2008 NPS Commercial Services Program Environmental Audit Update

Each year the Commercial Services Program conducts environmental audits at various concession sites throughout the NPS. The main focus of these audits is to proactively help operations by identifying:

- Areas of non-compliance with environmental regulations, Department of the Interior (DOI), NPS, and park-specific policies; and Commercial Services contract requirements;
- Areas where Best Management Practices (BMPs) can be implemented;
- BMPs and exceptional practices that concessioners already have in place.

For more complicated sites, audits are conducted in-person. For operations that are less complex, remote, or difficult to access, audits may be conducted over the phone. In calendar year (CY) 2008, the NPS Commercial Services Program conducted environmental audits at 36 concession operations. These concessioners were located in nine parks and included 16 onsite audits and 20 telephone audits.

2008 Audit Season in Review

Audit findings are ranked as Priority 1, 2, and 3. Priority 1 findings are non-conformances with laws and regulations that pose immediate, actual, or potential harm to human health or the environment. These findings have a deadline for closure of 90 days from issue of the Preliminary Environmental Audit Report (EAR). Priority 2 findings are non-conformances with laws and regulations that do not pose an immediate threat to human health or the environment. Priority 2 findings have a deadline for closure of 180 days after issue of the Preliminary EAR. Priority 3 findings are non-conformances with Executive Orders; DOI, NPS, or park policies, or the concession contract. Priority 3 audit findings also have a deadline for closure of 180 days after issue of the Preliminary EAR. BMPs are voluntary actions that can improve concessioner environmental management through pollution prevention, proactive planning, and moving towards sustainability. While strongly encouraged, BMPs are not required to be implemented.

The table below indentifies the number of findings and BMPs identified during the 2008 audit season and the number of findings that were closed.

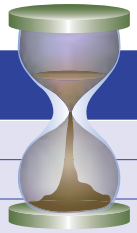
Exceptional Practices are actions adopted by a concessioner that go above and beyond what other similar service operators are doing. While auditors noted several positive practices throughout the 2008 audit season, there were no Exceptional Practices identified during CY2008.

Recent Improvements to Audit Program

Telephone audits—In the past, the Commercial Services Program opted not to conduct telephone audits of concession operations due to challenges in effectively communicating audit processes, roles and responsibilities, and deadlines. In 2008, however, logistical challenges related to conducting onsite audits of concessioners operating under Category III contracts necessitated the use of telephone audits. All concessioners participating in the 2008 telephone audits received a pre-season in-brief presentation. This allowed concessioners to schedule their environmental audit for a convenient time, ask questions about the audit process, discuss their expectations, and review timeframes for reporting and implementation. The result was a round of very successful telephone audits, which will be used again in the 2009 audit season for a number of Category III concession operations.

Report format updated—For the 2008 audit season, a significant effort was made to streamline both the Preliminary EAR and the Final EAR to make reports more user friendly. The Preliminary EAR was pared down to have find-

(continued on page 6...)



Priority	No. Findings	No. Findings Closed
One (1)	0	0
Two (2)	178	28
Three (3)	119	16
Best Management Practice	172	N/A
Total of compliance findings	297	44
Total of all findings	469	N/A

Grand Teton National Park at sunrise in the fall reflected in a side channel of the Snake River.

GreenLine

GreenLine is an official publication of the National Park Service Commercial Services. The newsletter provides a forum in which the NPS can share information with NPS staff and concessioners about the NPS Commercial Services, current environmental requirements, and best management practices; it also identifies resources available to improve concessioner environmental performance and highlights success stories.

Guest articles have been reviewed by the NPS Commercial Services and, if required, edited in collaboration with the original author.

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NPS Commercial Services
12795 W. Alameda Parkway
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, CO 80225-0287
Phone: 303/987-6820
Fax: 303/987-6901

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Notice: This newsletter is intended as an educational tool for businesses providing visitor services in national parks. Every effort has been made to ensure the information presented is accurate. However, the content does not constitute a complete reference to federal, state, or local laws nor does it constitute National Park Service rulemaking, policy, or guidance. Relying solely on the information in the newsletter will not guarantee compliance with applicable regulations. Strategies, procedures, and proposed solutions for compliance issues should be discussed with the appropriate federal, state, and/or local regulatory agencies; it remains the sole responsibility of operators to determine compliance with regulations. Inclusion in the newsletter is not an endorsement of a particular operator, product, or strategy.

