much of the work took place out-of-doors, and the office/paperwork was accomplished in a trailer with sparse furniture, electricity, and a telephone. If the project supervisor was lucky, the park might have a room and a desk in a maintenance facility. It was pure luxury to have half of a library building, as was the case during one period at Grand Canyon National Park, or cushy office space in a headquarters building as at Buffalo National River during the 1980s.

Created in 1971, under the DSC associate director, the first organizational chart lists seven divisions providing services to geographical NPS regions and one division of Historic Preservation. Supporting the regional divisions were five functional divisions: the Office of Research and Consultative Services, the Office of Construction Services, the Office of Plans and Design Services, the Office of Graphic Services, and the Office of Surveys. The Office of Construction—and later the Branches of Construction—were staffed with project supervisors, the professional experts, and crafts persons who were the senior field employees, and project inspectors who provided invaluable support.

On temporary duty, construction employees moved every twelve to fifteen months on average. It was a nomadic lifestyle that seemed to appeal to folks who were newly out of college, not married, and with no children or, at the other end of the spectrum, the empty nesters who were happy to take up temporary residence at one of "America's Jewels" often with their own recreational vehicle.

Project supervisors and project inspectors operated not independently but with great autonomy in the field. Very close relationships developed among them and with contract officers, contract specialists, and project designers. Through frequent, problem-solving telephone calls, these individuals, in most cases, formed a smoothly functioning team, gaining great respect for the skills and knowledge that each brought to the table.

To match personnel with projects, some branch chiefs used a spreadsheet affectionately known as "the Ouija Board" to forecast employees' future assignments. Usually, the Ouija Board forecasted future assignments about as accurately as the real board game. It was always a challenging endeavor that depended on when construction would end at one park and when a contract would begin at the next assignment. Of course, part of the challenge was pairing the appropriate project with an employee having the correct skill set.

In the early days of the Denver Service Center or perhaps even before the Denver Service Center and before branches or divisions of transportation existed, there were landscape architects permanently duty stationed at Blue Ridge and Natchez Trace because of the continuous road construction that was required to maintain the 400+ miles of parkways. Though assigned to DSC Construction, those employees were responsible for liaison between park superintendents and the Federal Highway Administration and, later, the Federal Lands Highway Program staff who provided contract administration of road and bridge construction at the parkways. At parks where construction could only take place seasonally, as was the case in many western mountain parks, DSC project supervisors and project inspectors would either return to Denver and prepare or catch up on paperwork, including as-constructed drawings, or travel to and assist with other construction projects.

By 1975, the Denver Service Center was organized into five geographical teams. Each team then contained functional Branches of Planning, Design, Construction and some even had a Branch of Historic Preservation. At times, employees assigned to construction branches totaled 20 to 25 percent of the Denver Service Center's entire staffing.

With most construction employees at field locations, it was deemed important to bring field employees together for five days each year. At these annual gatherings, a robust training program was presented that included updated changes to contract language and application, legal guidance for project supervisors and project inspectors, material testing procedures, inspection techniques, and job site safety.

These annual affairs were held at various locations around the country, and there were team meetings and award ceremonies while everyone was together. In addition to receiving training, employees met with coworkers, some team designers, team managers, contracting officers, and staff from the Contracts Division.

Occasionally, relationships between field personnel and office personnel could become frayed. Generally, this most often occurred when there was a problem during construction and a project supervisor made a decision without consulting the project designer. Around 1990, a management action long-referred to by rank-and-file employees as "Black Friday" took place at the Denver Service Center when DSC Manager John Reynolds reassigned the Design Branch chiefs to Construction and the Construction branch chiefs to Design. That is, the branch chiefs got the opportunity to walk in each-others' shoes for a time. It didn't completely eliminate the occasional conflicts, but the branch chiefs learned another side of the organization and the problems their colleagues faced.

In late 1995, the organization of the Denver Service Center became functionally grouped once again. The work of the Denver Service Center, including design and construction, was now to be accomplished using a project-management approach. For the next four years, NPS project supervisors and project inspectors finished ongoing park projects, and by 1999, the office had fully transitioned to contracted construction management staff performing field duties that had been performed by National Park Service employees.

Construction Branches ceased to exist.

Larry Walling, Branch Chief, Design and Construction and Chief, Transportation Division (Retired)

The Professional Support Division

The Professional Support Division existed for the first twenty-five years of the Denver Service Center (approximately 1971–1996). Its function was to provide technical assistance and mentoring to designers and construction managers as well as to lend professional assistance to regional office and park staff with the Denver Service Center's widely experienced consultants. Quality control of projects leaving the office was provided through a plans and specifications review process. Later, this division was broken down into the following branches: Professional Consultants, Roads and Transportation, Estimating, and Concessions. The professional consultants included specialists in architecture, landscape architecture, environmental engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, and structural engineering, in addition to historical and cultural specialists and an accessibility specialist.

Other organizational-driven responsibilities included a complete updating of NPS Master Specifications and Standard Details for use by the Denver Service Center and regional offices (critical to the advertisement of construction contracts). They were also used by outside design firms doing programmed project designs. The professional support staff also organized in-house technical training courses and discipline-specific monthly discussion meetings. There was a maintenance assistance program to address requested assistance with serious technical problems in park facilities, representation on industry standards-setting committees and major guidance for correction of park emergencies that were not being immediately addressed by programmed design and construction programs.

Some of these emergency projects were the following:

- correcting problems resulting in contamination of public drinking water supplies or streams feeding town water treatment plants (health and safety),
- handling of severe drought situations where park water supplies were drying up,
- locating and repairing buried pipeline leaks, making it possible to keep up with daily water supply needs, and
- giving on-site assistance to Park staffs to correct non-compliant wastewater treatment plant discharges.

The division's contribution and support of park maintenance related incidents and systemic problems ensured an income stream separate from line-item construction and put DSC experts on the front line solving park problems with their special expertise.

Tom Harrington, Senior Environmental Engineer (Retired)

The Technical Branch of Design and Construction

The Design and Construction Technical Branch plays an integral role in the success of each project managed by the Denver Service Center. DSC technical experts collaborate with project management teams to ensure each project maintains overall adherence to NPS policies and guidelines, programmatic requirements, scope, budget, compliance, and permitting requirements. In addition, projects are reviewed for compliance with DSC design standards and deliverable requirements and with health, safety, and functional requirements.

The branch consists of senior design professionals and compliance specialists who provide quality assurance reviews and compliance oversight and offer a wide range of design and construction consulting services to parks, regions, and program offices. The branch has developed tools that coordinated the wide range of federal mandates and best practices for sustainable construction of all types. These tools pushed design and construction projects to engage innovative practices that help reduce the impacts to the environment for development that provides for visitor enjoyment.

Compliance

The Compliance Section of the branch currently comprises two natural resource specialists and two cultural resource specialists, one of whom respectively is assigned to every DSC project. The mission of the Compliance Section is to meet project objectives while minimizing impacts to natural and cultural resources and to ensure that compliance for every project is appropriately completed for the National Environmental Policy Act, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and other laws, executive orders, regulations, policies, and guidelines (e.g., Endangered Species Act; Clean Water Act; Clean Air Act; Coastal Zone Management Act).

In addition, members of the Compliance Section

- work with project managers and region and park colleagues to ensure that mitigation measures and best management practices identified during compliance and permitting processes are included in subsequent design and construction documents,
- oversee contracted compliance work (e.g., preparation of environmental assessments, natural and cultural resource studies, and surveys), and

» provide technical assistance and advice to staff of the Denver Service Center, regional support offices, park units, and contractors regarding the National Environmental Policy Act, Section 106 and other laws, regulations, guidelines, and policies.

The Compliance Section has assisted with the completion of compliance for a number of notable projects over the years, including revitalization of the Gateway Arch National Park grounds associated with the city of St. Louis's CityArchRiver project and a number of projects on the National Mall (e.g., the Washington Monument security screening facility and rehabilitation of the Lincoln Memorial undercroft).

Quality Assurance

The Quality Assurance (QA) team was established following the reorganization and downsizing of the Denver Service Center in 1998. A comprehensive group of design, compliance, and document-administration professionals was assembled to ensure each project package meets minimum criteria for contracting to commence, design content and completion conforms to federal criteria, and the opportunity for major construction-phase problems due to design insufficiency is minimized.

All projects under the purview of the DSC project management system undergo milestone reviews for consistency and conformance with federal requirements, regardless of the contract delivery method. Today, the variety of project delivery methods can include Design-Bid-Build and Partnership arrangements in which a cooperating organization uses creative contracting agreements and takes responsibility for hiring, managing, and architectural/engineering, awarding a construction contract, and presiding over construction administration. The latter method is a custom approach with specific stipulations and assigned responsibilities.

Quality Assurance is a control mechanism for project management teams. While contractors can relieve the obligation for the Denver Service Center to supply technically qualified expertise and input to guide decision making, at times an architect/engineer cannot perform at a high and consistent level across broad professional disciplines. That's where QA examination and involvement become invaluable. QA team members frequently deep-dive problems and issues to help clarify and direct outcomes that enhance design quality and elevate client satisfaction.

QA technical specialists provide special service to DSC management, to other government agencies, and even to our solicitors. The aggregate knowledge and repeated exposure to professional and park issues, possessed individually and by affiliation, are a storehouse of experience at responding to diverse design tasks and complex issues. The ability to offer direction and responses, to efficiently network with reliable sources internally and externally, and to retrieve answers with confidence and clarity is a benefit to project management, to architects/engineers, and to other stakeholders challenged by unusual circumstances. Quality Assurance covers a broad spectrum of information concerning architectural, landscape, engineering, preservation, natural and cultural resource, and environmental management issues. It's a resource treasure to be tapped by project teams to find creative design and construction methods and answers.

While most projects are line-item funded and follow the outlined process and parameters for project delivery, at times the Denver Service Center responds to unusual requests for technical assistance and oversight. Such requests can originate directly from parks and regional offices, from congressional legislation for a specific project purpose, from other federal agencies lacking the expertise, from NPS or Interior Department solicitors, and from partnership organizations managing projects independently.

The technical branch maintains the Denver Service Center's Workflows website (https://www.nps.gov/dscw/index.htm), which provides guidance and resources for A/E firms, construction management firms, and construction contractors and is used by NPS employees to access clear and timely guidance for project completions. Firms and contractors that collaborate with the Denver Service Center receive guidance and access through Workflows related to cultural resources, natural resources, design, and construction for new and existing facilities, historic structures, and infrastructure systems.

The DSC Technical Branch was called in after the 2011 earthquake that damaged the Washington Monument. The structural expertise provided by the branch helped managers evaluate alternative approaches for restoring the monument and preventing future damage from similar earthquakes.

After Hurricane Sandy struck the east coast in October 2012, the Park Service set broad goals for rebuilding to protect against future storms and the additional effects of climate change. To convert these goals into action, the DSC Technical Branch collected the best science and Federal Emergency Management Agency flood/storm data to set new, more protective standards for constructing in vulnerable areas.

The branch has offered essential support to such major projects as the Elwha Dam removal, rehabilitation of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool, and the Gateway Arch in St. Louis.

Geographical Information Systems (GIS) visual displays were significant support for planners working to understand complex issues and proved pivotal in planning for the Big Cypress National Preserve, an area once viewed as Florida's last frontier, insulated by its rugged terrain from mainstream pressures, but that way no longer. In establishing the preserve, Congress called for the protection of the preserve's "natural and ecological integrity in perpetuity." But Congress allowed certain existing uses to continue, subject to reasonable regulation. Alternatives for hunting, off-road vehicle access, overnight backcountry camping, and oil and gas development had to be based on the distribution of important resource areas in each planning unit. The Washington-based Mining and Minerals Office worked with the Denver Service Center to prepare a minerals management plan, excluding future oil and gas development from important resource areas. To ensure completion and protection of the Everglades preserve, the Denver Service Center GIS database helped establish credibility with all the stakeholders. The preserve continues to use GIS data in its operations. (The GIS group is part of the DSC Planning Division.)

The Technical Branch of the Denver Service Center is also a center of excellence for construction cost estimating. Branch personnel help the Park Service to obtain project cost estimates that reflect the actual cost of doing work in remote and challenging environments.

Jared Kaber, Chief, Technical Branch
Greg Cody, Compliance Section Chief and
Cultural Resource Technical Specialist
Chris Jones, Historical Architect (Retired)

The Information Management Division

The Information Management (IM) Division grew from the Park Service need to efficiently manage architectural and construction drawings. The division's mission progressed from management of physical documents to cloud-based systems with stops on the way for microfilm and server-stored electronic files. The division has embraced and implemented new technologies as funding allowed. The Denver Service Center was an early user of an integrated system for document and records management, SharePoint for collaboration purposes, and Project Server for project management.

Over the years, the division has been responsible for technological improvements to support the center's mission as well as managing the administrative support and operations staff. Currently, the division is charged with the Technical Information Center (TIC) branch consisting of the TIC collection, the eTIC2 system, the DSC Library, and the print shop; Information Services Branch with management of the Project Online and SharePoint systems, general systems administration support, and technology improvements; and the DSC employee development program.

Technical Information Center. The Technical Information Center ensures the preservation and dissemination of NPS documents and drawings that are used in the planning, development, construction, modification, and repair of buildings and facilities in the parks. TIC's scope has expanded over the years to include in-house and NPS-funded final reports for all disciplines, including studies on natural and cultural resources, history, and preservation. The Technical Information Center follows technology trends in scanning and electronic records management to ensure that documentation is maintained. Certified records managers have been part of the TIC staff since the early 2000s. TIC's use of technology supported by archivists, archives technicians, and contractors provides the flexibility and professionalism in meeting new needs and challenges as it supports NPS park units and offices.

Microsoft Project Online. The Denver Service Center and the Inventory and Monitoring Division recognized the need for project management tools for design and construction projects. In 2004, they began to explore Microsoft Project Server, which allowed for scheduling, tracking, and reporting on projects. The system was installed and an administrator hired to work with DSC project managers for effective utilization of the tool. Newer versions were installed over the years, culminating in the move to Project Online in 2020. This move took the Denver Service Center to a cloud version, resulting in new functionality in a stable, secure environment. Integrated data visualization tools include Power BI Dashboards for improved reporting on projects. In addition to construction projects, the DSC Planning, Transportation, Contracting, and Information Management Divisions use Project Online for management of their projects.

Microsoft SharePoint. The Denver Service Center has been using SharePoint since 2007 for document collaboration and process automation with DSC project stakeholders and contractors and internally within DSC divisions. In 2010, the Denver Service Center created a SharePoint application that helped manage the documents and processes during a DSC-managed construction project. The Denver Service Center has maintained a SharePoint site that served as its Intranet for the last fifteen years. During 2020, the Denver Service Center moved to SharePoint Online and rolled out a new enhanced version of its DSC intranet that helped define the Park Planning, Facilities, and Lands Directorate design standards for SharePoint sites.

