

# A Timeline of NPS Civic Engagement Policy and Initiatives

**2001–2002**  
**National Workshops: The NPS and Civic Engagement**  
 Initiated by the NER, a first workshop in New York City convenes park managers, public historians, resource specialists, scholars, and museum professionals to discuss how national parks can become centers for civic engagement. A second workshop in Atlanta brings this dialogue to the Southeast Region.

**2003 (and 2007)**  
**Director's Order #75A on Civic Engagement**  
 D.O. #75A, signed in 2003 and renewed in 2007, articulates the NPS commitment to have all units and offices embrace civic engagement as “the essential foundation and framework for creating plans and developing programs.”

**2005–2007**  
**NER Workshop Series on Civic Engagement**  
 As part of the NER initiative, the NER Office of Interpretation and Education, the Conservation Study Institute, and partners sponsor four day-long workshops across the region for NPS interpretation and education staff and partners. Two of the work-shops focus on principles and practices, and two emphasize facilitation skills.

**2006**  
**Interpretation and Education Program Business Plan: Helping People Enjoy, Care About, and Care for National Parks**  
 This plan reviews past and current operations of the Interpretation and Education Program, identifies strategies to strengthen interpretation and education agency-wide, and reaffirms the importance of civic engagement as a strategy for relevancy in the future.

**Interpretation and Education Renaissance Action Plan**  
 This NPS-wide plan states that changing demographics and societal trends present challenges to future stewardship of resources and intangible values in national parks, and identifies civic engagement as an action area.

**Interpretation and Education Evaluation Strategy and Summit**  
 NPS National Education Council and partners develop a strategy to ensure relevant, engaging, and effective education, and convene a dialogue on creating a culture of evaluation within NPS.

**2008–2009**  
**Civic Engagement Workshops: Principles and Promising Practices of Youth Engagement**  
 Two workshops (held in April 2008 and March 2009 by NER Office of Interpretation and Education, the Conservation Study Institute, and partners) address the principles and practices of civic engagement for the youth audience. They provide tools and strategies to help parks increase their success with youth engagement activities.

2001      2002      2003      2004      2005      2006      2007      2008–2009

**2001**  
**Publication of *Rethinking the National Parks in the 21st Century***  
 This National Park System Advisory Board report recommends better serving Americans by encouraging the study of America’s history, promoting collaboration nationwide, practicing sustainability, and improving institutional capacity through enhanced workforce diversity and training.

**2002–2006**  
**Northeast Region Civic Engagement Initiative**  
 The NER begins a series of meetings that include 19 Preserving Memory seminars, which explore challenges that arise in interpreting America’s heritage and attended by superintendents, program managers, and park partners. A website, a small grants program, case studies, newsletters, and a civic engagement bibliography are all products of this initiative.

**2005**  
**NER Conference: Keeping National Parks Relevant in the 21st Century**  
 This meeting opens a dialogue on issues related to diversity and the relevance of national parks and programs in the Northeast Region. Two task forces are created: one to engage new audiences and communities, and the other to promote diversity in the workforce.

**2006**  
**National Meeting: *Scholars Forum***  
 The National Park System Advisory Board’s Education Committee convenes historians, sociologists, and NPS leaders to discuss civic engagement, the place of national parks in the nation’s educational system, and how NPS commitment to education can strengthen civic awareness and stewardship in America.

**NER Transitional-Management Assessment Program (T-MAP) Report on Civic Engagement**  
 Based on more than 30 interviews, a team of superintendents and senior program managers recommends options to sustain civic engagement efforts in the NER.

**2007**  
**National TEL Training Workshop: “Do We Have All the Pieces? Strengthening the NPS through Civic Engagement”**  
 This interactive workshop is the first agency-wide training on civic engagement, presented by the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (as its annual diversity training) and the Supervision, Leadership, and Management Training Program.

**Centennial Initiative**  
 This national initiative celebrates NPS accomplishments during the agency’s first 100 years. It also provides a means for envisioning a second century of working “in partnership to preserve parks, while reconnecting adults and children to the outdoors, history, and culture.”