GreenLine is printed using vegetable-based inks on 100% post-consumer recycled/recyclable, acid-free, Green Seal- and FSC-certified paper by a 100% wind-powered printing facility.

Ask Dr. Ima Park

I've heard that the EPA recently amended the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) rule. How will this affect my NPS concession operation?

Dr. Ima Park: The SPCC Rule applies to facilities with oil storage capacities of 1,320 gallons aboveground or 42,000 gallons underground that could potentially release oil into navigable waters. Effective January 14, 2010, the recent changes are intended to help owners and operators comply with the rule by adding flexibility and clarification. Some key elements of the revisions include changes in definitions, exemptions and amendments.

Definitions

Revised definitions related to concession operations include: Facility, Permanently Closed, Manmade Structures, and Wind Turbines. The revised definition of 'facility' is particularly noteworthy for concessioners who operate several geographically separated facilities and were previously required to develop a single plan to cover all operations. The revised definition now allows concessioners to make the determination of what a 'facility' is based on various factors and parameters.

Exemptions

Tanks and containers containing hot-mix asphalt, all pesticide application equipment, and heating oil tanks and containers at single-family residences are exempted under the SPCC revisions[1]. However, it is currently unclear if the heating oil container exemption applies to federal facilities with single-family residences, so contact your regional EPA Coordinator for interpretation.

Amendments

Here is a brief summary of the SPCC plan amendments and how they might apply to your concession facility:

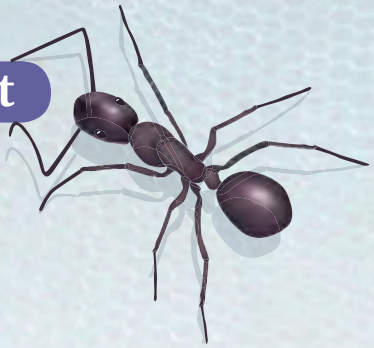
- Plans must be prepared, amended, and/or implemented by November 10, 2010.
- Tier I and Tier II facilities[2] that meet certain criteria may complete a self-certified plan. Tier I facilities may also complete a streamlined plan. All others must develop and implement a plan certified by a professional engineer (PE).
- The facility diagram must include all fixed containers, as well as the typical storage area for portable containers.
- Secondary containment is required to address only the most likely oil discharge.
- Security measures can be streamlined and tailored to the facility as long as the facility can demonstrate secure and controlled access to all oil handling, processing, and storage areas.
- Aboveground containers must be regularly inspected for integrity by appropriately qualified personnel in accordance with industry standards, eliminating the need for certification from a PE.
- Concessioners can conduct visual inspections of containers with animal fats or vegetable oils (AFVOs) rather than using other integrity testing methods provided that the containers meet certain requirements (e.g., are elevated, made of austenitic stainless steel, are not internally insulated, are shop built, and are subject to US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations).

For detailed information on these SPCC revisions and how they might affect you, visit www.epa.gov/emergencies/content/spcc/.

[1] A single family residence is viewed as a household that has direct ownership/control of the oil stored in the heating oil container. The single-family residence owner must be able to prove that they are using the fuel for the sole purposes of heating the residence and that it is not a part of overall business operations.

[2] Tier I facilities are those that meet the current qualified facilities eligibility criteria and that have no individual aboveground oil storage containers with a capacity greater than 5,000 U.S. gallons. Tier II facilities are all other qualified facilities.

Environmentally Friendly Pest Management



In an effort to reduce risks from pests and pest related management strategies, the NPS implemented an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program beginning in 1979.

IPM is "a science-based, decision making process that coordinates knowledge of pest biology, the environment and available technology to prevent unacceptable levels of pest damage, by cost-effective means, while posing the least possible risk to people, resources and the environment."[1] Current IPM NPS policy, which applies to both parks and concession operators, is outlined in the 2006 NPS Management Policies and NPS-77 Natural Resources Management Guideline[2]. These requirements address four important elements: review (concur or non concur of proposed pest management strategies), reporting, storage, and minimization of pesticide use.

Prior to conducting any pest management actions, the concessioner should consult with the park IPM coordinator to develop an effective pest management strategy (non-chemical control methods such as structural modifications, exclusion, trapping, improved sanitation and storage procedures, etc., biological agents, or chemical pesticides). If it is determined that a specific pesticide is justified, concessioners must request permission by submitting a Pesticide Use Proposal (PUP) to the park's IPM coordinator. NPS issues an annual pesticide use call each spring; concessioners must report the previous year's pesticide use to the park IPM coordinator via the PUP System.