Carol R. Simpson, Chief, Information Management Division

The Technical Information Center

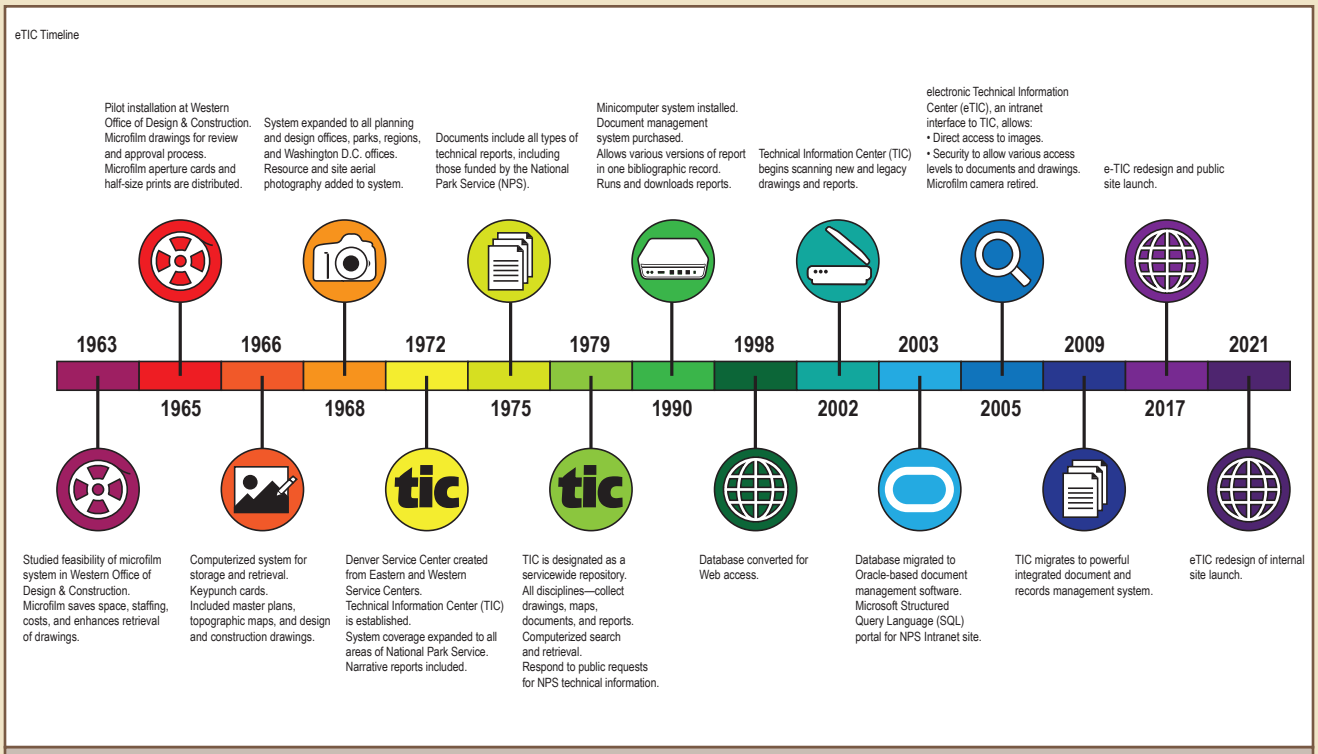
In 1963, a study was conducted on the feasibility of installing a microfilm system in the Western Office of Design and Construction. The goal of the study was to find a means of alleviating some of the major problems that were occurring in all design offices, such as the growing costs of preparing, filing, and retrieving technical drawing information, as well as the reproduction and distribution of those documents. The study indicated that the military and private design offices had had considerable success in saving space, workloads, and money with microfilm systems.

A pilot installation began operation in January 1965 in the Western Office of Design and Construction in San Francisco. At first, the system was used to film drawings for the review and approval process. By 1966, it was apparent that the microfilm system had to be supplemented with a data processing system to manage the large amount of information. A keypunch card system was implemented, designed to contain printed information as well as machine-readable information, and a computer was programmed to store and retrieve the information in a manner that was most useful to the client.

Traditionally, park master plans had been in a drawing format. But in 1967, the format was changed to a report format. As a result, the system was expanded to manage more narrative types of documents. The Technical Information System arrived as the first information system in the National Park Service. In 1975, the system was again expanded to include all types of technical report documents used in the planning and design process, not only by the Denver Service Center, but also those generated by the parks, regions, and Washington offices.

During the years from 1979 to 1989, the Technical Information Center (TIC) was maintained on a Boeing computer using the INQUIRE database management system. Keypunch data entry cards had become a thing of the past. During this time, the Technical Information Center became a servicewide repository for all disciplines' drawings, maps, and documents, and the Technical Information Center strengthened its role in responding to public requests for NPS technical information.

In April 1990, a minicomputer system was installed in the Technical Information Center. The custom-designed INFORMIX database was maintained on a SUN workstation to allow access for four DEC terminals for TIC staff. In 1998, the Internet and the popularity of Wide Area Networks prompted the Technical Information Center to convert their database to a web-deliverable product. And in 2003, the database was loaded into High View, a COTS document-management software with an Oracle backend for metadata. The collection is available on the National Park Service Internet site using a customized Microsoft Structured Query Language portal.



A timeline of the DSC Technical Information Center's milestones.

In 2005, eTIC, an intranet interface to the TIC collection was released, providing servicewide access through a Google-like search feature.

Today, the system holds more than 220,000 data records, which represent 800,000 microfilm aperture cards of maps, plans, and drawings; 1,500 records of resource and site aerial photography; photographs; and 85,000 planning, design, construction, natural resource, and cultural resource documents. In addition, 2.2 million image files are linked to the data records. A public interface to the collection was released in 2018 (pubs.etic.nps.gov). This allows portions of the TIC collection to be available through an Internet connection.

Alvie Sellmer, Acting Chief, Technical Information Center
Abel Ramon, Branch Chief, Technical Information Center

Falls Church Branch—Falls Church, Virginia, and the Applied Archeology Center—Silver Spring, Maryland

In the 1970s, the Denver Service Center established a branch of the Eastern team in Falls Church, Virginia. The team included a fairly large group of professionals who had been part of a team carrying out restoration work on the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal as part of the Bicentennial program following the considerable damage done by Hurricane Agnes in 1972. That restoration team had been based in Seneca, Maryland.

The Falls Church team provided planning, design, construction, and transportation project management support and even had an in-house graphics publications person (visual information specialist). Falls Church served the National Capital Parks, National Mall, and the White House. They worked closely with the White House liaison and provided project support on very sensitive projects like the White House roof, guard stations, bollards, etc. They reacted to security incidents with physical security designs but also provided overall plans for the White House gardens and the comprehensive plan for the White House. The never-ending work on George Washington Memorial and the Baltimore Parkway kept them extremely busy.

Having team members who lived and worked in the DC metropolitan area ensured a relationship with the National Capital Region and the park superintendents, which would have been more difficult from a Denver location.

Falls Church staff regularly visited park sites and worked on projects from preplanning through post-construction. Their work was always made more complicated with political events, VIPs, and other visitors who wished to observe these high-profile projects in progress. The FDR Memorial was one of their final projects—a stellar example of this office's dedication and excellence. During the 1970s, members of the team also established a specialized Historic Preservation Training Center (Williamsport) in Frederick, Maryland.

In addition, the Denver Service Center staffed an Applied Archeology Center in Silver Spring, Maryland. That office completed technical archeological reports for east coast and National Capital area parks in conjunction with design projects or as stand-alone services. The dedicated staff represented the best of that profession and went on (after its closure in 1999) to lead in their respective fields.

In 1999, after the NAPA recommendations were released, it was determined that Falls Church staff would be co-located in Denver at the Denver Service Center, and that office was closed.

DSC Support Services

While Denver Service Center professionals and project managers have been on the front lines at parks and regions, there has always been a strong cadre of support staff—from student interns to administrative specialists to printing technicians to drafting technicians and beyond—to assist in getting projects out the door.

At its largest in the 1970s and 1980s, 40 administrative staff supported 800 employees. In 1971, there was one telephone for the entire service center (at Joslins), and an administrative person answered calls and delivered messages from around the entire National Park Service to the DSC employees. Staff monitored fax machines and keypunch machines, mailed hundreds of bid set packages, and made sure employees had secure reservations for flights and hotels (before CONCUR and travel websites).

These support professionals worked as a team with each other and coordinated across geographic teams to ensure that the processes went smoothly and efficiently, allowing the DSC project staff to concentrate on the work at the parks. Support staff were loyal to the Park Service and great defenders of the Denver Service Center, even during hard times of staff reductions.

In more recent years, the support staff grew to address new technologies and provide new roles in support of project staff members. Many administrative systems (budget, finance, charge card, etc.) now support the staff, and these systems must be administered to provide optimum service and minimum frustration.

Many DSC support staff have graduated and moved on to other agencies. Other staff members (even those from early-1980s high school programs) have stayed and have grown with the Denver Service Center or the NPS regional office.

The service center concept prevails throughout those professions fifty years later.

Then: No desk telephones
Now: TEAMS calls on every computer

Then: Multiple paper copies produced on typewriters and distributed by mail
Now: TEAMS shared files/emails/chat—all instantly shared

Then: Mailed 300 bid sets (sometimes full-size prints) to potential contractors
Now: Electronic System for Awards Management (SAMS.gov). Bids are all electronic

Then: Project data sheets—printed and put in notebooks for review
Now: Panorama

PART THREE: CHRONOLOGY

DSC CHRONOLOGY

This chronology includes highlights of pertinent NPS and DSC history, including the various awards received to date.

1872

- Yellowstone National Park, near the headwaters of the Yellowstone River in the Wyoming Territory, is "dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasuring-ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people."

1916

- Congress establishes the National Park Service as a bureau in the Department of the Interior with passage of the National Park Service Organic Act (16 USC 1-4). The 1916 Act directed the National Park Service to promote and regulate the use of the national parks, monuments, and similar reservations to "conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

1917

- Stephen T. Mather is appointed the first director of the National Park Service.

1929

- Horace M. Albright, who had served both as superintendent of Yellowstone National Park and as assistant director of the National Park Service during Stephen T. Mather's tenure, is appointed to replace him as Park Service Director.

1930

The Educational Division is abolished with the establishment of the Branch of Research and Education in the Washington Office.

1937

National Park Service establishes a regionalized organizational administrative structure, incorporating the Emergency Conservation Work and the Civilian Conservation Corps district offices and their professionals into four National Park Service regional offices.

1942

The Washington Office of the National Park Service moves to the Merchandise Mart in Chicago, Illinois, to provide more office space in Washington for defense- and war-related agencies during World War II.

1946

The Branch of Development is established in Chicago by consolidating the former Branches of Plans and Design and Engineering.

1955

The Park Service launches Mission 66, an ambitious initiative to upgrade park facilities, construct new visitor centers, improve roads, and upgrade maintenance facilities in preparation for the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the National Park Service. Mission 66 would become the largest developmental initiative in the history of the bureau.

1967

The document management system in the Western Office of Design and Construction is expanded, and the Technical Information Center becomes the first information system in the National Park Service.

1969

In July, the National Park Service issues its "Reorganized Service Center Concept," and the concept is implemented resulting in the designation of offices in San Francisco and Washington, DC, as the Western and Eastern Service Centers, respectively.

1971

- National Park Service Director George Hartzog decides to consolidate the Eastern Service Center in Washington, DC, with the Western Service Center in San Francisco and shift the operation to Denver. Offices are set up on the second floor of an old Joslins department store at Villa Italia shopping center in Lakewood, Colorado.
- Glenn O. Hendrix is named the first director of the Denver Service Center.
- The Technical Information Center is established, and system coverage is applied to all areas of the National Park Service.

1973

- The American Bicentennial development program of the National Park Service is established with a total budget of approximately $100 million for the period between July 1, 1973, and June 30, 1976.
- The October 1973 issue of *Progressive Architecture* (Reinhold Publishing Company) publishes a ten-page illustrated profile of the Denver Service Center.

1974

- The Denver Service Center moves from their space in Lakewood's Villa Italia shopping center into professional office space at 755 Parfet Street, farther west in Lakewood.

1975

- John W. Henneberger becomes DSC manager. Henneberger would author an unpublished manuscript titled, "To Protect and Preserve: A History of the National Park Ranger." (NPS History Collection, Harpers Ferry)
- Following a Civil Service audit, a DSC task force produces what would later be referred to as the "Alternative #1: Strong Team Concept," and as a result, the Denver Service Center is reorganized for the first time.

1976

- The General Authorities Act passes directing the secretary of the interior to investigate, study, and continually monitor the welfare of areas whose resources exhibit qualities of national significance and which may have potential for inclusion in the national park system.

1978

- President Carter signs the National Parks and Recreation Act into law.
- Denis P. Galvin is named DSC manager.

1979

- The Technical Information Center is designated as a servicewide repository.

1982

- Launch of the Park Restoration and Improvement Program, which included line-item construction projects totaling $18.8 million.

1984

- Six DSC projects receive Federal Design Achievement Awards and of those two (*) are selected for Presidential Awards for Design Excellence:
  - Franklin Court at Independence National Historical Park*
  - Linn Cove Viaduct at Blue Ridge Parkway*
  - Jordan Pond House at Acadia National Park
  - Klondike Gold Rush National Park General Management Plan
  - Lowell National Historical Park Visitor Center
  - Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area General Management Plan
- The Denver Service Center receives a Certificate of Commendation in Preservation from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for its work on the Civil War gunboat *Cairo* at Vicksburg National Military Park.
- In 1984, project team members for the rehabilitation of the historic buildings of Skagway, Alaska, for the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park are honored with a Federal Design Achievement Award from the National Endowment for the Arts-Presidential Design Award Program.

1985

- Gerald D. Patten succeeds Denis Galvin as DSC manager on October 13.
- A reorganization at the end of the fiscal year realigns the Denver Service Center into three (rather than four) geographical planning and design teams: Western (Alaska/Pacific Northwest/Western), Central (Midwest/Rocky Mountains, Southwest), and Eastern (North Atlantic/Mid-Atlantic/National Capital/Southeast).
- A subsurface drill hole from the rim of Grand Canyon National Park is completed to the base of the Muav limestone cliff allowing an ample supply of water to be provided—via an eight-inch waterline—to the major visitor facilities on the canyon's south rim.

