



Niobrara National Scenic River Interpretation & Education DRAFT FY 2013 Strategic Plan



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Mission Statement

We seek to preserve the Outstandingly Remarkable Values of the Niobrara National Scenic River (NSR) through effective interpretation and education services that reveal meanings, foster connections to river resources and inspire people to protect the Niobrara for this and future generations. Our work reflects professional excellence and is accomplished through initiative, integrity, open communication, thoughtful consideration and interdependence with scenic river partners and landowners.

Support for NPS Mission and Niobrara NSR Goals

This work plan is based upon the mission statement of the National Park Service (NPS) that guides all NPS sites.

"...to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife 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 Organic Act of 1916

On a national, regional and local level, the NPS is accountable for attaining agency and site goals under the Government Results and Performance Act (GPRA). The GPRA goals for which the Interpretation & Education program is directly responsible include:

Niobrara NSR GPRA Goal IIa: By September 30, 2013, 87% of NSR visitors at Niobrara NSR safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of NSR facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities. (As measured by the annual Visitor Score Card survey)

Niobrara NSR GPRA Goal IIb: By September 30, 2013, 84% of NSR visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of Niobrara NSR and its resources for this and future generations. (As measured by the annual Visitor Score Card survey)

Niobrara NSR GPRA Goal IIb2: By September 30, 2013, 86% of NSR visitors will be satisfied with Facilitated Programs (As measured by the annual Visitor Score Card survey)

Niobrara NSR Internal Goal: By September 30, 2013, attendance at facilitated programs will rise to 11,600 (from 583 in 2006). NSR visitors and the general public have the opportunity to come to value their national parks by attending a variety of interpretive programs. (As measured by annual interpretive program attendance figures)

Each NPS site along with stakeholders prepares its own management plans that are laid out in a General Management Plan (GMP). The GMP lists the Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) that are nationally significant for the Niobrara National Scenic River (NSR) and need to be protected. These values and other GMP information provided the over-arching mission for the individual divisions carrying out the work of the NSR service site.

	Goal	2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
		Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual
Ila1A	% of visitors to NIOB are satisfied w/appropriate NSR facilities, services and recreational opportunities	83	89	84	94	85	85	86	96	86	96	87	
Ilb1*	% of NIOB visitors understand the significance of the NSR	85	83	83	85	84	79	84	93	86	91	84	
Ilb2	% of NSR visitors satisfied with NSR facilitated programs	No reporting prior to 2010				80	98	81	93	85	93	86	
Ivb2**	Attendance at NIOB facilitated programs will increase to X from 583 in 2006	750	755	800	10076	10176	10405	10510	12906	10610	15246	11670	

*As of Fy12, DOI-NPS GPRa requires only tracking and reporting, but not goal-setting for this goal.

**As of FY12 DOI-NPS no longer tracks this goal. NIOB will continue to track for program management purposes.

Support for Niobrara NSR Management Goals

The following goals are set forth in the 2007 Niobrara NSR General Management Plan.

NSR management seeks:

- To preserve or restore where reasonable the Niobrara River in its **free-flowing condition**;
- To preserve the river's **outstandingly remarkable values** (scenic, recreational, geologic, wildlife, paleontological);
- To **work cooperatively** with landowners, agencies, and others to manage the private and public lands within the Niobrara River Valley;
- To provide for **safe public enjoyment** of the river by offering a variety of recreational opportunities that do not unfavorably affect the river's resources;
- To **interpret** the natural and cultural resources and values of the Niobrara River Valley.

The potential impact of interpretative services on visitor experiences and visitor safety can be easily imagined. How does Interpretation and Education support NSR management goals of resource preservation & restoration? How can a ranger-led talk lead to preservation of NSR resources?

Consider the following quote:

*“In the end
We will only conserve that which we love.
We love only what we understand.
We will only understand what we are taught.”*

Baba Dioum, Senegalese Poet

Interpretation is defined by the NPS and The National Association for Interpretation as providing opportunities for an audience to form their own intellectual and emotional connections to the meanings inherent in a site. Interpretation does not preach resource preservation, but rather it inspires audiences to consider what they individually might value about a specific site, resource or experience and provokes them to action on behalf of that resource.

Interpretation helps visitors to understand and to care about NSR resources so they can then learn to care for them.

This understanding leads to enhanced resource protection and stewardship of NSR resources by the public for whom we care take national parks.



Outdoor Family Fun Day Activities

Support for NPS “A Call to Action” (C2A)

2016 marks the 100th anniversary of the NPS – a defining moment that offers an opportunity to reflect on and celebrate our accomplishments as we prepare for a new century of stewardship and engagement. Several reports over the past decade have provided a vision for the Service’s second century. C2A draws from three major initiatives – *America’s Great Outdoors: A Promise to Future Generations (2011)*, the National Parks Second Century Commission Report, *Advancing the National Park Idea (2009)*; and *The future of America’s National Parks (the Centennial Report, 2007)*.

The most relevant C2A goals to include in the FY2013 Niobrara NSR I&E program include:

- **#2 Step By Step** – *Creating a deep NSR connection between a younger generation and NSRs through a series of diverse experiences.*
- **#7 Next Generation Stewards** - *Create a new generation of citizen scientists and future stewards by conducting fun, engaging and educational biodiversity activities.*
- **#16 Live and Learn** – *Provide multiple ways for children to learn about national NSRs and what they reveal about nature, the nation’s history and issues affecting our civic life.*
- **#17 Go Digital** – *Reach new audiences...offer rich, interactive, up-to-date (web) content*
- **#19 Out with the Old** – *Engage national NSR visitors with interpretive media that offers interactive experiences.*
- **#30 Tools of the Trade** – *Provide employees the tools, training and development opportunities needed to reach their full career potential.*
- **#31 Destination Innovation** – *Accelerate the spread of ideas, encourage innovation, and inspire peer-to-peer collaboration across the Service.*
- **#32 Play It Safe** – *Daily risk management decisions and encourage employees to embrace safety as part of their professional identity.*
- **#35 Welcome Aboard** – *Inclusive workplace that implements orientation and mentoring for all new NPS employees.*

Desired Future Conditions

The Division of Interpretation and Education is committed to working with partners and stakeholders to accomplish this shared vision described in our Long Range Interpretive Plan. It should be recognized, however, that some of the desired future conditions are beyond the scope of the NPS to accomplish alone.

The Division of Interpretation and Education goals were created at a Long Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) workshop held in September 2009 with a variety of stakeholders.

I. By 2019, the river will be widely recognized as a national treasure, cared for and respected by the local community and visitors alike.

Goal 1: Visitors and other stakeholders will understand and appreciate the outstandingly remarkable values of the National Scenic River, and the river's place in the Wild and Scenic River and National Park systems. (GPRA Goal IIb Increased Visitor Understanding, NPS Emphasis Increased Relevance)

Goal 2: Visitors and other stakeholders will recognize the dependence of the Niobrara River's health on its "host" partners. (GPRA Goal IIb Increased Visitor Understanding, NPS Emphasis - Increased Relevance)

Goal 3: Visitors and other stakeholders will demonstrate stewardship by respecting the NSR's natural resources, agency regulations, and landowners' property rights. (NPS Emphasis - Increased Relevance)

II. By 2019, the river will be a premier destination for outdoor recreation, meeting the spectrum of needs and expectations of diverse stakeholders.