Pesticides stored within park-assigned areas must be stored in accordance with the manufacturers' labels. These may require separate storage by chemical type (herbicide, fungicide, insecticide, etc.) and from other hazardous materials. Some labels require pesticides be stored in locked, fireproof, ventilated facilities identified with appropriate warning signs[3]. Concessioners must acquire material safety data sheets (MSDS) for all pesticides used within park operations and facilities

To minimize pests, reduce conditions conducive to pests. For example, in areas where food is prepared or stored, implementing additional sanitation measures such as sweeping regularly, cleaning dishes promptly, trash removal, and properly containing food products will inhibit pest establishment. Seal areas or make structural modifications to prevent pests from entering facilities. This will eliminate or minimize the need for using pesticides. For rodents, note any signs of gnawing activity, droppings, and sightings. Eliminate food and harborage, and set snap traps in areas where these are observed to catch any rodents that enter a facility.

[1]As defined by the NPS IPM Program.

[2]Director's Order (DO) 77-7, which is intended to supersede NPS-77, is under development at this time.

[3]NPS Enviro Check Sheets provides additional guidance on pesticide storage on NPS property.

Bed Bugs & Biting Flies

Bed Bugs are a rising concern among concessioners, particularly those operating lodging operations. Bed bug management is a tedious and on-going process (could take three to four months to accomplish). The key steps in managing a bed bug infestation are: education, early detection, regular inspections, reducing clutter, vacuuming, and caulking crevices located in the room. Non-chemical options include: installing mattress encasements, structural heat treatments, and steam cleaning items with temperatures above 140 degrees Fahrenheit. Laundering bed linens in hot water and dryers will kill all stages of bed bugs. Pesticides may be necessary to control a bed bug infestation. Effective, low risk insecticidal dusts such as diatomaceous earth or silica powder work best when applied by a licensed and certified Pest Management Profession (PMP) with experience in bed bug management.

Biting Flies are also a common problem, especially among horse guides and outfitters. Implementing measures that dry or remove manure and reduce the amount of feed and water spillage will eliminate breeding sources for most nuisance fly species

Recycling and Environmental Purchasing Goes Big in Texas!

There's a cliché in Texas, "Here in Texas, we like things big!" Usually this saying refers to hairstyles, trucks, and steaks, but at Big Bend Resorts it applies to their recycling program. In fact, Big Bend Resorts, a Forever Resort property, received a 2008 NPS Environmental Achievement Award Honorable Mention for its aggressive recycling and green purchasing program. The program was so big it resulted in the diversion of 86,000 pounds of materials from its waste stream in 2008 alone. And the company doesn't plan to slow down its efforts anytime soon. According to Danny Ferguson, one of the managers of the program, the company intends to continually increase its efforts in order to further preserve and protect the park's natural resources.

Due to its remote location, Big Bend National Park maintains one of the few licensed landfills in the National Park Service. Since there are currently no other viable solid waste disposal options in the area, preserving the capacity of the landfill is a major priority for the park. When Big Bend Resorts first started its recycling program in 2004, the park estimated its efforts would extend the life expectancy of the park landfill by more than 30 years. Big Bend Resorts' recycling program has had such a positive impact on solid waste diversion at the Park that the company's recycling supervisor, Rafael Delcampo, elected to further protect area resources by implementing a similar program at a local high school in Mexico.

In addition to the company's solid waste reduction efforts, Big Bend Resorts also has an active green procurement program with the main goal of educating others to conserve natural resources. One way that the company achieves this is by notifying its vendors and contractors of its commitment to environmentally preferable products and services, then identifying suppliers and artisans who incorporate environmentally responsible processes into their products, packaging, and shipping methods. For example, Big Bend Resorts seeks merchandise that falls into one or more of the following categories: environmentally preferable (e.g. made from recycled or reclaimed materials); environmentally responsible (e.g., organic cotton); packed with minimal or recycled packaging; labeled to indicate how products were environmentally preferable; were shipped shorter distances to conserve energy; and, promoted conservation of natural resources (e.g., reusable mugs). In addition, the company reuses vendor product packing materials to pack customer purchases, uses energy-efficient lighting, provides shopping bags made of recycled content paper, uses only biodegradable to-go containers in its food and beverage operations, and sells environmentally preferable cleaning products.