1986

- The Denver Service Center is instrumental in planning, design, and construction for the launch of Great Basin National Park and for intergovernmental planning projects in East St. Louis, Chicago, and southwestern Pennsylvania.
- A special planning team is established to produce mineral management plans for the Alaska national parks to address the effects of mining operations and establish mitigating strategies.
- The Denver Service Center also produces land protection plans for Dinosaur National Monument, Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, and Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

1987

- The Denver Service Center and the Rocky Mountain Regional Office move to larger office facilities in a newly constructed four-story, brick building on West Alameda Parkway near Green Mountain in Lakewood, Colorado.
- The first annual NPS design workshop is attended by more than 200 participants from parks, regional offices, the Harpers Ferry Center, the Washington Office, the US Forest Service, and the Denver Service Center.

1988

- John J. Reynolds becomes manager of the Denver Service Center.
- A comprehensive management plan is completed for Steamtown National Historic Site, blending resource preservation with visitor use needs. The plan includes opportunities for hands-on experiences—including rigging a steam-era train.
- President Lincoln's home in Lincoln Home National Historic Site in Springfield, Illinois, is restored.
- The restoration of President Taft's home in Cincinnati, Ohio, is completed.
- Restoration of the 19th-century Russian Bishop's House in Sitka, Alaska, is completed.

1989

- The Land Use Plan/Cultural Landscape Report for Boxley Valley at Buffalo National River wins the President's Award for Design Excellence.
- The Buffalo Point Campground at Buffalo National River wins a Federal Design Achievement Award for efficiency, attractiveness, and innovative use of traditional native materials and craftsmanship.
- The Rough Ridge viaduct and bridges in Blue Ridge and the Cascade Creek Bridge in Yosemite are awarded second and third place, respectively, in a national Federal Highway Administration design competition.
- Long-term historic restoration work is completed on some of the most important historic structures in the national park system, including the Lake McDonald Lodge at Glacier, the Bryce Canyon Lodge, the Fordyce Bathhouse at Hot Springs, and the Kettle Falls Hotel at Voyageurs.
- The Johnstown Flood National Memorial visitor center opens. Historic rehabilitation of the Col. Elias J. Unger home is completed, and the home opens as park headquarters.
- The Branch of Publications and Graphic Design prepares for printing in both Russian and English the international report on a proposal to establish a Beringia International Park with Russia. Maps were drawn and linoleum block prints created for illustrations. Released at a Joint Soviet-American Commission meeting in Washington, DC, on January 10, 1990, the publication received an award from the American Society of Landscape Architects.

1990

- The Planning Division's *Study of Alternatives for the Salem Project* earns the American Society of Landscape Architects' Merit Award for Planning and Analysis.
- The historic National Park Inn at Mount Rainier National Park reopens after thirteen months of renovation.
- The new visitor access center at Denali National Park is completed and opened to the public.
- The Tyler Bend Visitor Center and district office building at Buffalo National River is completed.
- The minicomputer system is installed at the Technical Information Center, and a document management system is purchased.

1991

- The Great Basin General Management Plan is completed, the first GMP project to use a Geographic Information System database from the outset to substantiate planning issues and direct development proposals.
- The French Quarter headquarters/visitor center at Jean Laffite National Historic Site in New Orleans is completed as are the Liberty Theater and Prairie Cultural Center at Eunice and the Wetlands Cultural Center at Thibodaux.
- Groundbreaking ceremonies are held for the FDR Memorial in the nation's capital.
- The DSC Office of Professional and Employee Development produces *Guiding Principles of Sustainable Design*.

1992

- The Denver Service Center completes the Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum management plan for America's Industrial Heritage Project through a partnership with the Southwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Preservation Commission.
- A Visitor Use Management Workshop for the Grand Canyon General Management Plan brings together a combination of experts from the Walt Disney Company, the National Parks and Conservation Association, Penn State University, Grand Canyon National Park Lodges, the Smithsonian Institution, Texas A&M University, the University of Vermont, the National Aquarium of Baltimore, and representatives of several national park areas.
- Three major construction projects culminate in Western Pennsylvania: the Allegheny Portage National Historic Railroad Visitor Center, the Horseshoe Curve Visitors Center, and the Albert Gallatin Visitor Center at Friendship Hill National Historic Site.
- The Denver Service Center receives two Excellence in Highway Design awards: one for the new Grand Teton Road and one for the Sol Duc Valley Road in Olympic National Park.
- Sequoia Kings Canyon Road Character Guidelines for the General's Highway reconstruction project receives the Federal Design Achievement Award.
- Old Faithful Inn receives the Federal Design Achievement Award, the National Historic Preservation Award, and the President's Award for Design Excellence.
- The Denver Service Center contacts the Photovoltaics Systems Assistance Center at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico, for technical training. As a result, a partnership is established to promote energy conversation and increase the use of renewable energy at NPS facilities.

1993

- President Bill Clinton declares the administration's goal of reinventing government and appoints Vice President Al Gore to lead the effort.
- Work begins on the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Memorial.
- Construction documents are completed for a new visitor center at John Day Fossil Beds National Monument in Idaho.
- Designs are completed for housing at Cape Hatteras National Seashore and several parks in Alaska (including Glacier Bay, Wrangell-St. Elias, and Katmai) as well as for a new maintenance facility at Yosemite National Park.
- A visitor center is completed at North Cascades National Park in Washington.

1994

- Charles P. Clapper Jr. becomes director of the Denver Service Center.
- In October, the Denver Service Center is selected as a Department of the Interior reinvention laboratory.
- The final Grand Canyon National Park General Management Plan/ Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision is completed.
- The Transportation Division receives an Award for Excellence in Highway Design for the Lakeshore Scenic Drive at Lake Mead National Recreation Area in Nevada.
- The Denver Service Center hosts the first annual NPS Design Workshop.
- Three DSC projects are recognized by the Federal Highway Administration in its Excellence in Highway Design, 1994 Biennial Awards: The Forehand Hollow Bridge on the Natchez Trace (Award of Excellence) and the Sentinel Bridge in Yosemite and Mount Carmel Highway in Zion National Park (Awards of Merit).
- *Guiding Principles of Sustainable Design* receives a Merit Award from the American Society of Landscape Architects.

1995

- As a result of its *Reinvention Plan*, the Denver Service Center's organizational structure is changed from a geographical team organization to an organization with an emphasis on project management. The new organization consists of six functional groups, each headed by a chief: Project Management, Management Services, Resource Planning, Landscape Architecture, Engineering, Architecture, and Contracting.
- The Denver Service Center receives the 1994 President's Award from the Colorado Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects for *Western Pennsylvania: It's Landscape, People and Industry*.
- Presidential Design Awards are presented to the Denver Service Center for reconstruction of the Sentinel Bridge in Yosemite National Park and the construction of the Tennessee Route 96 Bridge on the Natchez Trace Parkway. The Sentinel Bridge is also recognized by the American Society of Landscape Architects in its annual issue of *Landscape Architecture*, which was devoted to public landscapes.

1996

- The Mount Rainier National Park Paradise Wastewater Treatment Facility is completed.
- At Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the rehabilitation of the Presidio water treatment facility is completed.
- A ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by local, state, and federal officials, members of Congress, and Vice President Gore is held on the Natchez Trace Parkway near Nashville to dedicate and open the northern terminus of the parkway in Tennessee.
- The DSC Reengineering Laboratory receives Vice President Al Gore's Hammer Award in recognition of work that embraces the principles of the vice president's national performance review.
- Construction is completed on the Bushkill River Access at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.
- A new 12,000 square foot visitor center is dedicated at Mission San Jose at San Antonio Missions National Historical Park.

1997

- At a White House ceremony, the Denver Service Center and the Department of Energy's Sandia National Laboratory receive the National Park Foundation's 1997 National Park Partnership Leadership Award for resource stewardship and preservation. In addition, the National Park Service and the Denver Service Center are recognized for partnership contributions to Maho Bay Resorts, recipient of the 1997 *Smithsonian Magazine's* Environmental Award.
- A Presidential Design Award is given to the Denver Service Center and the Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division of the Federal Highway Administration for their work on the design and construction of the double-arch bridge on the Natchez Trace Parkway.
- Frank Greve's Knight Ridder News Service story about the cost of a restroom facility at Delaware Water Gap is published. Almost immediately, a subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations holds a hearing on Park Service Housing and Construction.
- The Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial in the nation's capital is completed on schedule and 8 percent below budget.

1998

- A panel of the National Academy of Public Administration submits a report to Congress entitled, "Strengthening the National Park Service Construction Program—the NAPA Report."
- The TIC database is converted for web access.

1999

- A restructured Denver Service Center is established with an authorized ceiling of 260 full-time equivalent positions. Under the new organizational structure, project management would be strengthened, and the amount of professional and technical services being contracted out would be substantially increased.

2000

- The American Society of Civil Engineers presents their highest project honor, the "Outstanding Project Leadership Award" to the Cape Hatteras Light Station Relocation Project.

2001

- Daniel N. Wenk is named director of the Denver Service Center.
- The Colorado Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects Planning and Design Awards program acknowledge the Boyhood Farm Restoration project at the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site with a Land Stewardship Award.
- The Department of the Interior Design Awards recognize the War in the Pacific Recreation Area with a Universal Access Award.
- The American Planning Association acknowledges the Denver Service Center with an Annual Outstanding Federal Planning Program Award.
- The American Planning Association gives honorable mention to the Canyon View Information Plaza at Grand Canyon and to the Transportation Center at Zion National Park.
- The general management plan for Dry Tortugas National Park receives an Outstanding Collaborative Planning Project Federal Planning Division Award.

2002

- The Technical Information Center begins scanning new and legacy drawings and reports.
- The historic Fort Sumter Education Center at Fort Sumter National Monument holds its grand opening.
- The American Society of Landscape Architects recognizes three DSC projects: Blue Ridge Parkway (Classic Award); Zion National Park, Transportation Center (Honor Award); and Grand Canyon National Park, Greenway Master Plan (Merit Award).
- The Colorado Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects Planning and Design Awards recognized the Giant Forest Museum project at Sequoia National Park and Liberty Square and Ferry Boat Facility at Fort Sumter National Monument.
- The general management plan for Dry Tortugas National Park receives an Outstanding Collaborative Planning Project Federal Planning Division Award.

2003

- An Award for Excellence in Highway Design for the Lakeshore Scenic Drive at Lake Mead National Recreation Area in Nevada is presented to the Denver Service Center by the Federal Highway Administration.
- The TIC database is migrated to Oracle-based document management software, and Microsoft's Structured Query Language is set up as the portal for the NPS intranet site.
- The Denver Service Center is recognized with an American Society of Landscape Architects Colorado Chapter Award for the Sequoia National Park restoration of the Giant Forest.

2004

- The American Planning Association (Federal Planning Division) cites the Denver Service Center with its 2004 Award for Outstanding Collaborative Planning Project for the Cane River National Heritage Area Management Plan.
- The Cumberland Gap National Historical Park Visitor Center opens to the public on October 8.
- The Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve Visitor Center is renovated and expanded.

2005

- The new Marinus Willett Collections Management and Education Center at Fort Stanwix National Monument opens July 1.
- The Crater Lake Superintendent's Residence is restored to serve as a science and learning center.
- The intranet website eTIC launches.

2007

- Samuel Q. Whittington becomes director of the Denver Service Center.
- The Bunker Hill Monument restoration project is completed.
- The storage building and maintenance buildings at the Historic Resources Support Center at Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park are completed.
- The Homestead National Monument of America opens a 10,700-square-foot Heritage Center in Beatrice, Nebraska.
- The Cheyenne Cultural Center at Washita Battlefield National Historic Site in Cheyenne, Oklahoma, is completed in a joint effort with the US Forest Service.
- The visitor center and administration building at Pu'ukohola Heiau National Historic Site opens.

2008

- A ribbon-cutting ceremony is held for the Blue Ridge Parkway Destination Center.

2009

- The Crown of the Statue of Liberty reopens to the public on July 4.
- Congress passes the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.
- LEED Platinum Certification is granted to the Eielson Visitor Center at Denali National Park and Preserve and to Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center at Lassen Volcanic National Park.
- The Eielson Visitor Center at Denali receives an Environmental Achievement Award from the Department of the Interior.
- The Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center at Lassen Volcanic National Park receives a Federal Energy and Water Management Award from the US Department of Energy.
- LEED Gold Certification is given to Blue Ridge Parkway Destination Center, which also receives "Environmental and Wood Design" recognition from the North Carolina American Institute of Architects and a Federal Energy and Water Management Award from the US Department of Energy.
- The logo design for the Designing the Parks conference is recognized with a Blue Pencil and Gold Screen Award from the National Association of Government Communicators.

2009 (continued)

- Ford's Theatre National Historic Site receives recognition from the Construction Management Association of America and the US District of Columbia Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation.

2010

- The Thomas Edison National Historical Park Laboratory Complex receives a 2010 New Jersey Historic Preservation Award.
- The Corson Maritime Learning Center at New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park wins a Massachusetts Historical Commission Preservation Award.
- Germantown White House at Independence National Historical Park opens to the public and wins a 2010 Preservation Achievement Grand Jury Award from the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia.
- The replacement facility in Solstice Canyon is completed in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. A wildfire had destroyed the original building in November 2007.
- The Denver Service Center obligates 100 percent of its managed projects under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, awarding 140 ARRA projects with a gross value of more than $577 million.
- Construction of the new visitor center at the African Burial Ground National Monument in lower Manhattan is completed.

2011

- Phase 1A of the Flight 93 National Memorial is dedicated and opened to the public.

2012

- The Denver Service Center replaces the general management planning program by introducing the foundation document process.
- Olympic National Park Elwha River Restoration is recognized by the American Council of Engineering Companies.
- Hamilton Grange National Memorial is recognized by the New York Landmarks Conservancy.
- Independence Tower at Independence National Historical Park is recognized by the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia.
- The Jefferson Memorial Seawall at the National Mall and Memorial Parks receives a National Capital Region Award from the American Society of Civil Engineers.
- The Point Bonita Lighthouse Bridge at Golden Gate National Recreation Area is recognized by Engineering News Record California.
- The Student Intern Center at Santa Monica National Recreation Area is recognized by Federal Energy and Water Management.
- Hurricane Sandy tears through the Caribbean and up the East Coast of the United States, inflicting substantial damage on national parks in the Northeast Region. The Denver Service Center undertakes more than sixty projects related to that damage valued at more than $200 million.
- The new Visitor and Research Center at Mesa Verde National Park opens on December 14.
- LEED Platinum Certification is awarded to the following national park buildings:
  - » Pinnacles National Park Westside Visitor Contact Station
  - » Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area Interagency Visitor Center
  - » Grand Teton National Park Moose Village Employee Housing
- LEED Gold Certification is awarded to the following visitor centers:
  - » Dinosaur National Monument Visitor Center
  - » Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine Visitor Center
  - » Mammoth Cave National Park Visitor Center

2013

- The Mesa Verde National Park Visitor and Research Center receives LEED Platinum Certification.
- The Statue of Liberty reopens on Independence Day with repairs completed following the damage inflicted by Hurricane Sandy the previous October.
- The Benjamin Franklin Museum opens to the public.
- Repair to the Kaluapapa Dock receives an Honor Award from the American Council of Engineering Companies of Hawai'i.
- The Westside Maintenance and Visitor Facilities earns a Merit Award from the American Council of Engineering Companies of California.
- Foothills Parkway in Great Smoky Mountains National Park receives an Award of Excellence from the American Segmental Bridge Institute.
- The Bicycle Feasibility Study for Cape Cod National Seashore receives a Planning Project Award from the American Planning Association, Massachusetts Chapter.
- The Old Courthouse Roof Replacement at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial receives a North American Copper in Architecture Award from the Copper Development Association and the Canadian Copper and Brass Development Association.
- The NPS Park Planning Program is given the American Recreation Coalition Beacon Award.
- The Moose Maintenance Building at Grand Teton National Park receives LEED Gold Certification from the US Green Building Council.
- The visitor center at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument receives Gold Certification.