Goal 4: Visitors will use the river safely and responsibly to ensure safety and a sense of security for themselves, their family, landowners, and other visitors. (GPRA Visitor Safety Goal, GPRA IIA Visitor Satisfaction, GPRA Goal IIb Visitor Understanding)

Goal 5: Visitors will have the opportunity to enjoy a variety of recreational activities, regardless of ability level, that do not interfere with other people and do not adversely impact the river resources. (GPRA IIA Visitor Satisfaction, GPRA Goal IIb Visitor Understanding)

Goal 6: Visitors will be provided with opportunities to experience solitude and discover nature in the company of friends and family. (GPRA IIA Visitor Satisfaction, GPRA Goal IIb Visitor Understanding)

Goal 7: Visitors will experience the natural landscapes of the Niobrara River valley through sight (scenery, clear night skies, wildlife), smells (campfires, nature), hearing (friends, water, wind, night sounds), touch (water in falls vs. river, heat of sun), and taste (campfire cooking, local produce). (GPRA IIA Visitor Satisfaction, GPRA Goal IIb Visitor Understanding)

Goal 8: Visitors will easily obtain accurate information about way-finding, resources, river access points, accommodations, and other basic needs. (GPRA IIA Visitor Satisfaction, GPRA Goal IIb Visitor Understanding)

III. By 2019, there will be a wide range of learning opportunities available to the public throughout the year.

Goal 9: Visitors will have the opportunity to purchase publications, maps, and other educational materials that will enhance their river experience*. (GPRA IIa Visitor Satisfaction, GPRA Goal IIb Visitor Understanding)

**Due to ethics concerns, federal employee time and equipment cannot be used to develop copyrighted materials other than for the NPS public domain. We cannot design and produce materials for sale by private vendors. However, we can provide some planning and project review assistance on publications and materials developed for sale by others.*

Goal 10: Through effective personal and non-personal interpretation, visitors will discover personal meaning in the Niobrara resources. (GPRA IIa Visitor Satisfaction, GPRA Goal IIb Visitor Understanding, GPRA Goal IIb2 Visitor Satisfaction with Facilitated Programs, GPRA Goal IVb Attendance at Facilitated Programs, NPS Emphasis – Increased Relevance)

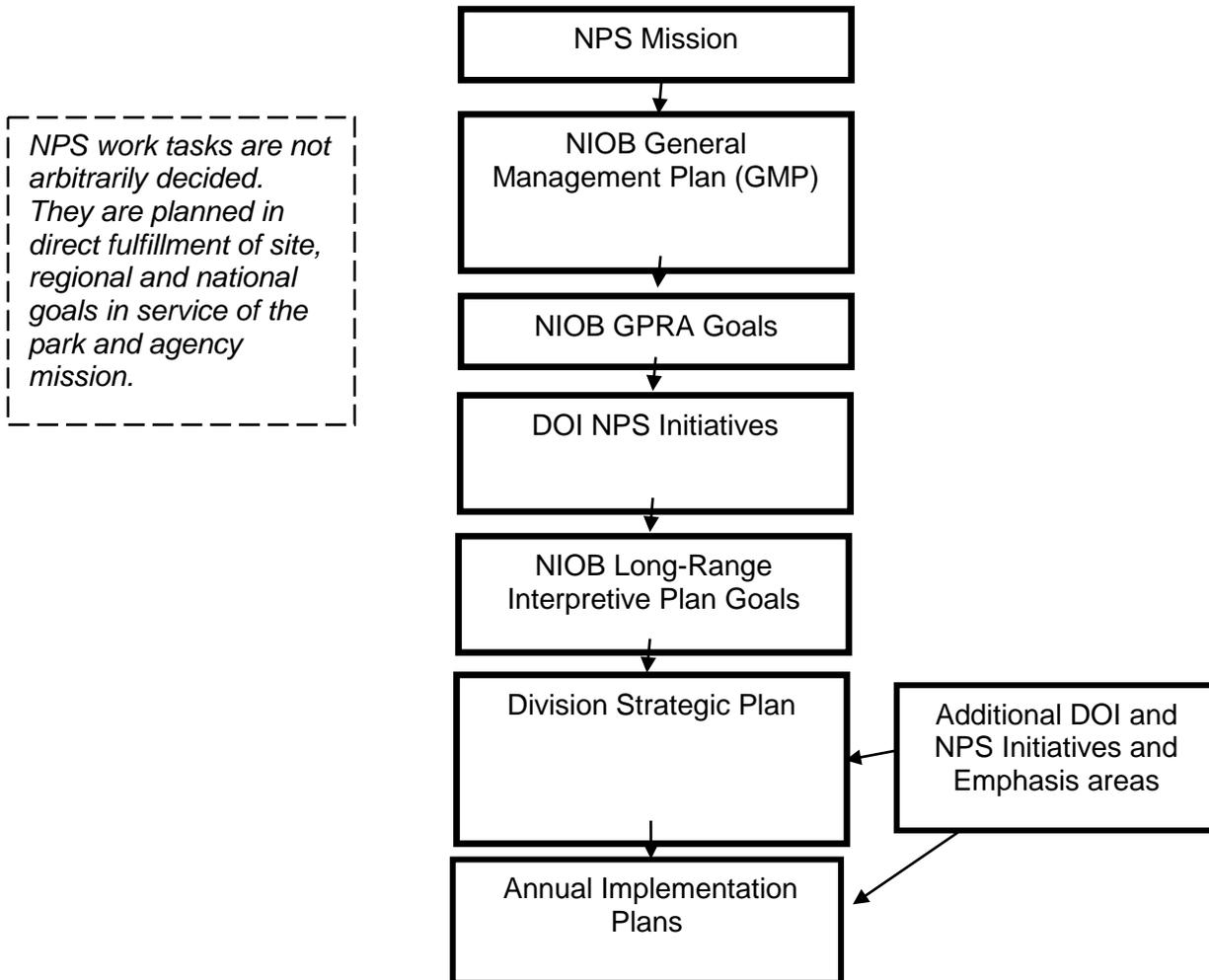
Goal 11: Through outreach efforts and educational programs, the public will have opportunities to learn about the mission and resources of Niobrara National Scenic River. (GPRA IIa Visitor Satisfaction, GPRA Goal IIb Visitor Understanding, GPRA Goal IIb2 Visitor Satisfaction with Facilitated Programs, GPRA Goal IVb Attendance at Facilitated Programs, NPS Emphasis – Increased Relevance)



Visitors enjoy a guided hike by park ranger interpreter, Bill Stahl.

Creating a Ten-Year Strategic Plan

The following diagram indicates how implementation plans are created that flow from the mission of the National Park Service right down to the tasks planned for each fiscal year.



In addition to long-range interpretive plans, a variety of factors influence the work that is necessary at each site. There may be Department of the Interior, National Park Service or Regional Office initiatives or emphasis areas. Some of these recent initiatives include: NPS “A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement” (C2A), “The Interpretation & Education Renaissance of the NPS”, emphasis on Climate Change Education and Research from the Department of the Interior, as well as the continuing service-wide efforts to increase the relevance of NSRs and to engage underrepresented audiences and utilize new technology appropriately.

Part One: The Ten-Year Strategic Plan

For the purposes of this plan, work tasks are divided into the goal areas stated in the 2010 Long Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP). Each of these site goals have a notation as to which GPRA goals are affected. Where applicable, other national emphasis areas will be addressed under specific Niobrara LRIP goal areas.

Each Interpretation & Education Division permanent employee will then have a personalized annual implementation plan that details the tasks to be accomplished by the individual. These will also capture any collateral duties for which the employee is responsible. Seasonal employees, Interns, and Teacher-Ranger-Teacher positions will have more generic goals in the plan, as their employment seasons are 120 days or less.

- I. **By 2019, the river will be widely recognized as a national treasure, cared for and respected by the local community and visitors alike.**

Goal 1: Visitors and other stakeholders will understand and appreciate the outstandingly remarkable values of the National Scenic River, and the river's place in the Wild and Scenic River and National Park systems. GPRA

Goal 2: Visitors and other stakeholders will recognize the dependence of the Niobrara River's health on its "host" partners.

Goal 3: Visitors and other stakeholders will demonstrate stewardship by respecting the NSR's natural resources, agency regulations, and landowners' property rights.

Goals 1-3 Division Objectives:

- A. Develop and implement a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (LRIP, AIP, Interpretive Database) and implement other NSR, regional and national strategies to establish and improve the NSR's interpretive services. Completed

2011, 2012 Accomplishments: Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) prepared and distributed via website.

2010 Accomplishments: Long Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) published April 2010, distributed to stakeholders and available on NSR web site.

- B. Secure funding for Interpretation & Education division staff and programming through base as well as project and grant fund sources.

2012 Accomplishments: Secured NPS base funding to support 2 Seasonal GS5 Seasonal Park Ranger, Interpreters, and 2 Student Conservation Interns. \$6,300 additional support for 2 SCA Interns secured through a successful NPS Youth Partnerships in Parks project request. Secured \$835 in Volunteer program funding.

2011 Accomplishments: Secured NPS base funding to support 2 GS-5 Seasonal Park Ranger Interpreters, and 1 Student Conservation Association Intern. 1 Teacher-Ranger-Teacher paid through successful Youth Partnership in Parks project request.