To learn more about the environmental efforts of Forever Resorts properties, including Big Bend Resorts, please visit: http://foreverearth.net/.

Array of Sunshine in Death Valley, California

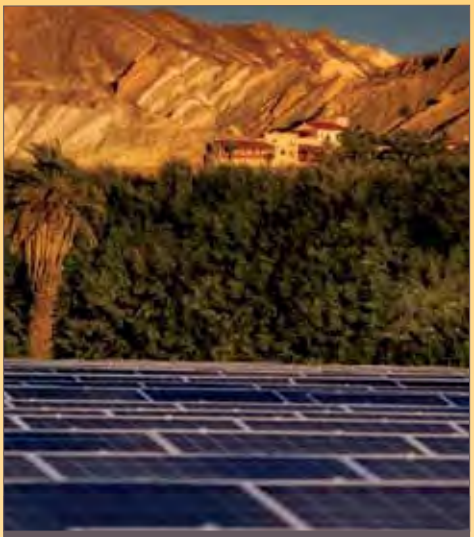
Xanterra Parks & Resorts is known for its commitment to "go green" including innovations in energy and water conservation throughout the NPS. However, in 2008, Xanterra took its renewable energy management efforts to a new level by installing one of the largest non-utility-owned renewable energy systems in the country. The one megawatt (1 MW) solar photovoltaic (PV) system, located in Death Valley National Park, not only helped Xanterra reduce its carbon footprint, but it also allowed the company to earn another NPS Environmental Achievement Award.

Completed in February 2008, Xanterra's PV system is composed of nearly 6,000 panels over five acres - approximately the size of five football fields. The system is on target to generate more than 2.2 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of energy per year. That's enough electricity to power more than 500 American homes, or 33 percent of the resort's annual electricity consumption! And because Death Valley is one of the sunniest spots on the planet and the array tracks the sun, the PV system is expected to be 40 percent more efficient than an average solar facility, often generating 100 percent of the facility's electricity usage during daylight hours.

In addition to saving energy and money, the PV array is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2) by 284,000 tons over the next 30 years. In fact, Xanterra instantly realized a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions at its Death Valley facilities of more than 35 percent upon start-up of the new system. Such energy alternatives help to realize our national security goals of energy independence, as well as to support EO 13423, Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management, which calls upon federal agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions "…through reduction of energy intensity by (i) 3 percent annually through the end of fiscal year 2015, or (ii) 30 percent by the end of fiscal year 2015."

From Xanterra's point of view, the most significant way for any company to affect climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions is to rid itself of its dependence upon fossil fuels. One of the most effective ways to do that—besides shutting down—is to develop clean, emission free, renewable solar, wind, or geothermal energy at its operations. Chris Lane, Vice President of Environmental Affairs for Xanterra, explained that the company took advantage of available rebates and incentives to make this project work, but the main focus was on doing the right thing – not just economics.

By providing a heightened profile for renewable energy resources available in Death Valley National Park, the benefits of Xanterra's photovoltaic system will be shared with NPS and visitors for generations to come. For more information about Xanterra's environmental efforts, please visit www.xanterra.com/Environmental-Action-364.html.



Solar array at Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley, CA.

Recycling and Waste Diversion at Two of the Park's Crown Jewels

Delaware North Companies Parks and Resorts (DNC) considers operating in U.S. National Parks to be a privilege, and strives to preserve the natural majesty of these areas for future generations. DNC's commitment to the environment can be seen through the recognition it has received over the past few years, including a 2008 Environmental Achievement Award for its recycling and waste diversion practices at Yellowstone and Yosemite National Parks.

DNC provides lodging, retail, food and beverage, and transportation services in Yosemite National Park; and provides retail services in Yellowstone National Park. Through GreenPath® Environmental Management System (EMS), employee engagement, guest awareness, and business partner awareness, DNC has significantly reduced the amount of waste its operations produce despite increasing numbers of visitors and employees. For example, efforts were made to discourage employees from printing electronic documents, and where printing must take place, employees were asked to print their documents double-sided. These minor changes alone resulted in DNC employees using 22 percent less office paper than in the previous year. Another example of DNC's waste diversion efforts is the implementation of a policy requesting vendors to pack products in materials that could be recycled or reused.