2014

- Washington Monument Repairs are named among the Mid-Atlantic 2014 Best Projects by the Engineering News Record.
- The Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool and the Washington Monument receive a Grand Award in Design from the American Council of Engineering Companies of Metropolitan Washington, and a National Recognition Award from the council in 2015.
- A groundbreaking ceremony is held for the Collections Preservation Center at Great Smoky Mountains National Park, where 418,000 artifacts and 1.3 million archival records will be preserved.

2014 (continued)

- Fort Tilden Beach at Gateway National Recreation Area reopens to the public for the first time since its closure following damage sustained by Hurricane Sandy.
- The last remaining section of the Glines Canyon Dam is demolished with a final blast at 4:12 p.m. on Tuesday, August 2016, enabling the Elwha River to run free for the first time in 100 years. This marks the largest dam removal project in the history of the United States and the second-largest ecosystem restoration project in the history of the National Park Service.
- A ribbon-cutting ceremony is held to open the remodeled White House Visitor Center.
- One of three projects on the Tamiami Trail roadway through the Everglades—a mile-long bridge—is completed.

2015

- The Flight 93 Memorial Visitor Center opens to the public.
- The George Rodgers Clark Memorial Renovation Project is honored with a National Lighting Design Award from the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America.
- The Elwha and Glines Canyon Dam Removal and Elwha River Restoration Project receive a Best Project of the Year in Water/Environment Award from the Engineering News Record Northwest.
- The Merchants' Exchange Building at Independence National Historic Park receives a Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Construction Award for commercial properties.

2016

- Raymond K. Todd is named director of the Denver Service Center.
- The Planning Division begins the Visitor Use Management Framework and the Visitor Capacity Position Paper.
- The National Park Service celebrates its centennial on August 25.
- The Transportation Division and the National Capital Region receive a grant from the inaugural FASTLANE grant program.

2017

- The Planning Division receives the 2016 NPS Accessibility Leadership Achievement Award.
- The secretary of the interior issues a memo requiring the National Park Service to complete environmental impact statements that are not to exceed 150 pages for more standard planning efforts or 300 pages for unusually complex projects.
- The eTIC public site launches.

2018

- Transformed into an educational and visitor contact location, the Lockkeeper's House, which is the oldest structure on the mall, opens as a gateway to the National Mall.
- On September 9, the National Park Service, along with the Families of Flight 93, Friends of Flight 93 National Memorial, and the National Park Foundation hosts a dedication ceremony for the Tower of Voices, which is reoutfitted with 40 new chimes.
- A new section of the Foothills Parkway in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, including the 1.65-mile section known as the "Missing Link" now connected by a series of nine bridges, opens. Construction on the parkway began in 1966.
- The Denver Service Center and the Washington Office Facilities Planning Branch proudly accept the American Planning Association's National Planning Achievement Award for Transportation Planning for work on the NPS National Long Range Transportation Plan.

2019

- Another 2.3 miles of western bridges are completed in the Tamiami Trail roadway project—one of the largest conservation projects ever undertaken in the United States.

2020

- The Denver Service Center awards a $30.8 million construction contract to repair the historic Ellis Island seawall at the Statue of Liberty National Monument, a significant engineering upgrade addressing projected changes in tide levels and extreme weather conditions.
- The rehabilitated Arlington Memorial Bridge at George Washington Memorial Parkway is reopened at a ceremony on December 4.

2021

- The office continues to support maximum telework/remote work policies due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Implementation of the second NAPA report begins after the June 2020 report provided Denver Service Center with thirteen recommendations to improve efficiency.
- Carey Feierabend is hired as the DSC deputy director.
- DSC Planning and Transportation divisions leads the planning and implementation of a new vehicle reservation system at Acadia National Park. The effort is aimed to reduce traffic and parking congestion and may be implemented at other parks if successful.
- The Old Santa Fe Trail Building restoration is awarded a 2020 Santa Fe Heritage Preservation Award. The award winners are selected by the City of Santa Fe, the Historic Santa Fe Foundation, and the Old Santa Fe Association for achievements in historic preservation. The project earned the Sara Melton Award for Sensitive Maintenance and Rehabilitation.
- The Denver Service Center awards the first construction contract for a Legacy Restoration Fund project, created through the Great American Outdoor Act. The Denver Service Center serves as the project execution office for all LRF projects for the National Park Service.
- The Planning Division completes the strategic framework for the America 250th celebration in 2026. The framework is passed up through the Department of the Interior for approval.
- The Denver Service Center revises its sustainability design standards to incorporate Executive Order 14008 – Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad as it continues to integrate resilient design requirements through building codes, standards, executive orders, laws, and policies related to resiliency and climate change adaptation.
- The Denver Service Center celebrates its fiftieth anniversary in November.


JOLENE ROMERO
Stirling

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A: 1969 MEMORANDUM —SERVICE CENTER ORGANIZATION

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

OCT 7 1969

Memorandum

To: Assistant Secretary, Administration OCT 22 1969
Through: Assistant Secretary, Fish and Wildlife, Parks, and Marine Resources

From: Director, National Park Service

Subject: Service Center Organization

Following approval of the Secretary to consolidate our Philadelphia and Washington Service Centers, we have now completed our study of the remaining two Service Centers. This memorandum proposes a number of significant changes in their present structure for your consideration and approval if you concur.

As we discussed with the Secretary and Dr. McMurray several months ago, my objectives in reorganizing the Service Centers are to:

1. Adjust the professional staffing, including overhead, to meet the realities of a significantly decreased construction program brought about by several years of successive reductions in appropriations.

2. Provide better professional support to the parks.

3. Bring about a closer integration of our park planning and construction processes.

4. Achieve tighter control over the execution of our professional programs.

5. Decentralize non-headquarters type functions from the Washington Office to the Service Centers.

The Design and Construction Office concept was initiated in 1954. We have continued during the past decade to strengthen and improve the concept until, today, each consists of five offices, as follows:

Office of Design and Construction. Provides project design, construction, and construction contract administration services (including advisory services to maintenance programs).

Office of Land Acquisition. Executes the land acquisition program.

Office of Water Resources. Executes the water resources program.

Office of Resource Planning. Makes new area studies, master plans, and wilderness area studies for proposed or existing parks.

Office of Concessions Management. Provides concessions planning and advisory services.

In 1965 it was proposed that each Planning and Service Center should be an organization headed by a Center Director. As finally implemented, however, each of the component offices became a separate organization headed by a Chief under the jurisdiction of an Assistant Director in the Washington Office. Thus, the Planning and Service Center became primarily a location for professional services rather than an organization entity.

Our experience during the past three years has affirmed that the Service Center concept is basically sound and should be continued. A number of weaknesses have been identified, however, which should be strengthened to make the concept more effective.

First, there is a need for closer coordination among the individual offices in the Center. As noted above, the Office Chiefs now report to the Washington Office. The establishment of a Service Center as

an organizational unit, headed by a Director with the responsibility and necessary authority for coordinating the activities of the individual offices, is essential. To assist him in achieving this coordination, we also propose to establish an Office of Program Management. This office will, in addition, have the staff responsibility for providing liaison between the Service Center and the Regional Offices.

Second, there needs to be greater continuity in the planning and development process, which begins with the park planning studies done by the Offices of Resource Planning and continues through preliminary planning, project planning, and construction as carried out by the Offices of Design and Construction. The existence of separate Offices of Resource Planning and Design and Construction has, we believe, caused a discontinuity in this process; accordingly, we propose to consolidate them into an Office of Environmental Planning and Design. This office will be further strengthened by incorporating in it interpretive planners, natural scientists, and others who can contribute to the planning process, including the present small Offices of Concessions Management.

Third, as a concomitant part of strengthening the planning/development process, with particular emphasis on the need to upgrade the quality of our project design, we believe it is also desirable to split the more routine functions apart from our design activities. Accordingly, we propose to establish an Office of Construction Supervision and Maintenance which will have the responsibility for supervising the project supervisors, project inspectors, and project surveyors, a function now under the Office of Design and Construction. This office will also be responsible for providing professional maintenance advice and assistance to the Regional Offices and parks, especially on large or complex installations, and for providing a professional maintenance input to the planning and design process.

Fourth, much of the work accomplished by the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation in the Washington Office is associated with our planning and development process. Those employees performing this work can better function in the Service Centers in

close proximity to other offices engaged in this same process. Accordingly, we propose to establish an office for this purpose in each Service Center.

Fifth, as noted in our memorandum of August 8, we believe that we can achieve economies and provide better service by establishing an Office of Administrative Services in each of the Service Centers. This proposal has been approved by your office.

Sixth, you have previously approved the establishment of an Office of Water Resources in each of the Service Centers, to be achieved by splitting out personnel in the Branch of Water Rights from the present Offices of Land and Water Rights. We have decided that the small size of the resulting offices would not justify their separate status. Accordingly, we propose to leave them as a part of the land acquisition offices, and retitle these organizations as the Offices of Land Acquisition and Water Resources. Close technical direction of the water resources personnel, however, will continue to be provided by the Division of Water Resources in the Washington Office.

Seventh, to strengthen our internal controls, the responsibility for construction contracting will be combined with other procurement contracting and placed in the Office of Administrative Services. This will organizationally separate those employees responsible for supervising and inspecting contractor performance in the field from those responsible for letting and administering the contract--a means of insuring better control over contractor performance.

Thus, in summary the Washington and San Francisco Service Centers will each include the following units:

Office of the Service Center Director.

Office of Program Management. Monitors the scheduling and execution of all Service Center programs; provides liaison between Service Center and Regional Offices.

Office of Environmental Planning and Design. Prepares studies of possible new areas or additions to existing areas, master plans, wilderness studies, support data for new area and wilderness legislative proposals, and special or regional planning studies usually involving Service units. Prepares comprehensive developed area plans, including detailed preliminary plans for the design of all buildings, roads, utilities, and related development. Prepares construction drawings, technical contract specifications, and cost estimates for construction projects. Provides professional assistance and advice to the Regional Offices, parks, and other Federal and state agencies as requested.

Office of Construction Supervision and Maintenance. Provides on-site construction supervision of all construction contracts. Renders technical advice on maintenance matters to the parks. Provides technical input into the development of Regional and Servicewide maintenance programs and standards.

Office of History and Historic Architecture. Provides the regions with professional assistance in the fields of history and historic architecture, including the research to develop basic historic data, historic structures, reports, and furnishings plans. Participates in new area and master plan studies as requested. Provides construction supervision for historic structures.

Office of Land Acquisition and Water Resources. Executes the land and water rights acquisition program, including appraisals, negotiations, contracts, condemnations, exchanges, and cadastral surveys. Conducts water resources studies and investigations.

Office of Administrative Services. Provides personnel, financial, contracting (including construction contracting), contract administration, and property management services to the regions and Service Centers; and general office services to Service Center components.

Design Review Board. Meets periodically as required to review proposed architectural themes for parks and developed areas and proposed designs for structures. Includes Service Center Office Chiefs and others as necessary.

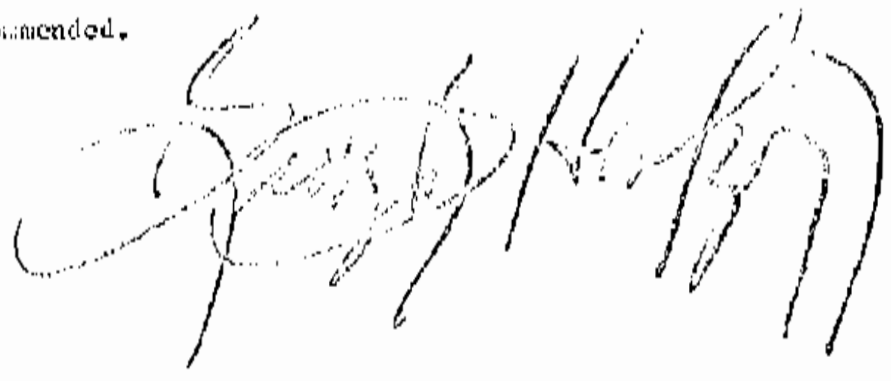
Program Review Board. Meets periodically, under the chairmanship of the Service Center Director, to review the Service Center execution of regional programs. Includes Regional Directors and Office Chiefs as required.