Goals 1-3 Division Objectives continued:

2010 Accomplishments: Secured funds to support 2 GS-5 Seasonal Park Ranger Interpreters, 1 Teacher-Ranger-Teacher and 1 Student Conservation Association Intern.

- C. Manage staff and division resources to meet or exceed Visitor Understanding of 83% (through FY11 only), Visitor Satisfaction of 85% and Visitor Attendance at Facilitated Programs of 10,610 as measured through the Visitor Score Card Process.

2012 Accomplishments: Visitor Understanding = 96%, Visitor Satisfaction with Programs = 93%, Visitor Attendance at Facilitated Programs = 15,699 (up 16% from 2011 with similar staffing).

2011 Accomplishments: Visitor Understanding = 93%, Visitor Satisfaction with Programs = 93%, Visitor Attendance at Programs = 12,906

2010 Accomplishments: Visitor Understanding = 79%, Visitor Satisfaction with Programs = 95%, Visitor Attendance at Programs = 10,268.

- D. Plan and implement formal and informal interpretation personal services program

2012 Accomplishments: Overall visitor contact numbers increased 16% over 2011 due to increased informal visitor contacts during the summer season. Formal interpretive program events were reduced from 2010 levels. Friday evening programs were not scheduled in 2012 due to poor attendance in previous years. As well, a wildfire in late July affected attendance at programs. Formal programs served 1,602 visitors, informal interpretation at river landings and on water served 9,281 visitors (11,167 including Visitor & Resource Protection contacts). Staff exemplified under-represented groups in the GS-025 job series. Education programs served 995 students. Conducting River Management Plan workshops in April prevented participation in Todd County Schools Enviro-Fair, accounting for the decrease in education program contacts from 2011 levels.

2011 Accomplishments: Formal interpretive programs continued at 2010 levels and served 2,154 visitors, informal interpretation at river landings and on water served 7,882 visitors (10,408 including Visitor & Resource Protection contacts). Staff exemplified under-represented groups in the GS-025 job series and were rated "Minimally" to "Fully Successful" in their work. Education programs served 1,122 students in 16 schools in 7 districts from 2 states.

2010 Accomplishments: Formal programs scheduled Fri/Sat @ Smith Falls Campground, and Guided Walks at Ft. Niobrara Refuge Sun. served 1,323 visitors, informal interpretation at river landings and on water served 5,992 visitors (8,372 including Visitor & Resource Protection contacts). Staff exemplified under-represented groups in the GS-025 job series and were rated "Fully Successful" in their work.

- E. Create opportunities to develop formal community-based programs with local partners such as the Valentine Public Library, Rotary, and Scout groups.

2012 Accomplishments: Provided programs for Delta Kappa Gamma teaching sorority (1), Cherry Hills Assisted Living Center (1), Nebraska Master Naturalists (1), Girl Scouts (5), and the Sand Hills Discovery conference (1). Valentine, Springview and Bassett Libraries Summer Reading Series programming was scheduled, but later cancelled by the libraries. Programs were unable to be rescheduled.

F. Goals 1-3 Division Objectives continued:

2011 Accomplishments: Library summer reading series 1 program each at Rock County and Valentine, 1 Girl Scout Program, 1 Rotary Club program, 1 Sand Hills Discovery Conference program, volunteer, and partner 1st Aid/CPR instruction, Awarded Spirit of Girl Scouting Community Benefactor Award by Girl Scouts – Spirit of Nebraska.

2010 Accomplishments: Library summer reading series (1 program only due to library closure), 2 Girl Scout Programs, Boy Scout 1st Aid/CPR instruction, Guided Hike for National Trails Day.

G. Continue to support Niobrara Council Day Camp efforts with NPS personnel and equipment.

2012 Accomplishments: 8 Day Camp programs, 13 Pre-school sessions, and 2 After School Nature club sessions were presented. Loaned program props to support additional Day Camp programming.

2011 Accomplishments: 8 Day Camp, 9 Pre-school, and 1 After-School Nature Club education sessions presented.

2010 Accomplishments: 9 Day Camp education sessions presented.

H. **Require all interpreters to present the complex land ownership/stewardship relationship in their roving and formal interpretation. Completed & Ongoing**

2010 - 2012 Accomplishments: It is now standard for interpreters to include private land messages in programs and during informal interpretation contacts to stress partnership and respect for private lands.

I. Clarify land ownership/stewardship messages on NSR website.

2012 Accomplishments: Plan Your Trip page revised again for clarity of private lands and private business information access.

2011 Accomplishments: Plan Your Trip page now includes private land and private business information and a message to encourage respect for private lands.

2010 Accomplishments: Introductory paragraph on home page includes land ownership information (“lands are mostly privately owned”).

J. Seek ways to evaluate progress towards the goal of increase awareness of complex land ownership/stewardship of river lands.

2011 Accomplishments: Researched information regarding evaluation tools that don't require Office of Management & Budget (OMB) approval (which can take up to 9 months).

2010 Accomplishments: None

K. Brainstorm ways to encourage demonstration of stewardship through volunteer and visitor activities.

2012 Accomplishments: Volunteers contributed 1306 hours to the NSR from 24 volunteers representing \$26,773 in value. Increase in hours due to having two full time SCA interns in Interpretation.

Goals 1-3 Division Objectives continued:

2011 Accomplishments: Volunteers contributed 896 hours to the NSR from 34 volunteers representing \$18,368 in value. Reduction in full-time volunteers from 2010 accounts for some of the observed decrease. One person volunteered full time in Interpretation for 12 weeks. Former Resource Management volunteer position was converted to a GS-2 Biologic Aide position to enable recruitment local students which resulted in a drop in volunteer hours from 2010.

2010 Accomplishments: Volunteer hours contributed to the NSR increased to 1,509 from 47 volunteers representing \$30,934 in value. They included: two full-time volunteers (1 Resource Management, 1 Interpretation) as well as numerous community volunteers assisting with Outdoor Family Fun Day, National Trails Day, National Public Lands Day and river cleanup.

L. Seek method for evaluating stewardship demonstration. **Completed**

2010 Accomplishments: Consider annual Volunteer-In-Parks program participation as a measure of stewardship demonstration. This indicates individuals and groups who value the Niobrara enough to give of their time to help the NSR service in its management.

M. Maintain and improve NSR partnerships with outfitters, local chambers of commerce, local landowners, area interest groups and the Niobrara Council.

2012 Accomplishments: Added Nebraska Master Naturalists as informal partner. Worked with the Nebraska Association of Irrigators to facilitate a leadership-training weekend.

2011 Accomplishments: New relationships with Todd County, SD Schools for spring Enviro-Fair, Sand Hills Discovery Foundation for annual conference and continued relationships with existing informal partners: Niobrara Council; NVOEP; Valentine, Ainsworth, Bassett, Springview, Cody-Kilgore, St. Francis, and West Boyd schools; USFWS, The Nature Conservancy, Nebraska Forest Service, and Girls Scouts – Spirit of Nebraska Council. Worked with Valentine Chamber of Commerce to produce and distribute press release to counter misperception of Niobrara NSR flooding.

2010 Accomplishments: Achieved deeper relationship with Niobrara Council and other Niobrara Valley Outdoor Education Partnership members for education, gained new community contacts for advertising programs, increased informal contacts with outfitter businesses weekly with distribution of program advertisements.

II. **By 2019, the river will be a premier destination for outdoor recreation, meeting the spectrum of needs and expectations of diverse stakeholders. GPRA Goal IIa and lib NIOB Mission goals: Preserve Outstanding Resource Values, Work Cooperatively, Public Enjoyment and Interpret Resources**

Goal 4: Visitors will use the river safely and responsibly to ensure safety and a sense of security for themselves, their family, landowners, and other visitors.

Goal 5: Visitors will have the opportunity to enjoy a variety of recreational activities, regardless of ability level, that do not interfere with other people and do not adversely impact the river resources.

Goal 6: Visitors will be provided with opportunities to experience solitude and discover nature in the company of friends and family.

Goal 7: Visitors will experience the natural landscapes of the Niobrara River valley through sight (scenery, clear night skies, wildlife), smells (campfires, nature), hearing (friends, water, wind, night sounds), touch (water in falls vs. river, heat of sun), and taste (campfire cooking, local produce).

