



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Commercial Services Program



Planning for Commercial Services – Bedrock Principles

Concessions Management Advisory Board
October 2011 – Mesa Verde National Park



NPS Organic Act



The service thus established shall promote and regulate the use of the ... national parks ... by such means and measures as conform to the fundamental purpose of the ... parks ... which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the 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.



NPS General Authorities Act



The authorization of activities shall be construed and the protection, management, and administration of [parks] shall be conducted in light of the high public value and integrity of the National Park System and shall not be exercised in derogation of the values and purposes for which these [parks] have been established, except as may have been or shall be directly and specifically provided by Congress.

1998 Concessions Management Improvement Act



Congress finds that the preservation and conservation of park resources and values requires that such public accommodations, facilities, and services as have to be provided with [parks] should be provided only under carefully controlled safeguards against unregulated and indiscriminate use, so that visitation will not unduly impair these resources and values and development of public accommodations, facilities, and services within [parks] can best be limited to locations that are consistent to the highest practicable degree with the preservation and conservation of the resources and values of such [parks].

1998 Concessions Management Improvement Act



It is the policy of Congress that the development of public accommodations, facilities, and services in [parks] shall be limited to those accommodations, facilities, and services that are necessary and appropriate for public use and enjoyment of the [park] and are consistent to the highest practicable degree with the preservation and conservation of the resources and values of the [park].



NPS Management Policies 2006 1.4.3.1



- Every unit of the National Park System has enabling legislation or proclamation explaining the reason the unit was created. In determining whether or how to allow an authorized use, park managers must consider the congressional or presidential interest, as expressed in the enabling legislation or proclamation, that the use occurs. Where there is strong public interest in a particular use, opportunities for civic engagement should factor into the decision-making process.



NPS Management Policies 2006 10.2.2



- A park must have a commercial services strategy to ensure that concession facilities and services are necessary and appropriate, financially viable, and addressed in an approved management plan.
- A park may develop a commercial services plans to further implement a park's commercial services strategy and to guide decisions on whether to authorize or expand concessions.



NPS Management Policies 2006



- A decision to authorize or expand a park concession will consider the effect on, or need for, additional infrastructure and management of operations and be based on a determination that the facility or service –
 - Is consistent with enabling legislation
 - Complements a park's mission and visitor service objectives
 - Is necessary and appropriate for the public use and enjoyment of the park
 - Is not, and cannot be, provided outside park boundaries



- Incorporates sustainable principles and practices in planning, design, siting, construction, and maintenance
- Adopts appropriate energy and water conservation, source reduction, and environmental purchasing standards and goals
- Will not cause unacceptable impacts
- Prior to initiating new services, NPS must complete a market and financial viability analysis to ensure the contract is feasible.



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