Waste diversion efforts have had measurable success. In total, operations at Yosemite achieved a waste diversion rate of 38 percent in 2007, and Yellowstone operations achieved waste diversion rate of 34 percent. The waste diversion efforts at Yosemite saved the company approximately $96,000 in dumping fees.

Much of DNC's recycling program success comes from people— employees, guests, and business partners. More than 2,400 DNC employees have been trained on DNC's recycling program, including where recycling bins are located, what materials are recycled, how materials can be separated, and other DNC solid waste management policies. Environmental and training efforts are incorporated into DNC's EMS GreenPath®—a formal, documented, and comprehensive plan with the goal of serving and protecting the National Parks' natural, historical, and cultural resources. Taking its environmental commitment one step further, DNC has achieved International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 14001 certification for their EMS, GreenPath®, at both Yosemite and Yellowstone National Parks.

Ahwahnee Hotel at Yosemite National Park.

Learn more about DNC's environmental stewardship programs at www.delawarenorth.com/GreenPath.aspx.

Hamilton's Store in Yellowstone National Park.

Water Conservation: How Thriving Businesses Flow

Freshwater is one of our most precious and limited natural resources, especially during the hot, arid summer months. "Federal facilities have a tremendous opportunity to lead by example within their communities to showcase innovative and cost-effective water efficiency strategies."[1] This is especially true with concessioners that operate facilities within our national parks, as they have many opportunities to interact with park visitors on a daily basis.

In an effort to further incorporate sustainability measures, including water efficiency, into government operations, President Bush signed EO13423: Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management in 2007. This EO requires federal agencies to identify and implement cost effective water saving measures to achieve, at minimum, a two percent annual or 16 percent overall reduction, of water use intensity by the end of fiscal year (FY) 2015.[2]

Although concessioners are currently exempt from the requirements of EO13423, they are encouraged to strive to meet the goals outlined by this order. To support park water conservation efforts, concessioners may consider incorporating some of the following best management practices into their operations: water-efficient or xeriscape landscaping, water management and conservation planning, water-efficient kitchen and bathroom fixtures, water capture and storage systems, and the use of grey water or reclaimed water for ponds and irrigation (if permitted). Additionally, water conservation strategies developed by concessioners may be appropriate for incorporation into an EMS.

One of the largest uses of treated water in park operations is for landscaping and managing the grounds around facilities. Considerations such as "climate appropriate" landscaping can support concessioners and their goals of reducing water use. For example, traditional Kentucky blue grass landscapes and lawns are only native to areas that receive over 40 inches of precipitation a year. Where this is not the case, the grass must be constantly watered to live. Incorporating other xeriscaping methods, such as planting drought tolerant species, watering at night when evaporation rates are lower, and drip irrigation methods, can all help to decrease the amount of water used within your operations.

Another major source of water use for many concessioners is indoor fixtures, such as toilets which use approximately 4.8 billion gallons of water a day! To reduce water usage, consider installing water efficient models, such as Ultra-Low Flow (ULF) toilets[3] and composting toilets, when it is time to replace existing fixtures. In addition, consider replacing sink faucets with low-flow options, and purchasing Energy-Star appliances for your kitchen and laundry operations. Non-potable water or grey water, including untreated rainwater, can also be collected and used in many localities for operations such as dish washing, laundry and irrigation.

Additional resources and strategies for achieving water conservation goals can be found at: www.eere.energy.gov/femp/water/index.html.

[1] According to the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP).

[2] The baseline used to determine progress in meeting these goals is water use in FY2008.

[3] Toilets that use less than 1.6 gallons per flush (gpf) or less.

(continued from front page...)

ings represented in a table format. The table includes the finding number, citation, audit finding description, recommended corrective action, photo number (if applicable), and responsible party. The Final EAR was similarly streamlined, with a few extra fields added, such as park and concessioner comments on the audit findings. Feedback so far has been positive, and the Commercial Services Program intends to use the same format for the upcoming 2009 season.

It's In the Bag!