Goal 8: Visitors will easily obtain accurate information about way-finding, resources, river access points, accommodations, and other basic needs.

Goals 4-8 Division Objectives:

- A. **Create/Provide Camping Adventure with My Parents (CAMP) Program The high per participant cost of providing this program is fiscally unsustainable. Not be planned in FY13-19. Completed**

2012 Accomplishments: Two overnight adventures served 25 individuals (5 families) with overwhelmingly positive feedback. Second weekend of summer was cancelled due to lack of reservations. 15 additional participants for the last weekend cancelled their reservations due to Region 24 Complex Fire road closures.

2011 Accomplishments: Two overnight adventures served 22 individuals (5 families) with overwhelmingly positive feedback evaluations from participants and volunteers. Third scheduled program scratched due to last minute cancellations (health and transportation issues) by all three families.

2010 Accomplishments: Three overnight adventures served 39 individuals (7 families) with overwhelmingly positive feedback evaluations from participants and volunteers.

- B. **Collaborate with Niobrara Council to revise & publish “ethics” rack card. Completed**

2010 Accomplishments: Assisted council staff with text and design revision input.

- C. **Create and distribute to outfitters and partners a map with precise mileages and approximate times to standardize information. Completed**

2011 Accomplishments: Designed, evaluated with outfitters, produced and distributed 24x 36 poster size and 11 x 17 counter size standardized maps and provided PDF files to outfitter businesses for use on their web sites.

2010 Accomplishments: Surveyed outfitters to determine demand and information desired for product. Lack of GIS files limited progress towards drafting a map.

- D. **Maintain and improve NSR web site for ease of trip planning information and to manage visitor expectations of visit.**

2012 Accomplishments: Added new River Levels web page with information on how to translate river gauge information to anticipate floating conditions, linked to a prominent “Feature” on the home page. Grew Facebook presence during Region 24 Complex Fires as our page became a trusted source for fire information and NSR closures. In one week went from 1,700 to over 3,000 fans. A higher number of sustained followers are checking our page than prior to the fires. Added Region 24 Complex fire updates to web page as alerts, including burn bans and closures. Also, “tweeted” fire updates on NSR Twitter feed.

Goals 4-8 Division Objectives continued:

2011 Accomplishments: Added Schedule of Events calendar and emergency notice that river was NOT flooded (due to confusion with the town of Niobrara, NE which was), and updated List of Outfitters to reflect new business in 2011. Facebook page updates with over 1,010 fans by end of fiscal year. Program posts are “tweeted” via Twitter and re-posted by NGPC, local outfitters and Omaha/Lincoln family activity groups on their Facebook pages.

2010 Accomplishments: Updated List of Outfitters to reflect ownership changes for 2010. Established Facebook fan page with over 600 fans by end of fiscal year.

E. Develop and print revised rack card for distribution to area businesses, Interstate Rest stops and other partners that will encourage web site use. Completed

2012 Accomplishments: Reprinted the rack card with revised office address.

2011 Accomplishments: Distributed the Niobrara NSR rack card to local business and Nebraska Tourism I-80 rest area outlets.

2010 Accomplishments: Redesigned, printed and distributed the Niobrara NSR rack card.

F. Support Smith Falls State Park as distribution outlet for existing supply of Junior Ranger booklets and badges. Completed

2012 Accomplishments: Old book supply has been exhausted. New book designed and activities underwent formative evaluation this summer.

2011 Accomplishments: Approximately 180 booklets were distributed at Smith Falls State Park.

2010 Accomplishments: Approximately 350 booklets were distributed at Smith Falls State Park.

G. Seek funding for a Comprehensive Wayside Plan, equipment and bases to produce in-house waysides with plotter printer and self-adhesive vinyl.

2012 Accomplishments: NPS staff installed kiosks in late summer at Smith Falls SP and Brewer Landing. Chief edited project-funding request in PMIS to seek funding for comprehensive wayside planning effort in 2015 from National 20% Recreation Fee funding source.

2011 Accomplishments: Acquired two 3-sided kiosks for installation at Smith Falls SP and Brewer Bridge Landing to provide Niobrara NSR orientation, information, and interpretation.

2010 Accomplishments: Acquired two portable wayside bases, a large format printer, self-adhesive vinyl and sign press to produce temporary wayside exhibits in the future.

H. Encourage strategic sign planning for orientation and information signage along the river.

2012, 2011, 2010 Accomplishments: Funding remains elusive to support this effort.

I. Collaborate with Niobrara River Outfitters Association for learning and presenting issues to visiting public.

2012 Accomplishments: Presented information on division efforts at Outfitter Orientation meeting. Two of thirteen businesses sent staff

2011 Accomplishments: Presented information on division efforts at Outfitter Orientation meeting.

2010 Accomplishments: Attended two association meetings.

III. By 2019, there will be a wide range of learning opportunities available to the public throughout the year. GPRA Goal IIa, IIb and IVb Park Mission Goals: Work Cooperatively and Interpret Resources

Goal 9: Visitors will have the opportunity to purchase publications, maps, and other educational materials that will enhance their river experience.

Goal 10: Through effective personal and non-personal interpretation, visitors will discover personal meaning in the Niobrara resources.

Goal 11: Through outreach efforts and educational programs, the public will have opportunities to learn about the mission and resources of Niobrara National Scenic River.

Goals 9-11 Division Objectives:

A. Plan for future Junior Ranger program development.

2012 Accomplishments: Secured project and NPS base funding for an SCA Intern to design and field test a 14 page full color 8 x 7 Junior Ranger book. Draft completed.

2011 Accomplishments: Submitted, but was not selected for, a fully-funded 2011 Junior Ranger SCA Ambassador to re-design the Junior Ranger book.

2010 Accomplishments: Revised PMIS project to be input in 2012 Added 2011 request for CAMP program intern funding

B. Seek Cooperating Association agreement and implementation of HQ Sales outlet with Eastern National Association - **Changed from** - ~~Explore publication capabilities with Sandhills Prairie Refuge Association~~

2012 Accomplishments: SPRA currently does not have the financial capacity to fund publication production.

2011 Accomplishments: No accomplishments to report. Due to capacity issues, this effort is a lower priority early in the Ten-Year Plan.

2010 Accomplishments: No accomplishments to report.

C. All interpretive services provided by the division meet national standards for successful interpretation and are evaluated against those standards.

2012 Accomplishments: Achieved. All permanent and seasonal interpreters' formal and informal interpretation met NPS professional standards for success. Interpretive Talks, Guided Walks and Informal Interpretation services were evaluated using national standards and developmental feedback given to staff.

2011 Accomplishments: Permanent interpreter met standards. Seasonal interpreters partially met standards even with much coaching and developmental feedback throughout the summer.

2010 Accomplishments: Achieved (measured through supervisory program evaluations).

Goals 9-11 Objectives, continued:

- D. Interpreters will develop mini-programs on all NSR themes and formal programs and outreach programs throughout the year will touch on all topics in the range of primary themes.

2012 Accomplishments: *Each interpreter completed at least seven “mini-talk” outlines (and in one case produced fourteen) which covered all NSR significances (Outstandingly Remarkable Values). Outreach programs were presented centered on NSR significances and made relevant for specific audiences.*

2011 Accomplishments: *Permanent Interpreter was fully successful. Seasonal staff informal and formal programs were directly tied to some NSR themes and national significances, but did not represent all themes (i.e. paleontological and geological topics were well represented despite coaching).*

2010 Accomplishments: *Staff informal and formal programs were directly tied to NSR themes and national significance.*

- E. Web based video programs will be developed and posted to the NSR web site with the 2016 goal of representing each NSR primary interpretive theme through a 2-3 minute video.

2012 Accomplishments: *None*

2011 Accomplishments: *Draft Climate change podcast storyboard updated during “Earth-to-Sky” training. Capacity constraints prohibited further progress.*

2010 Accomplishments: *Draft Climate Change Impacts pod cast storyboard completed by seasonal ranger*

- F. Chief of Interpretation will continue to serve as IDP certifier and Regional Lead coach for national interpretation standards certification.

