

National Park Service
2013 Environmental Achievement Awards

Winner

Mammoth Cave National Park Team

The Real Deal

In 2012, Mammoth Cave National Park completed a number of significant sustainability projects. The park:

- Adopted Call to Action Goal #23, “Go Green.” For this goal, the park committed to reducing its carbon footprint and showcasing the value of renewable energy to the public. The park intends to double the amount of renewable energy generated within the park and by park facilities;
- Received one of the first grants through the Department of Energy Clean Cities/National Park Initiative to replace old vehicles with new, more efficient alternative fuel vehicles. The park marked these vehicles with a “flowering flame” emblem to draw attention to alternative fuels;
- Significantly expanded the recycling program through the commitment of park and partner employees;
- Used LED bulbs in all helmet/headlamps, reducing battery use by 85% when compared to use of conventional light bulbs; and
- Completed renovation of the visitor center. The reconstructed visitor center is a model of sustainable design that is on track to be LEED certified at the gold level. The center includes the following design elements:
 - A 29 kilowatt photovoltaic (solar) power system;
 - Almost all of the building is constructed of local materials from within 500 miles of the park;
 - 60 percent of the wood used in the visitor center comes from certified sustainably managed forest;
 - Counter tops are made of bamboo, a rapidly renewable material;
 - Natural light reaches virtually every room in the visitor center; and
 - A 30,000-gallon cistern captures rainwater off the roof of the building for reuse in flush toilets.

Mammoth Cave National Park’s efforts should serve as a model for sustainability projects at other parks as it demonstrates the National Park Service’s commitment to energy conservation and reducing the servicewide carbon footprint.