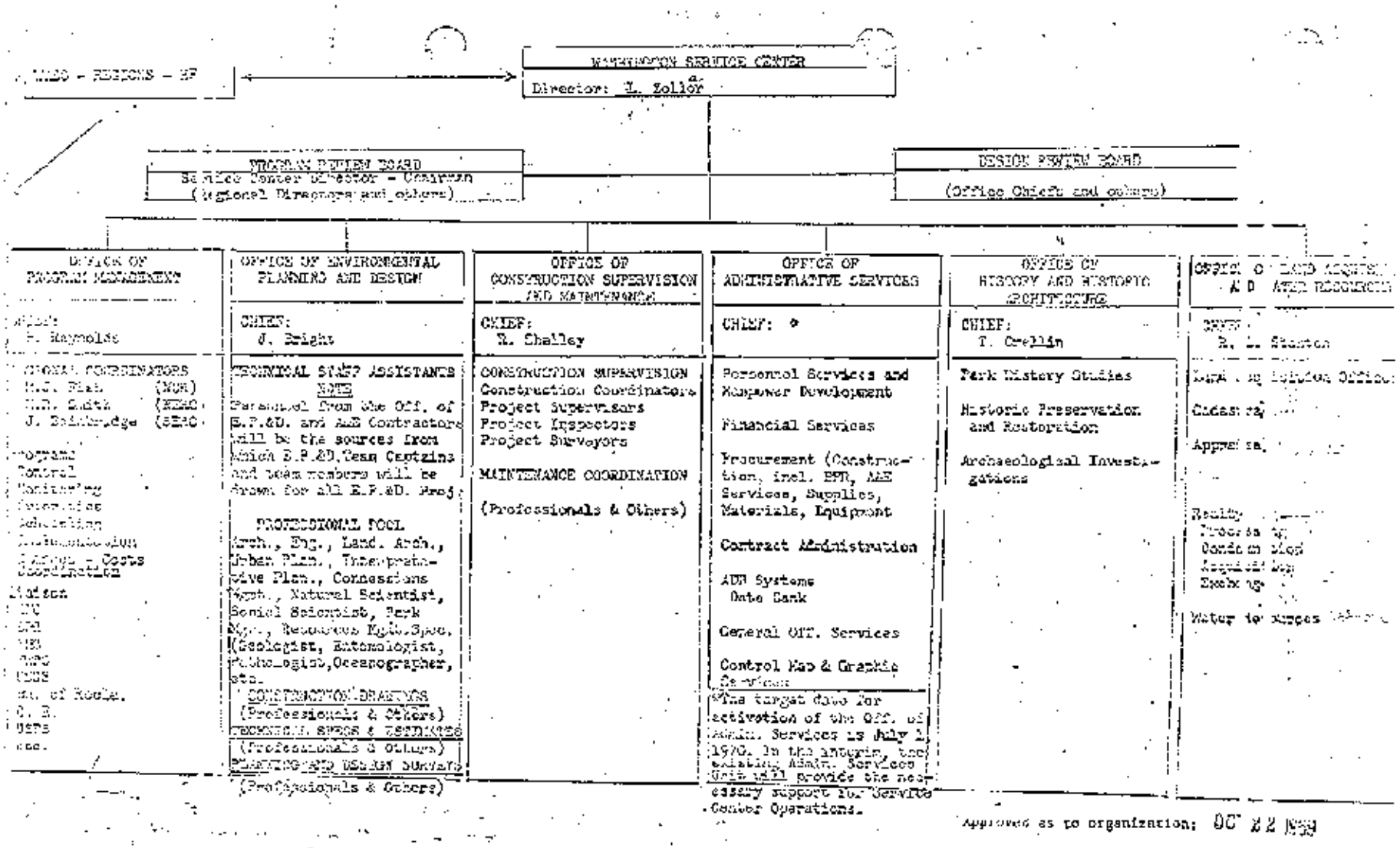
The role of the Service Center within the Service cannot be fully portrayed in terms of the individual components as outlined above, but rather must be considered in terms of its relationship to the Regional Offices and parks. The role of the Regional Directors and Park Superintendents is that of park managers. As such they are responsible for effectively operating the parks and for stating the requirements necessary to insure continued successful operation. The Service Center Director and his staff, on the other hand, exist solely to provide the professional and administrative services necessary to assist the Regional Directors and Superintendents in their management role. They identify how the requirements of the parks can best be met from a technical or a professional viewpoint. Theirs is a supporting role, and they exist only to serve the parks. Neither of these two components of the Service can function independently. Together they can insure effective and efficient operation of the National Park System.

One point not mentioned previously is relevant to the first of our organizational objectives. A substantial number of Service Center personnel, primarily from the present Offices of Design and Construction, will be transferred from the Service Center to the regional and park staffs, where they will serve primarily in support of park maintenance operations and to provide professional architectural and engineering advice to the Park Superintendents. In addition to decreasing the staff of the Service Center, this move will enable us to improve the caliber of our park maintenance program, which we have previously identified for the Bureau of the Budget and the Congress as one of our significant deficiencies.

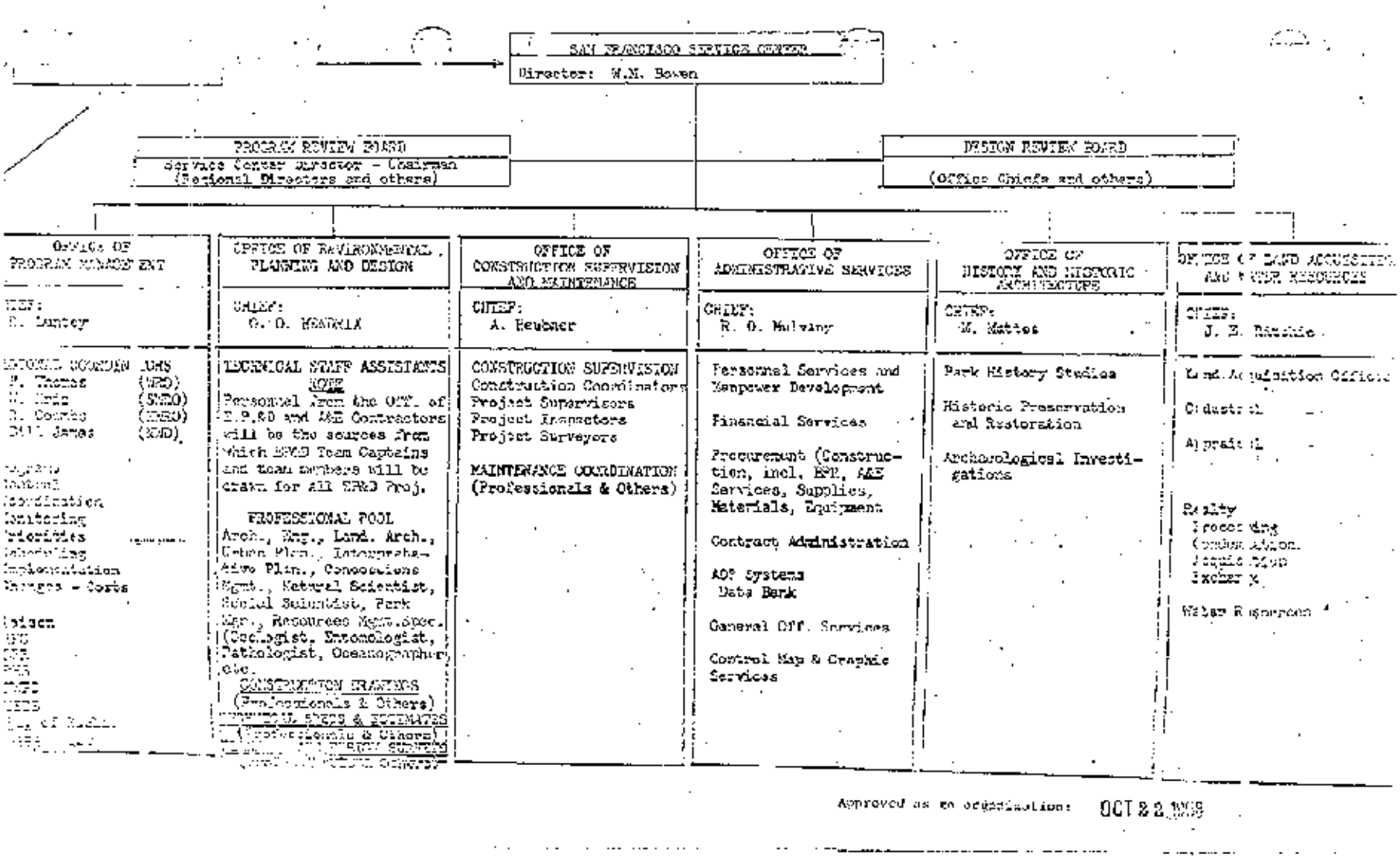
This memorandum attempts to list only the major features involved in our proposed reorganization of the Service Centers. If you or your staff would like further details concerning this proposal, we will be glad to discuss it with you or provide whatever additional information you may desire.

Your approval is recommended.





Approved as to organization: OCT 22 1969



Approved as to organization: OCT 2 2 1969

APPENDIX B: 1971 MEMORANDUMS—RELOCATION OF SERVICE CENTER OPERATIONS

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

October 8, 1971

Memorandum

To: Directorate--Washington Office and Field

From: Director

Subject: Relocation of Service Center Operations

Attached for your information is my self-explanatory memorandum of even date confirming the approval of Assistant Secretary Reed and Assistant Secretary Bodman to consolidate our Service Centers at Washington and San Francisco into one Service Center at Denver.

I have asked Mr. Zollar to work with Associate Director Jensen and each of the Service Center Directors in implementing this decision immediately. The Department has assured us of its full support in making the necessary relocation to Denver as easy and as smooth as possible.

We need the support and assistance of each of you and of each and every employee involved. I earnestly solicit your assistance and appreciate very much your cooperation.

Thank you.

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

OCT 2 1971

Memorandum

To: Each Employee, Eastern and Western Service Centers

From: Director, National Park Service

Subject: Service Center relocation

You have been previously advised that our permanent full-time employment ceiling has been reduced from 7,350 positions to 6,983 positions. In recognition of the extreme shortage of staffing in the parks, I have concluded, in consultation with the Washington office and Field Directorate, that 223 of these positions must be eliminated from the Service Centers. A reduction of this size makes a continued operation of two Service Centers ineffective. Thus, to enhance our effectiveness and productivity with reduced staffing, I have recommended, and the Secretariate has approved, the consolidation of our two Service Centers into one Service Center in Denver, Colorado.

I know that this transfer of functions is going to be a source of personal inconvenience to you. I wish that I could meet with each of you personally to discuss the matter. Since that is not possible, I have asked Mr. Zollar, our Director of Personnel, to arrange to meet with you at your place of employment, or at some other place convenient to you, to discuss your personal problems occasioned by this transfer. We have already ordered space for the consolidated Service Center in Denver and it is expected that the space will be available on or about November 15. Mr. Zollar will be available in the Eastern Service Center on Tuesday, October 12 to begin discussions with you.

Your understanding, cooperation and assistance in this matter is much appreciated.

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
EASTERN SERVICE CENTER
4228 Wisconsin Avenue NW.
Washington, D.C. 20242

IN REPLY REFER TO:
A4623-ESC-A

October 15, 1971

Memorandum

To: All Employees, Eastern Service Center

From: Acting Director, Eastern Service Center

Subject: Address, Temporary
Address, National Park Service Center,
Denver, Colorado

The address of the 55,000 square feet of space to be occupied by the National Park Service Center, Denver, Colorado is:

Villa Italia
300 So. Alameda
Denver, Colorado 80228

This location is a new shopping center at the intersection of Wadsworth Blvd. and Alameda Avenue, approximately two miles east of the Denver Federal Center. Permanent space, for later occupancy, will be approximately this same distance from the Federal Center. The final permanent location is being negotiated but has not been fully decided upon.

The temporary location has unlimited free parking for employees and is very convenient to schools, housing and shopping. Employees should realize however, that no public transportation, outside of the downtown area, is available. For all practical purposes, employees must provide their own transportation.

Administrative leave of not more than two working days may be granted to provide for settling real estate problems, legal problems, lease problems, and similar matters. No administrative leave is to be used to pack personal and household goods.

Employees who now have their paychecks sent to their home or bank, and who wish to change the designation so that the check is sent to the Service Center, should give their name and social security number to Sandy Dove, Administrative Operations. We will attempt to get this change through DIPS immediately.

Harvey B. Reynolds

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
EASTERN SERVICE CENTER
4228 Wisconsin Avenue NW.
Washington, D.C. 20242

IN REPLY REFER TO:
P40-ESC-D

October 26, 1971

Memorandum

To: All ESC Employees

From: Acting Director, Eastern Service Center

Subject: Reorganization of Service Center and resulting transfers

ESC employees will be notified on Wednesday, October 27, in regard to duty station transfers.

Employees being transferred to Regional Offices or parks should not request prehousing travel until entrance-on-duty date and other details have been cleared through the Director of the Service Center in communication with the Director of the Region. These employees should schedule interviews with the Director of the Service Center.

Employees being transferred to Denver may arrange their prehousing travel immediately upon receipt of official notification. These trips will be arranged at the employee's convenience. However, employees who are involved in projects which require immediate attention must have their travel date approved by their Office Chief.

Gene Lyttle and Tom Kern of the Duluth Land Acquisition Office are now in Denver and will be in an office at the Villa Italia. It is suggested that all employees transferring to Denver contact Mr. Lyttle or Mr. Kern for assistance since they will be able to advise in regard to both residences and apartments available in the Service Center vicinity. They will also be available to lend any possible advice and assistance in regard to purchase or rental agreements. Mr. Kern is an appraiser familiar with property values and can advise employees on the cost of residential property. We have requested the installation of telephones but do not as yet have a number for their office.

The National Park Service has a State office in the downtown Federal Building at 1961 Stout Street, Room 1010; telephone: 303-837-4502. Dick Strait is in charge of this office and he has assured us that he will be glad to assist our employees.

If you have questions after the meeting with Director Brown at 11 a.m., October 27, please feel free to contact Lew Farr's or Mr. Brown's office. Travel arrangements should be made through Nancy Williams.

Nancy B. Reynolds

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

October 26, 1971

Memorandum

To: Each Employee, Eastern and Western Service Centers

From: Director

Subject: Transfer of Functions

You were advised on October 8 of the decision to abolish the Eastern and Western Service Centers and to establish a new consolidated Service Center at Denver, Colorado, as one of the necessary actions to bring the Service into compliance with Departmental budgetary restrictions on personnel ceilings and reduction in personal services salary costs in the 1972 Fiscal Year.

On October 14 you were provided formal written notice of the transfer of your function to Denver. You were asked to advise us as to your willingness to move to Denver. Also, on October 15, I met with you in the Western Service Center and on October 19 I met with you in the Eastern Service Center, to respond to your questions concerning these actions. I explained to you the opportunities available elsewhere in the Service in the event you did not wish to move to Denver. As of October 22, approximately 500 of you had responded to our questionnaire as to your desires for reassignment. I deeply appreciate your assistance in this regard.

The Field Directorate and I met in San Francisco on October 22 - 26 to try to arrange a suitable assignment for each of you consonant with your expressed preference.

There is attached to this memorandum the notice of your new assignment. To a considerable extent we have been successful in reassigning you in accordance with one of your personally expressed preferences. It is with deep regret, however, that I must advise some of you that we cannot provide a reassignment in accordance with your expressed preference. In all honesty there is simply no way I can achieve this goal in a major readjustment of this magnitude. This is a personally painful experience for me for I know full well your disappointment.

To the maximum extent possible I want to ameliorate the very personal and difficult problems involved for you. Thus, to the extent that our program needs permit, I have assigned a number of personnel to positions at Denver,

but have assigned them temporary duty stations at their present locations. This will permit orderly transfer of employees to other Service positions to meet work program needs, allow for more effective placement elsewhere, and give those employees who cannot now move additional time to resolve personal hardships.

For those of you have have not yet responded, if you will provide us with your preferences in this matter, as previously requested, we will arrange to review them and see what we can work out.