2012 Accomplishments: *Chief coached a total of six interpreters in two different courses towards Advanced Certification in Interpretive Skills. Chief was accredited as NPS Interpretive Development Program Certifier and Curriculum Coordinator for the eleventh year of service. Reviewed 14 IDP products for national peer-review certification Provided coaching assistance to chiefs at Theodore Roosevelt NP, Organ Pipe Cactus NM, and Nicodemus NHS.*

2011 Accomplishments: *Chief served as Subject-Matter-Expert for workshop developing curriculum goals for NPS Division Leadership Development Program (aka “Chief’s Academy”), Peer-reviewed 10 national interpretive products, coaching three students towards Advanced Certification in Eppley/NPS web-based courses, advised Chiefs at Theodore Roosevelt NP, Organ Pipe Cactus NM, and superintendent at Agate Fossil Beds NM on interpretive standards and staff development.*

2010 Accomplishments: *Peer-reviewed & provided developmental feedback for 11 products, advised Nicodemus National Historic Site in drafting historic walking tour publication and mentored GS5 Park Ranger there in professional development. Instructed 1-week Regional Web Coach Training at St. Croix National Scenic River, WI*

Goals 9-11 Objectives, continued:

- G. Staff will be required to complete Basic certification and encouraged to complete Advanced training and certification in professional interpretation skills to enhance the effectiveness of NSR interpretation.

2012 Accomplishments: One seasonal Park Ranger completed two Advanced Certificates (Informal Visitor contacts & Interpretive Talk) and one SCA completed four of six activities towards Advanced Certification in Informal Visitor Contacts. One former seasonal VRP ranger completed Advanced Certificate in Informal Visitor Contacts and one current seasonal VRP ranger is pursuing the same certification with two of six activities completed by fiscal year-end.

2011 Accomplishments: One additional member being coached towards Informal Interpretation Advanced Certification, one dropped out, and continued coaching another in two courses. Seasonal staff completed Basic certification in Informal visitor contacts and Interpretive Talk, Permanent Park Ranger obtained "Earth-to-Sky" Certification in communicating climate change and attended 4 other Climate Change issue webinars.

2010 Accomplishments: Two staff began courses in three advanced certification programs (1 Informal Visitor Contacts, 2 Formal Visitor Contacts)

- H. **Permanent park ranger will complete NPS Fundamentals training during initial two years of employment. Completed**

2012 Accomplishments: Fundamentals V completed February 2012 (Adrienne J.)

2011 Accomplishments: Fundamentals I, II, III, and IV completed February 2011

2010 Accomplishments: Fundamentals II 2-week course at Grand Canyon scheduled for December 2010.

- I. Chief of Interpretation will work with NPS Midwest Regional Chief to implement peer-sharing and peer-skill development efforts as directed. **(Changed to meet regional and developmental needs from previous iteration: Chief of Interpretation will facilitate NPS Midwest Regional Workgroup on Professional Standards, coordinate regional discussion group on Rivers and participate in workgroups on Interpreting Climate Change and Youth Programs. Serve as an administrator for MWR Interpretation & Education SharePoint Site.)**

2012 Accomplishments: Chief developed and conducted pre-workshop "Executive Core Qualifications" skills assessment survey of MWR chiefs of interpretation, facilitated regional workshop agenda planning based upon participant skills assessments, presented two sessions at workshop (Working with Partners and Evaluating Interpreters using Professional Standards), and facilitated one day of workshop presentations. Suggested revamping MWR I&E Sharepoint site.

2011 Accomplishments: Continued to contribute to MWR Sharepoint site and advised MWR Regional Chief of Interpretation in its use.

2010 Accomplishments: Established and contributed to MWR interpretation & Education Sharepoint site. Post documents and training announcements for all regional interpreters to access.

Goals 9-11 Objectives, continued:

- J. Maintain NSR membership in the following professional groups: National Association for Interpretation (NAI); ~~North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE)~~ Nebraska Association for Conservation and Environmental Education (NACEE).

2012 Accomplishments: Chief and permanent interpreter attended NAI National Workshop in St. Paul, MN and volunteered to assist with room monitoring, meal ticket taking, and staffing the NPS Interpretive Development Program booth. Dropped NAAEE membership in favor of state organization NACEE with more opportunities for regional and local resources and networking. Permanent Park Interpreter manages website and Facebook page for Interpretive Naturalist Section of NAI.

2011 Accomplishments: Permanent Interpreter provided a session on working with partners for the NAI workshop in Las Vegas, NV in November 2010 and submitted article for publication in "Legacy" magazine, a publication of NAI. Permanent Park Interpreter manages website and Facebook page for Interpretive Naturalist Section of NAI. Membership in both organizations maintained.

2010 Accomplishments: Both the Chief and the Permanent Park Ranger attended the NAI workshop in Hartford, CT in November 2009. The permanent Park Ranger became trained in "Growing Up Wild" a Project Wild curriculum for K-3 graders.

- K. Maintain NSR participation in the following local groups: Niobrara Valley Education Partners (NVOEP); ~~Outlaw Scenic Byway (Hwy 12), Bridges to Buttes Scenic Byway (Hwy 20), Nebraska Natural Landmarks Program (NNLP)~~. (While supportive of the Byways program and state natural landmarks program, it is geographically infeasible to participate in meetings. Will continue to seek ways to work together to strengthen visitor information and tourism opportunities (2012))

2012 Accomplishments: Led and planned NVOEP 4th annual Nature Fest for area 5th graders. NPS staff provide one activity station and assisted two other partners in their activity stations. Served 103 students from 6 area schools. Participated with NVOEP in Springview Resource Day. Unable to participate in Todd Co Enviro-Fair due to RMP public meeting schedule.

2011 Accomplishments: Led planned and presentation of 3rd annual Nature Fest for area 5th graders using NVOEP partners serving 120 children from 5 local schools. Participated in Todd County Enviro-Fair (286 4th Graders) and Springview Resource Day (55 K-6th Graders).

2010 Accomplishments: Led planned and presentation of 2nd annual Nature Fest for area 5th graders using NVOEP partners. Served 103 children from 5 schools. Participated in NVOEP coordinated Springview Resource Day presenting 6 programs to over 80 children at Springview Elementary school.

Part Two: Annual Implementation Plan

Summary FY2013 Plan

In the coming year, the Division of Interpretation and Education will work toward our goal of preserving the natural and cultural resources of Niobrara National Scenic River through effective interpretation and education services. We will support and incorporate initiatives from the NPS “*A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship Engagement*” (C2A) which are noted parenthetically for appropriate work plan items.

We will establish a Niobrara NSR Visitor Center and Eastern National Cooperating Association sales outlet in the lobby of the headquarters office in Valentine. Eastern National is a non-profit partner with the mission of assisting National Park sites in their mission of visitor education, interpretation, resource protection, and visitor service. This visitor center will provide information, orientation, and interpretation of the national significances of Niobrara as well as local, inter-agency recreation opportunities. Operating hours will be the same as office hours (Monday – Friday, 8a.m. – 4:30 p.m. excluding federal holidays). Summer hours will be determined by seasonal staffing levels. Pending additional project funding, we will work with Harper’s Ferry Center (NPS) to develop and install temporary exhibits for this Visitor Center space in 2013. The NSR has also requested national funding in 2013 for a 2-year project to write, photograph, edit and produce a digital NSR orientation video.

We will continue to provide formal interpretive programs at Smith Falls State Park Campground on Saturday nights and add a Junior Ranger Children’s program here on Sunday late mornings, between Memorial Day and Labor Day as staffing permits. We will continue to work with NVOEP and other partners to provide environmental education such as Nature Fest, Springview Resource Day, and Todd County Enviro-Fair. We will reach out to underrepresented families through the Outdoor Family Fun Day Special Event in spring. We will continue to try to reach out to local teachers through the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program to develop lesson plans based upon Niobrara resources that meet state education standards. We will facilitate civic engagement during the River Management Planning and Commercial Services Strategy process.

All of these efforts are designed to help us reach incrementally higher service-wide GPRA goals in visitor satisfaction, visitor understanding of national significance and the NSR goal of increased attendance at facilitated programs as well as make progress towards the C2A Goals and the interpretive goals in this strategic plan.

