

COOPERATING ASSOCIATIONS

A. POLICY

Pursuant to National Park Service/Cooperating Association Memoranda of Agreement, Cooperating Associations aid and promote interpretive, historical, scientific and educational activities in National Park System areas to enhance visitor appreciation and enjoyment of their park experience. In certain circumstances, and with National Park Service approval, Cooperating Associations may sell non-theme visitor convenience items under concession authorizations.

In addition to the guidelines contained in NPS-32, the following guideposts apply:

1. Except where a compatible sales arrangement can be established or is now working, it is not in the public interest for a concessioner and Association to carry on duplicative, competitive operations in the same building.

2. It is in the public interest for the visitor to have easy, ready access to educational/interpretive materials, especially publications. In some cases, Associations have produced materials indigenous to the parks in which they operate, such as books, postcards, slides, films, and videocassettes. They should be encouraged to wholesale these materials to concessioners at appropriate discounts.

3. Visitor convenience items and related merchandise, such as unexposed film, may not be handled by Association outlets, except under conditions stated in item 4 and 5.

4. In seasons when concession operations are closed and an agreement can be worked out with the concessioner, and in isolated locations where no concessioner or other commercial outlet is readily available, Associations may be permitted to offer convenience and related merchandise to enhance the comfort and enjoyment of the visitor as long as such items are covered with the Association under a concession authorization.

5. Associations may not be authorized to sell convenience and related merchandise until and unless any preferential right to additional services of a concessioner have been fully respected under the terms of a concession authorization.

B. GENERAL

Cooperating Associations are established to aid and promote the interpretive, historical, scientific, and educational activities of the National Park Service. When it is determined to be necessary for the comfort and convenience

of park visitors, and concessioners are not presently providing such services, the Service may authorize Cooperating Associations to sell visitor convenience items which may include:

1. Hot or cold non-alcoholic beverages (dispensing machines preferable)
2. Feminine hygiene products
3. Aspirin/Antacids
4. Insect repellent, sun screen, etc.
5. Emergency fuel for campground use only (wood, gasoline, etc.)
6. Undeveloped film and blank video tapes
7. Postage stamps.

The sale of visitor convenience items, however, falls within the purview of the Concessions Policy Act and must be managed in exactly the same manner as concession permits/contracts issued to concessioners. Therefore, Superintendents or Regional Directors must take the necessary steps to issue the appropriate concession authorization for the sale of visitor convenience items pursuant to Special Directive 78-7 (REVISED) and the concessions program as enunciated in P.L.89-249, 36 CFR, Part 5.3 and Part 51, Chapters 5 and 6 of this Guideline and not the Cooperating Association Guidelines (NPS-32) alone.

When concession authorizations are awarded to Cooperating Associations for the sale of convenience items, franchise fees are determined pursuant to established concession procedures and deposited into the U.S. Treasury under the Visitor Facility Fund account number.

The issuance of a concession authorization for the first time to a Cooperating Association can be sole sourced for a 5-year term without public notice pursuant to 36 CFR 51.4(f). When renewed, however, the concession opportunity must be advertised using normal renewal procedures.