Statement on Consolidation of NPS Service Centers

In order to comply with newly-imposed budgetary restrictions on both positions and funds, the National Park Service has, with the approval of the Secretary of the Interior, decided to consolidate its Service Center operations in Denver, Colorado.

This action is being taken as a part of the National Park Service effort to meet the Servicewide requirement of a net reduction of 367 positions, which also will involve a substantial reduction in the Washington Office headquarters staff.

The action will entail the closing of the existing Western Service Center at San Francisco, Calif. and the Eastern Service Center, located in Washington, D.C.

The new facility in Denver will provide employment for approximately 350 employees. The 550 employees of the two Service Centers will be offered the opportunity either to transfer to the new Denver Service Center, or, where appropriate to a position in a field area.

Those, who for personal reasons, find it impossible to accept a new assignment in Denver or in a field area will be assisted in every way possible by the National Park Service, in finding employment either in other government agencies or in private industries.

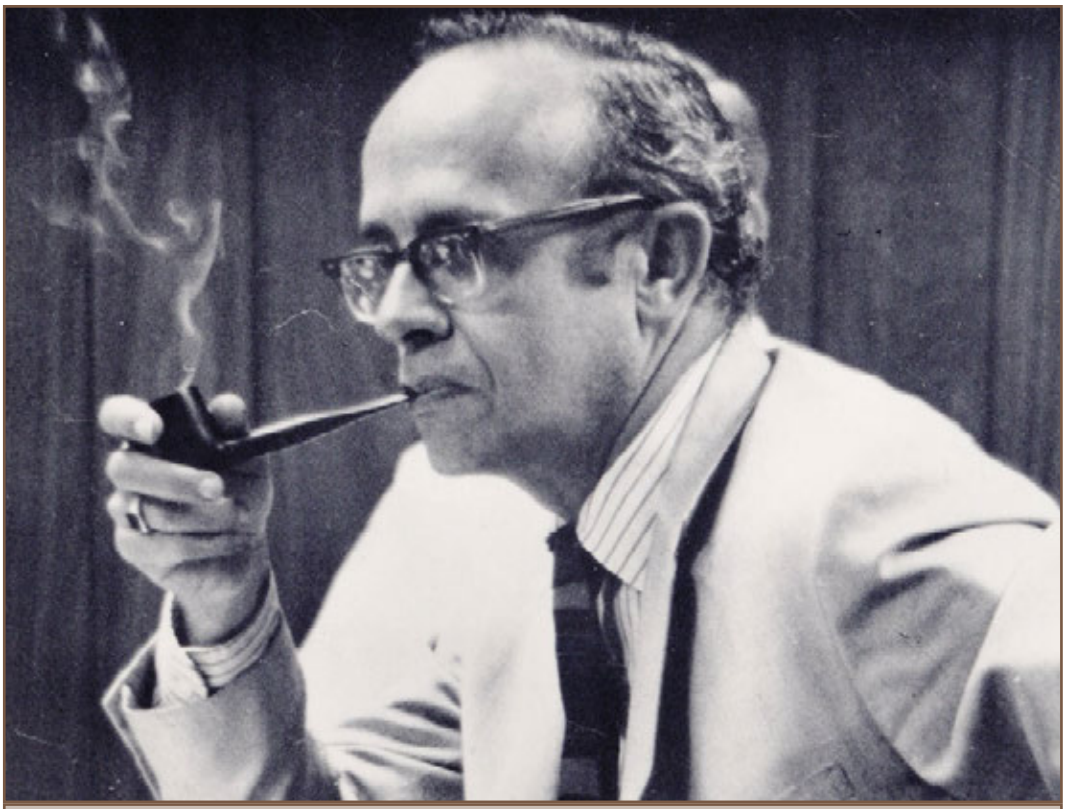
The consolidation of the Service Center operations into one facility is being taken as part of the effort to prevent further reductions in the staffs of National Park System areas, which already are severely understaffed. A further reduction in field personnel staff would jeopardize the protection of the natural resources of the parks and would reduce services to the public to an unacceptable level.

The Service Center functions as the planning, design and construction arm of the Service. It provides professional services in a variety of fields, including landscape architecture, engineering, architecture, sociologists, ecologists and park planners.

APPENDIX C: DSC DIRECTORS AND MANAGERS

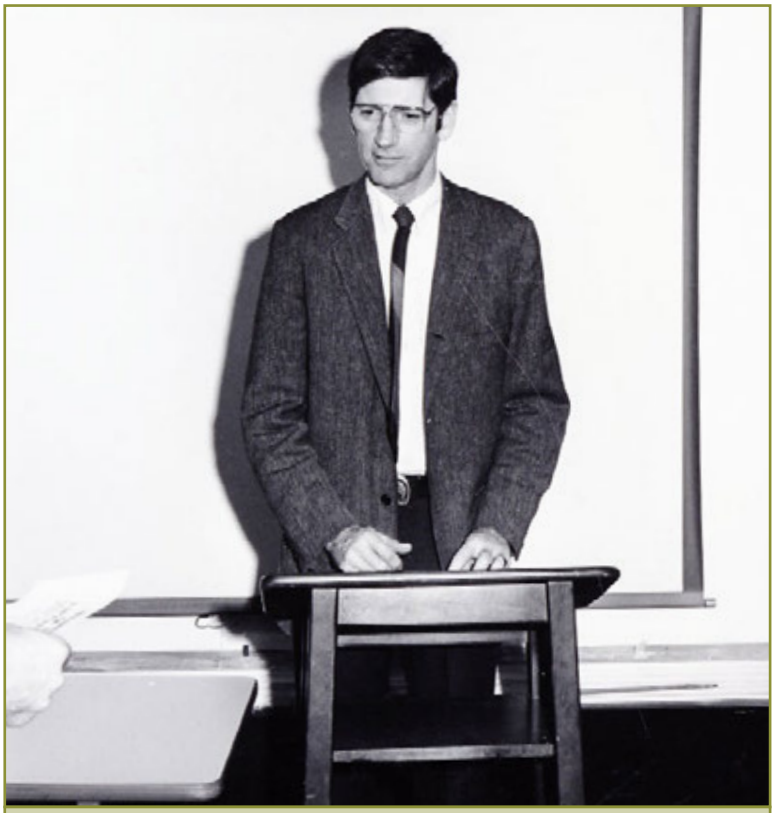
DSC Directors and Managers, 1971 – Present

Official titles changed in different administrations. This list does not include those who have served as acting director.



Glenn O. Hendrix, Director, November 15, 1971 – March 7, 1975

John W. Henneberger, Manager, March 10, 1974 – September 23, 1978



Denis P. Galvin, Manager, October 8, 1978 – October 5, 1985

Gerald D. Patten, Manager, October 13, 1985 – November 21, 1987

John J. Reynolds, Manager, September 25, 1988 – December 12, 1992

Charles P. Clapper, Jr., Director, January 1994 – March 2000

Daniel N. Wenk, Director, December 2001 – November 2006

Samuel Q. Whittington, Director, November 2007 – December 2015

Raymond K. Todd, Director, January 2016 – present

APPENDIX D: 1973 MEMORANDUM —GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING BIDDING PROCESSES

(Apparent grammatical problems in this memo likely resulted during the original transcription. Those who worked on the present history were unable to confirm or correct them.)

"Memorandum. To: Directors, Northeast, Southeast, National Capital Park, Midwest, Southwest, Western and Pacific Northwest Regions, Harper's Ferry Center and Albright Academy. From Director, Denver Service Center. Subject: Distribution of guidelines for handling bidding processes on Denver Service Center construction projects.

June 4, 1973. Denver Service Center. Organizational History files. 1972-1977. (WASO). Technical Information Center.

> Enclosed is a copy of subject guidelines which is self-explanatory. It is requested that copies be distributed to your subordinate field offices to which the guidelines have application.
>
> Although the guidelines, as such, are new, they do not call for any changes in practices or procedures used the Denver Service Center prior to this time. Rather, they have been prepared as an aid to all offices in providing assistance to the Denver Service Center in carrying out its construction program responsibilities. Questions with regard to the content or application of the guidelines should be directed to the Chief, Office of Contract Administration, Denver Service Center.
>
> Your cooperation in distributing the guidelines and requesting conformance with their provisions is appreciated and is expected to result in improved relations with the construction contracting community.

The guidelines pointed out that in administrating and supervising National Park Service construction projects,

> ... most matters are handled locally at Denver Service Center or through designated Denver Service Center employees in the field. However, it has long been recognized as advantageous from several aspects to enlist the assistance of parks and other field offices in certain of the steps involved in advertising for and opening of bids. Among the advantages are (a) use of the bidder's lists established and maintained by the field offices.

However, the guidelines stated that it would be a prohibitive task under current staffing ceilings for the Denver Service Center to maintain bidders lists for all the possible locales where projects might be programmed and to manage distribution of invitations for bids and opening bids at or near the project site. "Generally," the guidelines continued,

> ... the degree of cooperation and quality of assistance received have been first-rate, and the efforts by the staffs of other offices on behalf of Denver Service Center are greatly appreciated. It is recognized, however, that upon occasion Denver Service may call upon offices which may not have staff capability or experience to handle all eventualities connected with the competitive bidding process. For that reason and to provide for greater uniformity in the way bidding procedures on Denver Service Center projects are conducted, the following guidelines are set forth for the guidance of all offices which may be requested to handle bids for projects of Denver Service responsibility.

"PRE-BID PROCEDURES[1]

Upon receipt of an "Advance Preparation" memorandum from Denver Service Center transmitting a number of copies of the Invitation for Bids for an upcoming project, the field office should prepare a bidder's list of firms known to be interested in the type of work described on the invitation. A copy of the invitation should be then mailed to each firm on the list. A record must be kept on the list. The advance preparation memorandum will state the number of sets of plans and specifications Denver Service Center is proposing to forward for distribution. If the field office observes that interest in the project is such that the number of sets should be increased, Denver Service Center should be so advised as early as possible to facilitate printing of additional sets. On the other hand, if little or no interest is apparent, Denver Service Center should be advised promptly of that situations as well in order that appropriate action to stimulate interest may be taken.

1. Underscore in the original.

> The Denver Service Center would then transmit to the field office a memorandum transmitting the plans and specifications and requesting assistance in handling of the following five steps of the bidding process:
>
> 1. Distribute plans and specification for bidders.
> 2. Open bids.
> 3. Tabulate the bids in ascending order and check extensions for errors.
> 4. Notify Denver Service Center of results of bidding.
> 5. Forward all documents (all bids, opened and unopened; original abstract; invitation for bids — bidder's lists; and plan holder's list) to this office via CERTIFIED AIR MAIL.[2]

Leaving nothing to chance, the memorandum then stated the obvious:

> Plans and specifications should be distributed to firms requesting them or expressing interest on the work. The names of all firms to which the plans and specifications are distributed must be posted on a listing known as the plan holder's list.

The memo emphasized that this list must be kept current and accurate, "because, in the event that as addenda are issued, it is absolutely essential that all prospective bidders receive the same information."

2. Air mail still denoted a heightened level of urgency in the 1970s. Federal Express, the firm that came to define express delivery in the early years of the information technology revolution, had begun operations only two months before this memorandum was date-stamped. https://about.van.fedex.com/our-story/history-timeline/history

APPENDIX E: 1999 CHARLES CLAPPER SPEECH

A84 a88?

SISU!
CHARLES P. CLAPPER
DENVER SERVICE CENTER
JULY 2, 1999

Good morning. Today, only 183 days remain until the clock turns to the new millennium, the Year 2000. By then, we must work together to make the Denver Service Center the National Park Service's best every planning, design, and construction project management office. Two weeks ago, Director Stanton met with Chairman Regula of the House Interior Appropriations Committee. Chairman Regula told Bob Stanton how very pleased he is with the progress that the National Park Service and specifically the Denver Service Center has made in implementing the recommendations of the National Academy of Public Administration report and the direction provided by Congress in the Service's 1999 congressional appropriations. He also said that he understood how very difficult this past year has been for DSC and its employees. The Director has personally told members of the management team and me that he appreciates our efforts and recognizes our success. I too am very pleased with your dedication and perseverance through this very stressful time.

The NPS has lost over two hundred dedicated, experienced employees—people who had, in many cases, dedicated their entire career to providing outstanding planning, design, and construction services. Those are not only a number, they were our friends and colleagues, and we miss them. These losses will continue to weigh on us as we move forward to a new way of doing business, a way we must succeed in, a way we must make together. The time has come for all of us to work in partnership to rebuild confidence and regain our positions within the National Park Service as its leader in environmental planning, design, and construction. We must take the hard steps to be sure that we have learned the lessons of the past several years so that we never again face the prospect of being completely abolished or of being further downsized.

I am confident, given what we have been able to accomplish even during this past year, that if we continue to produce high quality, cost-effective products we need not fear further cuts. That means we must fully implement the NAPA recommendations and congressional directions and make sure that our stakeholders and our customers see that we are operating differently. Now is the time to show that we can be successful within this drastically changed environment and with much reduced numbers.

It has been easy in the midst of the crises of the past year to overlook our very real accomplishments in 1995, 1996, 1997, and 1998. Prior to NAPA's recommendations, DSC had significantly reduced construction and planning costs. We had looked to many new and innovative ways to handle both contracting and construction management. Our customer service record had vastly improved. The Vice President presented us with a Hammer Award and we received Presidential Design Awards as well.

Had we not been doing these things—of reducing costs, improving processes and focusing on customers, I am convinced that NAPA's recommendations would have been quite different and much more severe. DSC would not have survived as an organization; we would not be here now. We must remember those lessons. We must also recognize our project accomplishments during this stressful time, and should particularly note that our obligation rate during this period was in line with—and even ahead of—prior years. We have performed during the most challenging of times. We must continue doing that.

Do we have the human resources we need to perform as we now must? My answer is an unequivocal yes. What we can do for the National Park Service and its resources and visitors is too important not to perform at the highest level possible. I know we can do just that.

It is easy to be so focused on our losses that we overlook the enormous talent pool that remains. That pool is everyone here. As I look out at you, I see incredible years of experience in producing outstanding plans and designs for national parks. You have shaped our nation's heritage in ways both dramatic and subtle, but always in important ways. Look around at those here and consider the riches we have in this very room.

By January 2000 we need to begin the next millennium with the new DSC fully in place. We need to be healed from the wounds associated with the reduction in force and specifically the loss of our friends and colleagues and the experience they took with them. We need to have moved beyond that trauma. We need to have regained our sense of pleasure in our work, and our sense of accomplishment and contribution to the nation's parks. We also need to have demonstrated that the NAPA recommendations have been fully implemented. Particularly important is our shift to working collaboratively with private firms. I know you have a lot of concerns about this shift. Previously, we have all had problems in getting private firms to perform. But we are expected to make this new approach work, just as other state and federal agencies have. We can too.