Management Issues Currently Affecting Niobrara NSR

Budget Uncertainties

Expansion of I&E programming beyond 2010 funding levels is not anticipated. The national political and economic climate are signaling future budget reductions, not growth. Increases in salary associated with permanent employees developing from the entry-level to journeyman level skill and compensation will result in fewer dollars available to fund seasonal staff and projects in the future. In addition, the operation of a Visitor Center signals the need for NSR wide position management as work priorities have changed significantly since the completion of the Core Operations organization chart in 2009. With current staffing, the I&E operation of a public visitor center without the additional I&E staff will limit hours of operation to office business hours. If open on summer weekends, staff capacity to contact river visitors will be reduced.

River Management Planning

The NSR continues the River Management and Commercial Services Strategy planning in 2013, with public scoping workshops planned this spring to present draft plan alternatives for public comment. Continuing anti-government sentiment and misunderstanding or ignorance of the mission, purpose, and significance of Niobrara NSR among the local community (despite having gone through the General Management Planning process in the 1990's and 2000's) has increased antagonism towards NPS operations and staff. The NSR is also moving towards implementing legally mandated oversight of commercial services on the national scenic river. Some outfitters who were cooperative with NPS in previous years have withdrawn their cooperation in areas ranging from staff access to privately owned but publicly used river landings to the refusal to distribute NPS publications to educate visitors they bring to the river.

Administrative Changes

DOI and NPS changes in financial management systems, student hiring authorities, and coordinating administrative and purchasing functions between parks will cause some issues as the systems are implemented in FY13. Conversion to the competitive "Pathways" student hiring process was implemented in June of 2012, but without substantive guidance to direct hiring officials. This has impacted the ability to proactively craft timely vacancy announcements and to nurture informed relationships with students and institutions for recruiting purposes. These relationships must be developed and vacancy requests submitted to Human Resources in late fall (October) in order to be advertised in December/January and have individuals committed for hire by March/April. It does not appear that guidance will be available in this time frame.

Barriers to Success in 2013

Lack of Formal Agreements with Partners, Private Landowners, & Outfitters

Currently, we have no management mechanism, no formal relationship, with private businesses providing visitor access to and services on the Niobrara NSR. The forthcoming Commercial Services Strategy seeks to improve this, but will not be implemented until 2014. As a result, the vast majority of visitors are not informed about the river's national significance, rules & regulations, trip planning, safety hazards, facilities and services, opportunities for stewardship and learning, etc. Visitor expectations are not being met, or may be in conflict with the purpose of establishing the National Scenic River. Lack of cooperation and consistency hampers effective messaging and information transfer to river visitors.

Local Opposition to Change

Local anti-federal government sentiments are increasingly expressed against the National Park Service and U.S Fish and Wildlife Service with a rise in both agencies visibility to the community. The River Management and Commercial Services Strategy planning processes exacerbate this existing skepticism of federal agencies. Through these planning efforts, we are seeking to change and improve the current visitor experience from one highly variable in quality, safety, education, and experience to one that is more consistent with the mission and purpose of Niobrara NSR: to protect the nationally significant river resources for future generations while facilitating visitor use. Humans resist change and see it as a negative, in general. Staff will need to become more aware of how to lead and manage change and to bolster their skills to assist the public, local and otherwise, with patience, understanding and respect. Negativity directed at the agency and staff can decrease morale and performance. Supervisors must take the time to coach staff on change management and manage morale to maintain a positive and supportive environment both within the office and within relationships with stakeholders.

Lack of Administrative/Information Technology Support on-site

Currently, Niobrara NSR funds 50% of an Administrative Officer, an Administrative Technician, and a Hydrologist position with Missouri National Recreation River (MNRR). These positions are duty-stationed in Yankton, SD. Proximity yields greater benefit to MNRR than to Niobrara NSR simply by benefit of the location of staffing. On-site administrative and information technology support is provided at Niobrara NSR by the Chief of Interpretation and reduces the amount of time able to be devoted to program accomplishments. In 2012, the Chief of I&E spent over 400 hours (20% of their time) working on computer formatting, software installation, IT training and troubleshooting tasks. This was double previous years' efforts due to the need to design, coordinate and oversee the installation of a new server and VoIP telephone system and updating all computers to Windows 7 operating system.

FY13 will see the implementation of a new Google Apps system for email and calendaring that will require training and troubleshooting. As well, computer replacement planning and installation, software acquisition, installation and security requirements will require attention of the Chief away from interpretive operations.

The Chief of Interpretation assuming these duties has enabled the NSR to work more efficiently and effectively as a whole, but at a cost to the Interpretation and Education program capacity. As well, these duties and skill development are not codified in the Chief of Interpretation position description, yearly evaluation, or salary compensation. Until another solution for administrative and information technology support can be found, this work capacity impact limits greater I&E program goal accomplishment.

Unique Opportunities in 2013

Visitor Center Development

The new office building provides over 800 square feet for use as a visitor center and additional space set up as a classroom/meeting space. A significant time commitment will be required to establish the cooperating association relationship with Eastern National. Beginning a retail operation will involve planning, communication, product review and initial set-up. On-going tasks include operating the sales outlet space, developing a Scope of Sales for the operation, developing and implementing Standard Operating Procedures for sales, accounting, and security, reviewing development of NSR specific products, as well as training and oversight of staff operating the visitor center. With no dedicated staffing identified to operate a visitor center, coverage will require training all NSR staff members in operations and providing inventory security oversight for all who might happen to be available to staff the center.

The NSR has two interpretive media project requests up for consideration in 2013. One is to develop temporary exhibits in conjunction with Harper's Ferry Center. The other is a 2-year project to develop and produce a digital NSR orientation film that includes funding for a two-year GS-9 TERM Interpretive Specialist. Each of these projects will require considerable time and effort from the permanent NSR staff as subject-matter-experts. Interpretive staff will be aiding exhibit designers and film producers to develop exhibit text, images and graphics as well as to develop a film script and storyboard.

Unique Opportunities in 2013 continued

River Management and Concessions Management Strategy Planning Process

The planning and communications effort for river and concessions management will increase the workload of the interpretation program, but also provide a unique opportunity for staff to demonstrate their facilitation and communications skill as well as resource knowledge. Though contractors will be providing the writing services, there will still be many hours involved in facilitating public meetings, drafting potential alternatives, presenting alternatives to the public, evaluating public responses to alternatives, information and image gathering, reviewing drafts, and public affairs outreach and information management tasks for the program staff to complete.

3-sided Kiosks

The installation of two kiosks at Smith Falls State Park and Brewer Bridge Landing creates a workload demand of approximately 160 -240 hours on the division to plan, research, design, create, evaluate, produce in-house and install six interpretive panels before the beginning of the summer 2013 visitor season. This will require planning, image acquisition, interpretive writing, graphic design & layout, in-house printing, mounting on substrate and installation of panels at each kiosk. While the entire park will be involved in generating ideas and reviewing the work, the bulk of the project falls to the Chief of Interpretation & Permanent GS9 Park Ranger, Interpreter.

FY13 Individual Work Plans

Chief of Interpretation & Education

I. By 2019, the river will be widely recognized as a national treasure, cared for and respected by the local community and visitors alike. Goals 1-3 Objectives,

Implement a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan and other NSR, regional and national strategies to establish and improve the NSR's interpretive services.

Plan and secure funding for Interpretation & Education division staff and programming

- Maintain PMIS project funding proposals for: Visitor Center Permanent Exhibit planning, design, fabrication & installation; funding for Teacher-Ranger-Teacher positions, and Junior Ranger Book publication. (C2A goals #2, 7, 16, 19)

Recruit, hire, train and manage staff according to EEOC laws, principles and guidelines

- Work with HR to include solo canoe/kayak skill in rating assessment (C2A goal #32)

Manage staff and division resources to meet or exceed GPRA Goals of Visitor Satisfaction with Facilities of 87%, Visitor Satisfaction with Facilitated Programs at 86% and Visitor Attendance at Facilitated Programs of 11,670 as measured through the Visitor Score Card Process. (C2A goals #2, 7, 16)

Plan and implement a formal and informal interpretation services program (C2A goals #2, 7, 16)

- Implement Saturday evening programs and Sunday Junior Ranger Programs at Smith Falls Campground. Implement strategy and SOP for more accountability in interpretive roving patrols.
- Offer at least two NSR training sessions on foundations of interpretation and providing informal interpretation.