Did you know that it takes 60-100 million barrels of oil to manufacture the world's plastic bags every year, and over 400 years for most of them to biodegrade? Only one percent of plastic bags are recycled worldwide—about two percent in the U.S.—and the rest, when discarded, can persist for centuries. As a result, cities, states, and countries alike are seeking to deter plastic bag usage through initiatives such as bans, taxes, and levies. One result from increasing limitations on plastic bags has been new business opportunities in terms of reusable and recycled-content bags. Selling reusable or recycled-content bags has created a new means of advertising and income for business owners, while allowing them to save money on purchasing plastic bags for patron use. Some business owners have even implemented discount policies for customers who bring their own bags, or created policies requiring employees to ask patrons if they need a bag prior to providing one. What can your business do to help reduce the environmental impact of plastic bag usage?

Newsletter E-distribution Update!

Since our last issue, the NPS Commercial Services Program has decided to continue our efforts to be green and publish all issues of the GreenLine Newsletter electronically. No subscription request will be necessary - GreenLine recipients with email addresses on file will automatically be added to the e-distribution list. Beginning with the Fall/Winter issue of the GreenLine, you will receive an email notifying you when the latest issue of the newsletter is available online. We hope this will allow us to further reduce our environmental footprint by the end of 2009.

To continue receiving the newsletter in hard copy, or to subscribe to the electronically-distributed newsletter, please contact GreenLine@nps.gov or 303-987-6820.

What's In The Water?

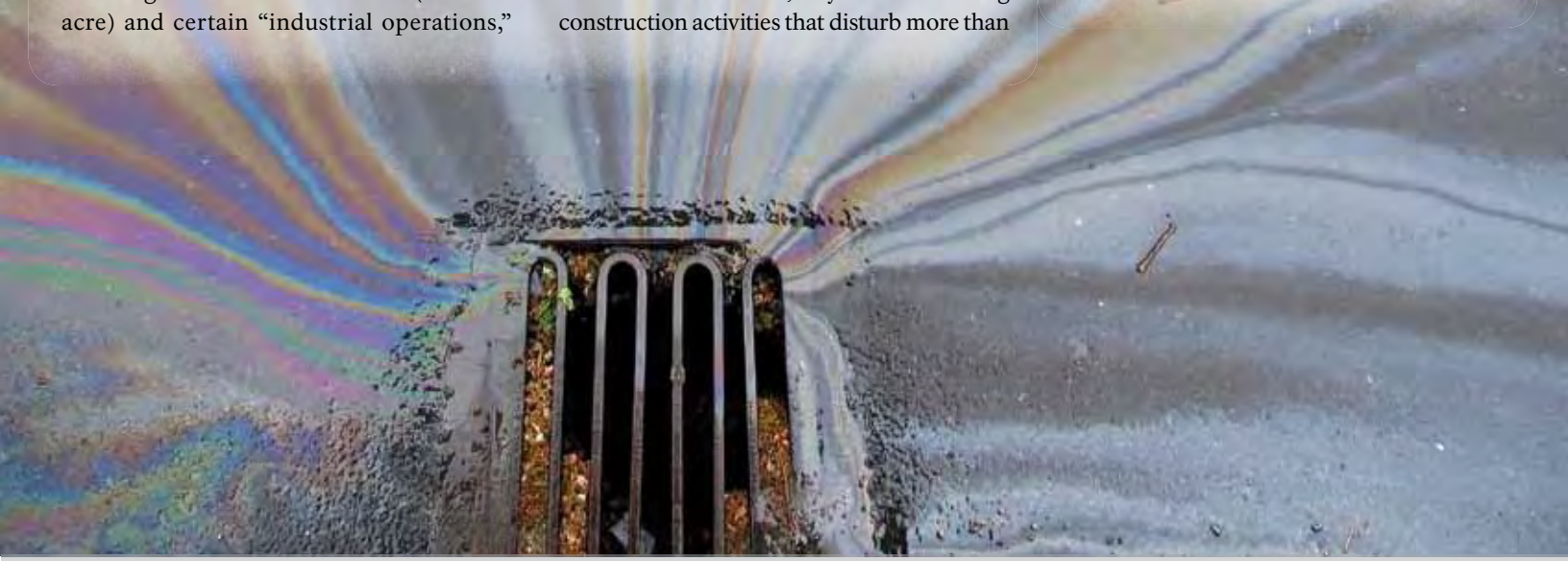
With the arrival of spring comes much needed moisture, important for supporting the plants and wildlife that thrive in our beautiful National Parks, and important for our drinking water supply. However, spring and summer rain and snowmelt can easily become polluted as it flows across roofs and lawns, maintenance yards and construction areas. The polluted stormwater runoff then flows through storm drains and swales, eventually entering our streams, rivers, ponds, lakes, bays, and oceans.