Finally, I want to thank each and every one of you for your commitment, competence and your sisu. That is Finnish for gumption. Sisu!

* * * * * *

A key component in making this transition is for us to work successfully in partnership with our union colleagues. I believe we have made significant progress in building that partnership and working together, doing so in very difficult circumstances. I look forward to moving ahead together.

(Introduced Mark Tabor, President AFGE Local 1105)

APPENDIX F: 2017 DAVID BERNHARDT MEMORANDUM REGARDING ORDER NO. 3355

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

WASHINGTON

ORDER NO. 3355

Subject: Streamlining National Environmental Policy Act Reviews and Implementation of Executive Order 13807, "Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure Projects"

Sec. 1 **Purpose**. This Order is intended to: 1) immediately implement certain improvements to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews conducted by the Department of the Interior (Department); 2) begin assessment of additional such opportunities; and 3) begin implementation of Executive Order 13807 of August 15, 2017, "Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure Projects" (E.O. 13807).

Sec. 2 **Authorities**. This Order is issued under the authority of section 2 of Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1950 (64 Stat. 1262), as amended. Other statutory authorities for this Order include, but are not limited to, NEPA, 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347.

Sec. 3 **Background**. The Department has broad responsibilities to manage Federal lands and resources for the public's benefit. The NEPA applies to the execution of many of the Department's responsibilities with the goal of ensuring that information regarding environmental impacts is available to decisionmakers and the public before decisions are made. The NEPA accomplishes this goal by requiring Federal agencies to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

Both the Department and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) have issued regulations to implement NEPA. Because the purpose of NEPA's requirements is not the generation of paperwork, but the adoption of sound decisions based on an informed understanding of environmental consequences, the regulations encourage agencies to: 1) focus on issues that truly matter rather than amassing unnecessary detail; 2) reduce paperwork, including by setting appropriate page limits; 3) discuss briefly issues that are not significant; and 4) prepare analytic (rather than encyclopedic) documents, among other measures.

In recognition of the impediments to efficient development of public and private projects that can be created by needlessly complex NEPA analysis, I am issuing this Order to enhance and modernize the Department's NEPA processes, with immediate focus on bringing even greater discipline to the documentation of the Department's analyses and identifying opportunities to further increase efficiencies.

This NEPA-streamlining effort dovetails with E.O. 13807. Among other requirements, E.O. 13807 requires CEQ to take actions to enhance and modernize the Federal environmental review process and to form an inter-agency working group to identify agency-specific

impediments to efficient and effective reviews for covered infrastructure projects. This Order begins implementation of E.O. 13807 in the context of the Department's overall effort to streamline the NEPA process.

Sec. 4 **Directives**.

a. Setting Page and Timing Limitations for Environmental Impact Statements.

(1) To implement the longstanding directives in 43 C.F.R. 46.405, and in 40 C.F.R. 1500.4 and 1502.7, all EISs 1) for which a bureau is the lead agency and 2) that have not reached the drafting stage shall not be more than 150 pages or 300 pages for unusually complex projects, excluding appendices. Approval of the Assistant Secretary with responsibility for the matter, in coordination with the Solicitor, is required to produce an EIS exceeding the above stated page limitations. In instances of EISs prepared with bureaus serving as co-leads, each responsible Assistant Secretary shall approve any deviations from this policy. To meet the page limitations, each preparer should focus on various techniques such as tiering or incorporation by reference.

(2) To ensure timely completion of EISs, and consistent with the timelines established for major infrastructure projects in E.O. 13807, each bureau shall have a target to complete each Final EIS for which it is the lead agency within 1 year from the issuance of a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS. The initial timeline must be developed by the lead bureau before issuing the NOI in accordance with 43 C.F.R. 46.240, taking into account all relevant timing factors listed therein, including any constraints required by cooperating agencies. An updated timeline should be prepared as needed during the development of the EIS (e.g., at the completion of scoping or if additional time is provided for public comment). Timelines exceeding the target by more than 3 months must be approved by the Assistant Secretary with responsibility for the matter. In instances of EISs prepared with bureaus serving as co-leads, each responsible Assistant Secretary must approve any deviations from this policy.

b. Setting Target Page and Timing Limitations for the Preparation of Environmental Assessments. Within 30 days, each bureau head shall provide to the Deputy Secretary through its supervising Assistant Secretary a proposal for target page limitations and time deadlines for the preparation of environmental assessments. Any common impediments to achieving the proposed targets should also be identified. In developing its proposal, each bureau should consider guidance from CEQ on the page length of environmental assessments. (Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning CEQ's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations, 46 Fed. Reg. 18,026, 18,037, Question and Answer 36a. (Mar. 23, 1981)).

c. Additional NEPA-Streamlining Review.

(1) The Deputy Secretary will coordinate a review of the Department's NEPA procedures to identify additional ways to streamline the completion of NEPA responsibilities. The review will include, but is not limited to, the following areas:

(a) bureau/office NEPA regulations, policies, guidance, and processes to identify: 1) impediments to efficient and effective reviews; 2) best practices and whether they can be implemented more widely; and 3) whether the Department should consider establishing additional categorical exclusions or revising current ones;

(b) requirements and process improvements under Title 41 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, 42 U.S.C. 4370m-1(c)(1)(D), to determine whether any best practices can be broadly applied, including to projects beyond the terms of the FAST Act;

(c) requirements and process improvements required by E.O. 13807, to determine whether any best practices can be broadly applied, including to any projects beyond the terms of E.O 13807; and

(d) CEQ NEPA regulations and guidance to assess whether to recommend changes to facilitate agency processes.

(2) Within 30 days of the effective date of this Order, each Assistant Secretary, in coordination with bureau heads, should provide recommendations for actions to streamline the NEPA process to include potential regulatory revisions, development of revised or additional categorical exclusions, revised or new guidance or policies, and recommendations on streamlining the surnaming process.

d. Implementation of E.O. 13807. The Deputy Secretary will also coordinate implementation of E.O. 13807.

(1) In order to begin implementation of E.O. 13807, each Assistant Secretary, in coordination with the bureau heads, is hereby directed to identify:

(a) potential impediments to efficient and effective reviews for infrastructure and develop an action plan to address such impediments as a subset of the review required in Sec. 4c(1)(a) above;

(b) potential actions that could be taken by CEQ to facilitate a review of major infrastructure projects, as a subset of the review required in Sec. 4c(1)(d) above; and

(c) pending proposals for major infrastructure projects, as defined in E.O. 13807 and that are not yet the subject of a NOI issued by the Department, that could be candidates for the "One Federal Decision" process.

(2) Within 30 days of the effective date of this Order, each Assistant Secretary, in coordination with the bureau heads, should provide the information requested in Sec. 4d(1)(a)-(c) above.

Sec. 5 **Implementation**. The Deputy Secretary is responsible for implementing all aspects of this Order, in coordination with the Solicitor and the Assistant Secretaries.

Sec. 6 **Effect of the Order**. This Order is intended to improve the internal management of the Department. This Order and any resulting report or recommendations are not intended to, and do not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities or entities, its officer or employees, or any other person. To the extent there is any inconsistency between the provisions of this Order and any Federal laws or regulations, the laws or regulations will control.

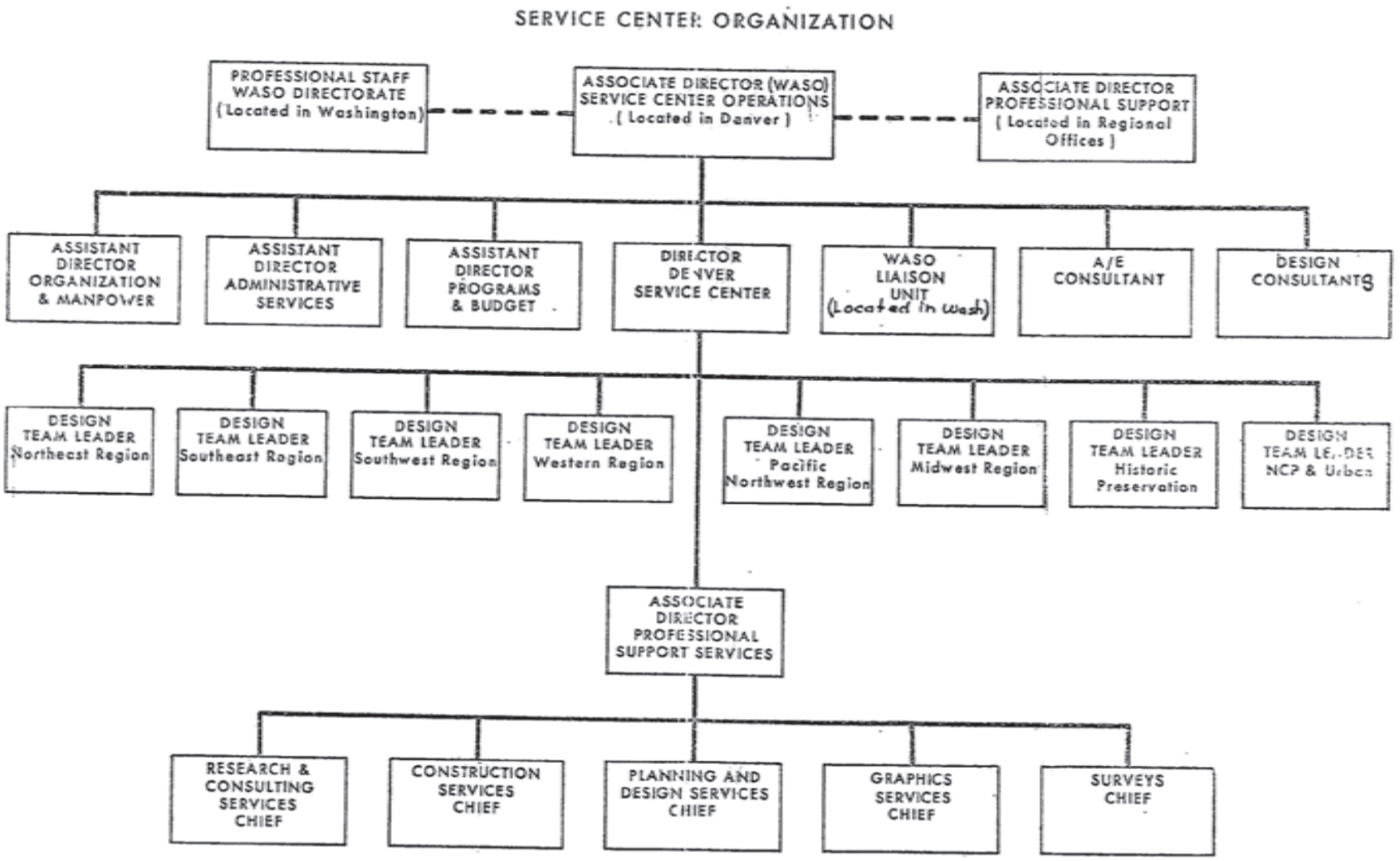
Sec. 7 **Expiration Date**. This Order is effective immediately and will remain in effect until it is amended, superseded, or revoked, whichever occurs first.