Create opportunities to develop formal community-based programs with local partners such as the Public Libraries, Community Clubs, and Scout groups. (C2A goals #2, 7, 16)

- Maintain library outreach program with Valentine and Bassett.
- Maintain community outreach programming at FY12 levels

Continue to support Niobrara Council efforts with personnel and equipment for their education efforts. (C2A goals #2, 7, 16)

- Plan and provide education sessions for Summer Day Camps, After School Nature Club, and pre-school programs as requested. *Delegated to Permanent Park Ranger*

Require all interpreters to present the complex land ownership/stewardship relationship in their roving and formal interpretation.

- Continue to emphasize importance, relevance and significance of this message in training and coaching staff and in interactions with the public.

Clarify land ownership/stewardship messages on NSR website as revisions are made. (C2A goals #17)

Chief of Interpretation & Education continued:

Encourage demonstration of stewardship through volunteer and visitor activities. (C2A goals #2, 7, 17)

- Encourage awareness of and train staff to provoke visitor responsibilities for care of river and respect for other visitors, private lands, etc. in informal interpretive contacts.

Seek method for evaluating stewardship demonstration.

- Track and report volunteer hours as measure of demonstrated stewardship

Maintain and improve NSR partnerships with outfitters, local chambers of commerce, local landowners, area interest groups and the Niobrara Council. (C2A goals #2, 7, 30)

- Obtain Agreements Technical Representative (ATR) certification
- Invite outfitters to participate in seasonal training sessions (interpretation & resource)

II. By 2019, the river will be a premier destination for outdoor recreation, meeting the spectrum of needs and expectations of diverse stakeholders. GPRA Goal IIa and lib NIOB Mission goals: Preserve Outstanding Resource Values, Work Cooperatively, Public Enjoyment and Interpret Resources. Goals 4- 8 Objectives

Participate in River Management Planning process

- Attend and facilitate input at public meetings, provide input to and editing for draft plan.
- Provide input for Commercial Services Strategy Planning and implementation.

Maintain and improve NSR web site for ease of trip planning information and to manage visitor expectations of visit. (C2A goals #17)

- Develop tracking for NSR website and Facebook metrics – *Delegated to Permanent Interpreter*

Support Smith Falls State Park as distribution outlet for existing supply of Junior Ranger booklets and badges. (C2A goals #2, 7, 16)

- Seek funding for publication of Junior Ranger booklet and badge supply.
- Train and support Smith Falls and USFWS staff to facilitate Junior Ranger program

Seek funding for a Comprehensive Visitor Center Exhibit Plan and Comprehensive Wayside Plan (C2A goal #19)

- Create and install waysides for three-sided kiosks at Smith Falls and Brewer Bridge landing
- Work with FMSS coordinator, Harper's Ferry Design Center and others to create and edit PMIS interpretive media proposals

Chief of Interpretation & Education continued:

Collaborate with Niobrara River Outfitters Association for learning and presenting issues to visiting public.

- Seek FY14 funding opportunities for design and production of “tear-off” maps

III. By 2019, there will be a wide range of learning opportunities available to the public throughout the year. GPRA Goal IIa, IIb and IVb NSR Mission Goals: Work Cooperatively and Interpret Resources. Goals 9- 11 Objectives

Revise official NSR map (Unigrid) text and replace images with assistance from Harpers Ferry Center by August 2014

Plan future Junior Ranger program development (*C2A goals #2, 7, 16*)

- Print a 1-year supply of new Junior Ranger Activity Books and Badges
- Pilot Junior Ranger Activity Book program summer of 2013 and collect feedback from participants..

All interpretive services provided by the division meet national standards for successful interpretation and are evaluated against those standards. (*C2A goal #30*)

- Evaluate formal interpretive programs & provide written developmental feedback according to national professional standards for interpretation

Interpreters will develop mini-programs on all NSR themes and formal programs and outreach programs throughout the year will touch on all topics in the range of primary themes. (*C2A goal #7*)

- Require outlines to be submitted within 4 weeks of hiring and revised as needed with final version copy to NSR files

Chief of Interpretation will continue to serve as Interpretive Development Program certifier and Regional Lead coach for national interpretation standards certification (*C2A goals #30 & 31*)

- Complete national IDP peer-reviews as assigned

Staff will be encouraged to pursue training and certification in professional interpretation (*C2A goal #30*)

- Coach permanent interpreter to achieve advanced certification in two courses
- Require all seasonal interpretive staff to complete Basic certification in Informal Visitor Contacts, and GS5's to complete Basic Certification in Interpretive Talk during first 3 weeks of employment
- Chief will train and certify as an Agreements Technical Representative (ATR) to facilitate partnership agreements for the NSR.
- Chief will complete the NPS GOAL Leadership Academy training.

Chief of Interpretation & Education continued:

Chief of Interpretation will work with NPS Midwest Regional Chief to implement peer-sharing and peer-skill development efforts as directed. **(Changed to meet regional and developmental needs from previous iteration: Chief of Interpretation will facilitate NPS Midwest Regional Workgroup on Professional Standards, coordinate regional discussion group on Rivers and participate in workgroups on Interpreting Climate Change and Youth Programs. Serve as an administrator for MWR Interpretation & Education SharePoint Site.)**

- Work with Regional Chief of Interpretation to facilitate communication among chiefs in the region, possibly implementing “zone” concept of small group communication

Maintain NSR membership in the following professional groups: National Association for Interpretation (NAI); Nebraska Association of Conservation and Environmental Educators (NACEE). *(C2A goal #30)*

- Nominate Niobrara NSR Junior Ranger Activity Book for NAI Media Award in 2013

Maintain NSR participation in the following local groups: Niobrara Valley Education Partnerships Group (NVOEP)

- Coordinate 5th annual Nature Fest Event for NVOEP, September 2013
- Participate in Springview Resource Day
- Participate in USFWS Kids Fishing Day

Permanent Park Ranger, Interpreter

By 2019, the river will be widely recognized as a national treasure, cared for and respected by the local community and visitors alike. *Goals 1- 3 Objective(s)*

Present complex land ownership and stewardship messages in all interpretation (C2A goal #7, 16, 17)

- Develop & post Facebook page messages reflecting respect for private land ownership
- Include messages as possible in revisions to NSR web site text

By 2019, the river will be a premier destination for outdoor recreation, meeting the spectrum of needs and expectations of diverse stakeholders. GPRA Goal IIa and IIb, NIOB Mission goals: Preserve Outstanding Resource Values, Work Cooperatively, Public Enjoyment and Interpret Resources. *Goals 4- 8 Objective(s) (C2A goals #7, 16, 30, 35)*

- Provide visitor contact and reception duties from Oct 1, 2012 until seasonal staff comes on duty
- Coordinate creation and distribution of NSR program flyers
- Participate in River Management Planning process
- Supervise annual Visitor Survey Card project in July
- Mentor, train, & coach staff in visitor Center and Sales outlet operations

By 2019, there will be a wide range of learning opportunities available to the public throughout the year. GPRA Goal IIa, IIb and IVb, NSR Mission Goals: Work Cooperatively and Interpret Resources. *Goals 9-11 Objective(s) (C2A goals #2, 7, 16, 17, 19, 30, 32 & 35))*

- Assist with planning, image acquisition, and provide design services for 3-sided kiosk panel
- Assist with planning, image acquisition, and provide review feedback for temporary visitor center exhibits
- Plan and develop training curriculum and materials, and present at least four sessions of seasonal training for Niobrara interpreters
- Moderate Niobrara NSR Facebook page, eliciting subject matter and images from other NPS staff
- Develop metrics and spreadsheet for tracking social media and park website statistics
- Make approved changes to NSR website and publications to improve visitor service
- Update Local Outfitters List for summer 2013

Prepare and present formal and informal interpretive programs, children's programs and community programs that meet NPS professional standards for interpretation

- Lead planning, advertising, coordination, and execution of annual spring Outdoor Family Fun Day event involving partners and volunteers to provide activities.
- Integrate "Take a Hike" prescription effort into Outdoor Family fun Day.
- Assist with training, coaching, and mentoring of seasonal interpreters, Teacher-Ranger-Teachers and Student Conservation Association Intern positions.
- Work with local public libraries for NPS rangers to provide programs in Valentine, and Bassett.

Permanent Park Ranger, Interpreter continued:

Provide pre-school, After School Nature Club, and Niobrara Day Camp education sessions for the Niobrara Council based on park significances.