In order to better monitor and prevent stormwater pollution, the Clean Water Act authorized the development of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program in 1972. NPDES regulates all stormwater releases that either reach or have the potential to reach surface waters or waterways. Under the program, stormwater from larger construction activities (over one acre) and certain "industrial operations," such as marinas and gas stations, are illegal unless authorized by an NPDES permit. Most NPDES permit programs are administered by authorized states, meaning that the EPA has approved the state-operated program, and that it either meets or exceeds federal requirements. States that do not have authorized programs include: Idaho, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New Mexico. These states, and concession operators within these states, are required to comply with the federal NPDES requirements.

Concessioners should assess their operation to determine if they are subject to NPDES permitting requirements. Common concessioner industrial operations include marinas with fuel service, gas stations, and parking areas. A complete list of industrial operations that require a NPDES permit is available at: http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/swcats.cfm. In addition, anyone conducting construction activities that disturb more than one acre of land is also subject to NPDES requirements, as sediment and other pollutants washed from such areas can negatively impact water quality and wildlife habitat.

Those operations that require a stormwater permit will be required to implement best management practices to minimize or prevent stormwater pollution from occurring. But even if you are not a facility subject to permitting, you may have activities that could be better handled to prevent stormwater pollution.

Look for simple practices like using alternative pesticides and detergents, covering equipment that is stored outside, minimizing soil exposure on trails by placing a layer of woodchips, and installing diversion ditches to protect natural drainages, to reduce your operation's stormwater impact and keep our park waterways as clean as possible.



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GreenLine

ASSISTANCE

If you require technical assistance on environmental issues or want to learn more about the NPS Commercial Services, contact us:

***GreenLine* Number:**
303/987-6820

Email:
NPS_GreenLine@nps.gov

Website:
concessions.nps.gov, click "CoEMP"

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Branch Chief's Corner

It is summertime again. From tropical storms to forest fires, floods to droughts, concessioners operating in national parks experience a variety of weather conditions during this time of year. And one common factor in all these events is water; sometimes too much, and sometimes too little. It is for this reason that we chose to dedicate our summer 2009 issue of the GreenLine to this critical natural resource.

In *Water Conservation: How Thriving Businesses Flow*, we discuss the Services' obligation to conserve water and meet Executive Order (EO) 13423, and ways concessioners can help us in these efforts. In *Ask Dr. Ima Park*, we discuss updates to the EPA Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) Program, highlighting how the changes apply to concession operations. In *What's In The Water?*, we present information about stormwater management, including permitting requirements and pollution prevention.

In addition to topics focused on water, we have also included some general programmatic and regulatory updates. We provide an overview of the 2008 environmental audit season in *2008 Audit Season in Review*, and highlight some program changes that will continue in 2009. In *Environmentally Friendly Pest Management*, we discuss reporting requirements and proper management of pesticides within the parks as these are common findings identified during concessioner environmental audits.

Finally, we wanted to take a moment to congratulate the three concessioners recently recognized through the 2008 NPS Environmental Achievement Awards for their outstanding environmental efforts: Delaware North Companies Parks & Resorts, Big Bend Resorts LLC., and Guest Services Inc. For more information on how your concession operation can apply for the NPS Environmental Achievement Award, please contact GreenLine@nps.gov.

Deb Harvey

Deb Harvey

Acting Contract Management Branch Chief,
NPS Commercial Services Program

Tap vs. Bottled Water—The Environmental Choice

For over a decade, the sale of bottled water has steadily increased into a multi-billion dollar industry with no signs of slowing down. According to the Beverage Marketing Corporation, Americans purchased over 8.6 billion gallons of water in 2008 (up from 4.7 billion in 2000), spending upwards of $11 billion annually.

In environmental terms, the annual production of bottled water in the US requires over 17 million barrels of oil (not including transportation needs), and approximately three liters of water per liter produced . In addition, bottling water produces more than 2.5 million tons of carbon dioxide, and less than 34 percent of beverage containers are recycled.

What can you do? Sell reusable bottles and provide filtered water stations. Offer a discount to visitors reusing their bottles. Encourage bottle recycling by placing receptacles in highly visible locations and educate visitors on current recycling statistics.