/s/ David Bernhardt

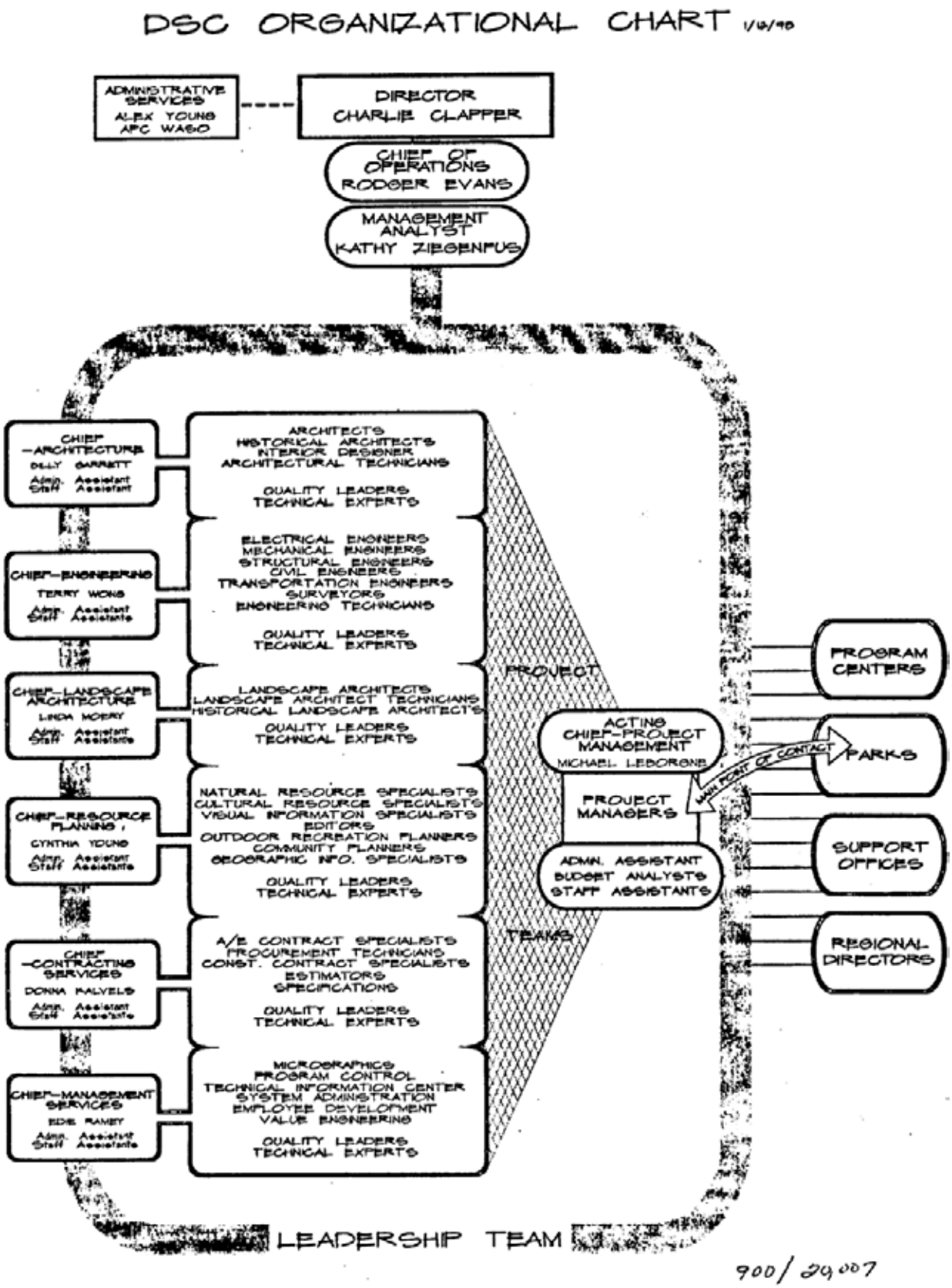
Deputy Secretary

Date: August 31, 2017

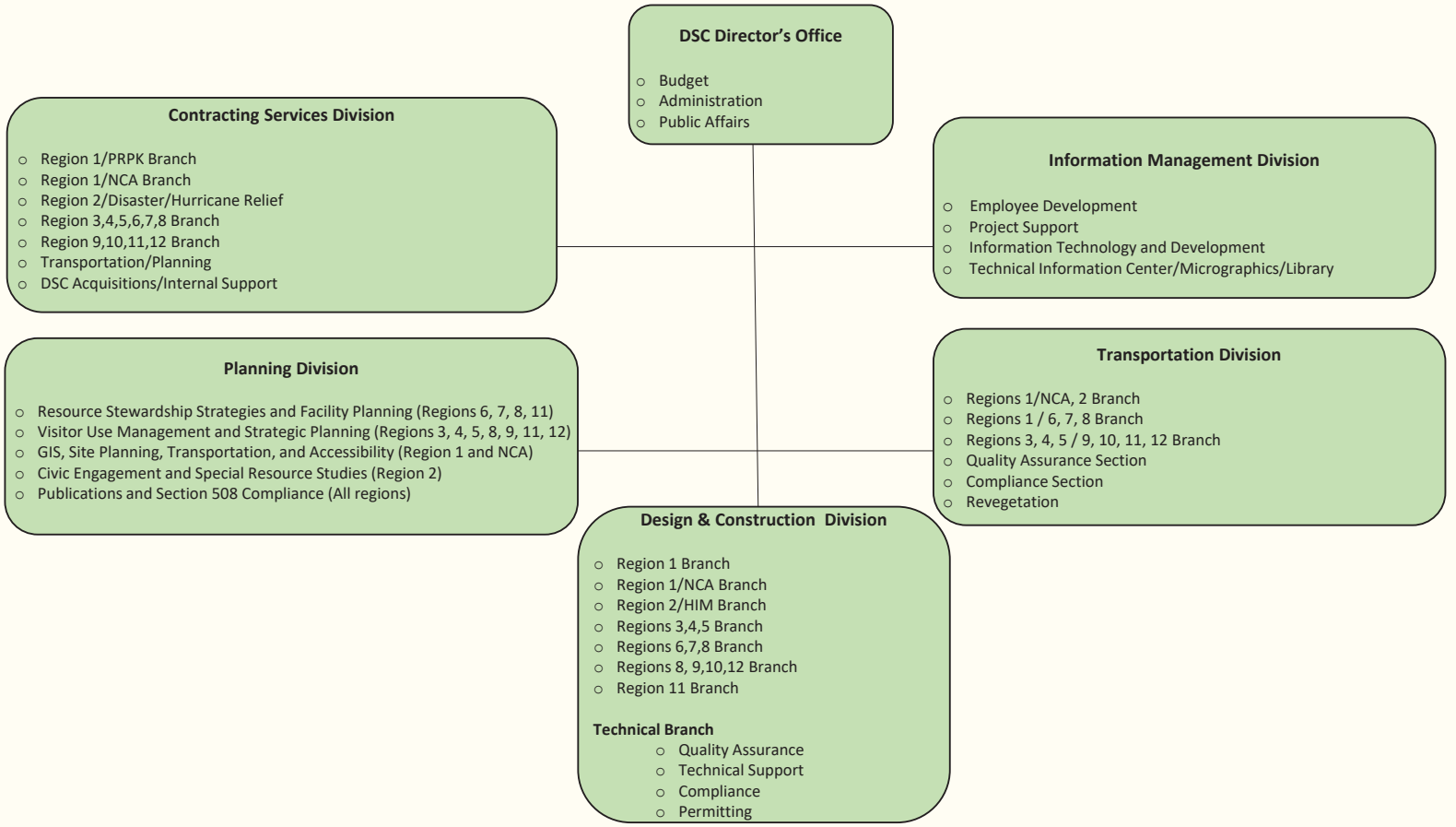
APPENDIX G: DSC ORGANIZATION CHARTS


SERVICE CENTER ORGANIZATION
PROFESSIONAL STAFF WASO DIRECTORATE (Located in Washington)
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR (WASO) SERVICE CENTER OPERATIONS (Located in Denver)
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT (Located in Regional Offices)
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ORGANIZATION & MANPOWER
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR PROGRAMS & BUDGET
DIRECTOR DENVER SERVICE CENTER
WASO LIAISON UNIT (Located in Wash)
A/E CONSULTANT
DESIGN CONSULTANTS
DESIGN TEAM LEADER Northeast Region
DESIGN TEAM LEADER Southeast Region
DESIGN TEAM LEADER Southwest Region
DESIGN TEAM LEADER Western Region
DESIGN TEAM LEADER Pacific Northwest Region
DESIGN TEAM LEADER Midwest Region
DESIGN TEAM LEADER Historic Preservation
DESIGN TEAM LEADER NCP & Urban
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES
RESEARCH & CONSULTING SERVICES CHIEF
CONSTRUCTION SERVICES CHIEF
PLANNING AND DESIGN SERVICES CHIEF
GRAPHICS SERVICES CHIEF
SURVEYS CHIEF

DSC Organization—January 1998



Denver Service Center Organization – November 2021



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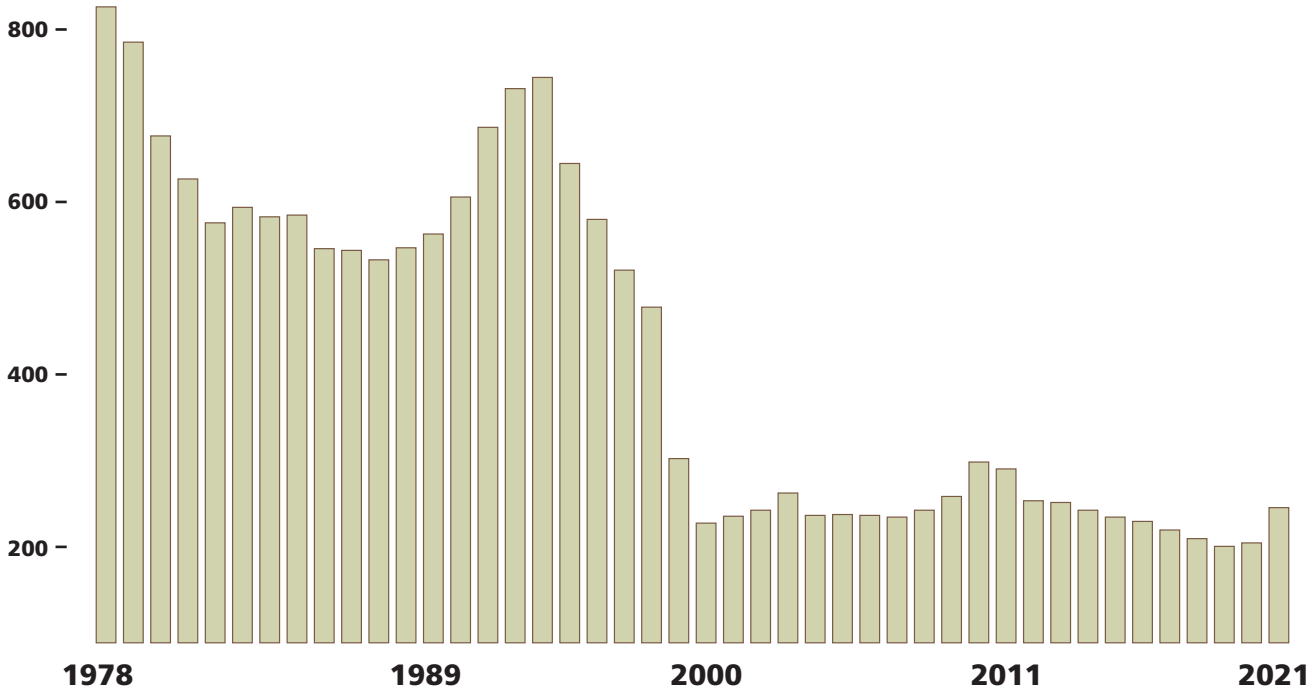
APPENDIX H: DENVER SERVICE CENTER STAFFING 1978–2021

YEAR	FTE
1978	825
1979	784
1980	675
1981	625
1982	574
1983	592
1984	581
1985	583
1986	544
1987	542
1988	531
1989	545
1990	561
1991	604
1992	685
1993	730
1994	743
1995	643
1996	578
1997	519
1998	476
1999	300

YEAR	FTE
2000	225
2001	233
2002	240
2003	260
2004	234
2005	235
2006	234
2007	232
2008	240
2009	256
2010	296
2011	288
2012	251
2013	249
2014	240
2015	232
2016	227
2017	217
2018	207
2019	198
2020	202
2021	243



APPENDIX I: BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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A big thank you to etic2, NPS Gallery, and the National Park Service History Electronic Library for invaluable access to legacy NPS and DSC references used throughout this history.

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Acknowledgments

Thank you to all of the following people who helped make this document what it is. This list includes those who contributed writings, notes, and thoughts as well as the people on the ground doing the research and technical work for its publication.

We could not have accomplished this work without your assistance.

We are grateful to the following professionals who contributed these descriptions of the important program activities of their National Park Service Denver Service Center branches and divisions:

- Aitken, Dave, Chief, Design and Construction Division (Retired)
- Alexander, Todd, Chief, Design and Construction, East
- Bennett, Ken, Historical Architect (Retired)
- Cahill, Kerri Branch Chief, Planning Division
- Church, Chris, Chief, Planning Division
- Copeland, Randy, Chief, Design and Construction Division (Retired)
- Eissenberg, Mike, Chief, Technical Branch (Retired)
- Harrington, Tom, Senior Environmental Engineer (Retired)
- Heronema, Glenda, Visual Information Specialist (Retired)
- Irish, Lori, Chief, Contracting Division
- Jones, Chris, Historical Architect (Retired)
- Kaber, Jared, Chief, Technical Branch
- Patten, Gerald, Director (Retired)
- Peterson, Jodie, Chief, Design and Construction, West
- Ramon, Abel, Chief, Technical Information Center
- Sellmer, Alvie, Acting Chief, Technical Information Center
- Siderius, Joel, Budget Officer
- Simpson, Carol R., Chief, Information Management Division
- Viray, Philip, Supervisory Visual Information Specialist
- Wagner, Howard R., Landscape Architect (Retired)
- Walling, Larry, Chief, Transportation Division (Retired)
- Warneke, Bruce, Chief, Technical Branch (Retired)
- Weed, Frank P., Manager, NPS Radio Program (Retired)
- Wong, Terry, Chief, Engineering Division (Retired)
- Ziegenfus, Kathy, Management Analyst (Retired)

The following people were interviewed by Tom Thomas or Edie Ramey:

- Aitken, Dave, NPS
- Alexander, Todd, NPS
- Beal, Larry, NPS
- Benge, Shawn, NPS
- Carlstrom, Brian, NPS
- Clapper, Charlie, NPS
- Cooper, Cal, NPS
- Copeland, Randy, NPS
- Crystal, Joe, NPS
- Dall, Tom, NPS
- Franzmann, Kristie, NPS
- Frost, Rick, NPS
- Galvin, Denis, NPS
- Gregerson, Patrick, NPS
- Halpern, Jonathan, NPS
- Hudson, Tim, NPS
- Hutchinson, Art, NPS
- Jarvis, Greg, NPS
- Kilborn, Larry, NPS
- Libman, David, NPS
- Masica, Sue, NPS
- Masson, Bob, NPS
- Miller, Carrie, NPS
- Percival, Kevin, NPS
- Pritchett, Mark, NPS
- Rees, Michael, NPS
- Reynolds, John, NPS
- Reynolds, Larry, NPS
- Ruch, Jeff, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility
- Schuster, Sandy, NPS
- Todd, Ray, NPS
- Turk, Rich, NPS
- Wenk, Dan, NPS
- Whittington, Sam, NPS
- Wilkinson, Charles, Professor, University of Colorado, Boulder
- Witmer, Bill and Gayle, NPS
- Ziegenfus, Kathy, NPS

We would like to thank the following people for their contributions to this project:

- Allen, Lindy, DSC Public Affairs Specialist
- Beck, Rachel, DSC Technical Information Center
- Burke, Mindy, Contract Editor, DSC Planning Division
- Cross, James E., Clemson University Libraries' Special Collections and Archives
- Dolezilek, Anne, DSC Technical Information Center
- Gallegos, June, DSC Technical Information Center
- Huff, Dan (Retired)
- Jones, John Paul, Visual Information Specialist, DSC Planning Division
- Kisluk, Catherine, DSC Technical Information Center
- Noon, Ivy (Sam), DSC Technical Information Center
- O'Connor Ralston, Rory, DSC Technical Information Center
- Powell, Jackie (Retired)
- Ramey, Fred
- Richardson, Samantha, DSC Chief of Staff
- Shea, Patrick (Retired)
- Sprinkle, Dr. John, NPS Bureau Historian
- Whipple, Carol (Retired)

Dr. John Luzader

Jay Bright

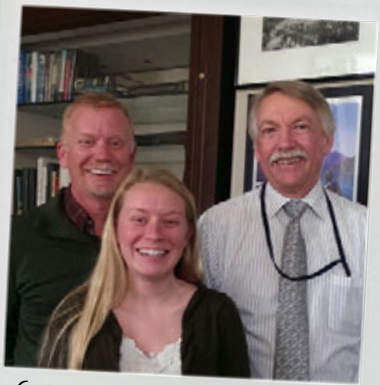
Kay Roush, Dan Huff, Clyde Schroeder, Bonnie Campbell, 1980s

Library Committee, 1998

Planning Division Student Interns with Management Team, 2011

Jim Corbett and Lindy Allen at ice cream social, 2011

Elwha River Restoration Team, 2012



Greg Jarvis and daughter Kiersten Jarvis with NPS Director Jon Jarvis, 2014

Technical Information Center, Bronco Friday, 2014

Founders Day Picnic, 2015

Root beer pong at Jim Corbett's retirement party, 2015

Contracting Services Bronco Fever, 2016

Susan McPartland in front of John Muir painting

Founders Day Run, 2016

Accessibility Training, 2017

DSC thanks Mike Reynolds for his service as Acting NPS Director, 2018

John Paul Jones and Phil Thys pose in front of a classic VW bug.

Underwater Explorer at DSC's Bring Your Child to Work Day, 2018

As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historic places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

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