- Provide community programs for community groups as may be requested

Operate Visitor Center and Sales outlet in safe, secure, and accountable manner. In the absence of chief, provide Cooperating Association accounting and management duties

Provide leadership and supervision to Interpretation & Education Division in the absence of Chief of Interpretation.

Provide CPR/First Aid instruction for seasonal staff and upon request to community and participate with NSR Safety Committee.

Communicate effectively and professionally with supervisor, seasonal employees, other NSR and partner staff (outfitters, Niobrara Council, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, The Nature Conservancy, etc.)

Follow all policy and law provisions regarding leave, Extra Hours, Time and Attendance, as well as responsible use and tracking of Travel obligations.

Participate in short- and long-term planning for interpretive services

Complete NPS/Eppley Advanced Certification in Informal Interpretation and Interpretive Talk

Complete NPS/Eppley Basic Certification in Interpretive Media

Submit at least one product for NPS/IDP Peer Review Certification

Participate fully in NSR safety program using Operational Risk Management Analysis tool to evaluate tasks and mitigate/eliminate any safety concerns.

Seasonal Park Ranger, Interpreter

By 2019, the river will be widely recognized as a national treasure, cared for and respected by the local community and visitors alike. *Goals 1- 3 Objectives (C2A goals 2 & 7)*

Present complex land ownership and stewardship messages in interpretation

Conduct work with professional demeanor, demonstrating respect for and including multiple points of view, while accurately representing agency management policy.

By 2019, the river will be a premier destination for outdoor recreation, meeting the spectrum of needs and expectations of diverse stakeholders. GPRA Goal IIa and IIb, NIOB Mission goals: Preserve Outstanding Resource Values, Work Cooperatively, Public Enjoyment and Interpret Resources. *Goals 4-8 Objectives (C2A Goals # 2, 7 & 16)*

Provide orientation and information assistance to river visitors including, but not limited to, tips for canoeing, kayaking or tubing operation and safety, wildlife watching, hiking, and other recreation opportunities.

Provide informal interpretation according to Standard Operating Procedures that meets national standards for success by providing opportunities for visitor access to resource meanings.

Safely operate a solo canoe or kayak on the river

Distribute interpretive program and NSR information as assigned.

By 2019, there will be a wide range of learning opportunities available to the public throughout the year. GPRA Goal IIa, IIb and IVb, Park Mission Goals: Work Cooperatively and Interpret Resources. *Goals 9-11 Objectives (C2A Goals # 2, 7, 16, 17 & 32)*

Prepare and present formal and informal interpretive programs, children's programs, and community programs that meet professional standards for interpretation.

Operate Visitor Center and Sales outlet in safe, secure, and accountable manner.

Communicate effectively and professionally with supervisor, seasonal employees, other NSR and partner staff (outfitters, Niobrara Council, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, The Nature Conservancy, etc.)

Provide postings for Facebook page, Twitter, and draft changes for the NSR website and publications to improve visitor service

Propose improvements to Interpretation & Education division operations, products and services

Participate fully in NSR safety program using Operational Risk Management Analysis tool to evaluate tasks and mitigate/eliminate any safety concerns.

Complete special projects as assigned.

Teacher-Ranger-Teacher(s)

By 2019, the river will be widely recognized as a national treasure, cared for and respected by the local community and visitors alike. *Goals 1-3 Objectives (C2A goals #2, 7 & 16)*

Present developed curriculum to students beginning the 2013-2014 school year.

With permanent staff, develop a program to provide a series of educational programs and river-based learning experiences for local High School students in grades 9 – 12

Present complex land ownership and stewardship messages in informal interpretation

By 2019, the river will be a premier destination for outdoor recreation, meeting the spectrum of needs and expectations of diverse stakeholders. GPRA Goal IIa and IIb, NIOB Mission goals: Preserve Outstanding Resource Values, Work Cooperatively, Public Enjoyment and Interpret Resources. *Goals 4-8 Objectives (C2A goal #16)*

Develop lesson plans/curriculum based upon the resources of the Niobrara NSR that encourage inquiry-based learning and including a site visit or ranger visit to the classroom as part of the plan.

By 2019, there will be a wide range of learning opportunities available to the public throughout the year. GPRA Goal IIa, IIb and IVb, NSR Mission Goals: Work Cooperatively and Interpret Resources. *Goals 9-11 Objectives (C2A Goals # 2, 7, 16, 17 & 32)*

Provide informal interpretation for visitors to the NSR

Develop and present at least one impromptu activity-based child's or family program multiple times during the summer.

Operate Visitor Center and Sales outlet in safe, secure, and accountable manner.

Communicate effectively and professionally with chief, permanent NSR ranger, seasonal employees, as well as other NSR and partner staff (outfitters, Niobrara Council, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, the Nature Conservancy, etc.)

Provide postings for Facebook page, and propose changes to NSR website and publications to improve visitor service

Propose improvements to Interpretation & Education division operations, products and services

Participate fully in NSR safety program using Operational Risk Management Analysis tool to evaluate tasks and mitigate/eliminate any safety concerns.

Complete special projects as assigned.

SCA Interpretation Intern(s)

By 2019, the river will be widely recognized as a national treasure, cared for and respected by the local community and visitors alike. Goals 1-3 Objectives

Present complex land ownership and stewardship messages in informal interpretation

By 2019, the river will be a premier destination for outdoor recreation, meeting the spectrum of needs and expectations of diverse stakeholders. GPRA Goal IIa and IIb, NIOB Mission goals: Preserve Outstanding Resource Values, Work Cooperatively, Public Enjoyment and Interpret Resources. Goals 4-8 Objectives (C2A goals #2, 7 &16)

Provide orientation and information assistance to river visitors including, but not limited to, tips for canoeing, kayaking or tubing operation and safety, wildlife watching, hiking, and other recreation opportunities.

Provide informal interpretation that meets national standards for success by providing opportunities for visitor access to resource meanings.

Safely operate a solo canoe or kayak on the river

By 2019, there will be a wide range of learning opportunities available to the public throughout the year. GPRA Goal IIa, IIb and IVb, NSR Mission Goals: Work Cooperatively and Interpret Resources. Goals 9-11 Objectives (C2A Goals # 2, 7, 16, 17 & 32)

Communicate effectively and professionally with chief, permanent NSR ranger, seasonal employees, as well as other NSR and partner staff

Assist with formal interpretive programs as assigned

Operate Visitor Center and Sales outlet in safe, secure, and accountable manner.

Provide postings for Facebook page, and propose changes to NSR website and publications to improve visitor service

Assist with Digital Media management

Propose improvements to Interpretation & Education division operations, products and services

Participate fully in NSR safety program using Operational Risk Management Analysis tool to evaluate tasks and mitigate/eliminate any safety concerns.

Complete special projects as assigned.

GS-9 Interpretive Specialist* (needed when Niobrara NSR Digital Video project funding is available date/year uncertain)

By 2019, the river will be widely recognized as a national treasure, cared for and respected by the local community and visitors alike. Goals 1-3 Objectives

By 2019, the river will be a premier destination for outdoor recreation, meeting the spectrum of needs and expectations of diverse stakeholders. GPRA Goal IIa and IIb, NIOB Mission goals: Preserve Outstanding Resource Values, Work Cooperatively, Public Enjoyment and Interpret Resources. Goals 4-8 Objectives (C2A goals #7 & 16)

By 2019, there will be a wide range of learning opportunities available to the public throughout the year. GPRA Goal IIa, IIb and IVb, NSR Mission Goals: Work Cooperatively and Interpret Resources. Goals 9-11 Objectives (C2A Goals # 2, 7, 16, 17 & 32)

Coordinate NSR input into Interpretive Media projects (temporary exhibits and/or NSR digital media)

Research and procure use rights for images (may include photography and videography with NSR equipment)

Communicate interpretive media project needs effectively and in a timely manner to division chief

Coordinate NSR staff and subject-matter-expert review of draft text, graphics, and other interpretive media

Facilitate communication between the NSR, Harper's Ferry Center and any contractors.

Communicate effectively and professionally with chief, permanent NSR ranger, seasonal employees, as well as other NSR and partner staff

Provide informal interpretation for visitors

Assist with formal and informal interpretation as assigned

Participate fully in NSR safety program using Operational Risk Management Analysis tool to evaluate tasks and mitigate/eliminate any safety concerns.