Sustainability Features of Santa Monica Mountains Visitor Center

National Park Service's First "Net Zero" Visitor Center

Summary: The Anthony C. Beilenson Interagency Visitor Center's photovoltaic panels produce all the energy required to operate the building throughout the year. The facility recently achieved LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum status, an internationally recognized green building certification. It achieves the federal standard for 2020 eight years ahead of schedule.

***Energy*:**

- 94 kW photovoltaic (PV) system converts sunlight into electricity and produces the facility's energy needs throughout the year. PV panels are mounted on "carport" structures to provide shade for parking and to reduce heat island effect of parking surface.
- Extensive use of natural lighting, particularly through tubular skylights. Daytime dimming system adjusts lighting based on natural light. All artificial lighting is 100% LED (light-emitting diode), including A/V equipment and computer monitors.
- Geothermal cooling system that uses high efficiency heat pumps.
- Solar hot water provides about 80% of hot water needs. Back-up system is powered by PV panels.

***Water*:**

- Landscape irrigation and toilet flushing uses community recycled water. Landscaping uses only native plants to reduce irrigation needs.
- Stormwater runoff is entirely treated onsite.
- Ultra water efficient restroom fixtures, including waterless urinal.

***Building Materials*:**

- Thick masonry walls of adoblar, which is similar to adobe but is fired in a kiln rather than baked in the sun. Its high thermal mass reduces temperature fluctuation and heating/cooling needs.
- High content of recycled and salvaged building materials. The front desk's countertop is made of recycled glass and the wood portion was salvaged from the original ceiling.
- All new wood is forest-certified.
- More than 99% of construction waste was recycled and diverted from the landfill.
- Clay roof tile meets LEED "cool roof" standard.
- Low emissivity or "Low-e" windows, which keep buildings warmer in winter and cooler in summer.