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SPECIAL DIRECTIVE 82-7 (REVISED)

ANNUAL REVIEW

To: Directorate, Field Directorate, WASO Office and Division Chiefs,  
and All Superintendents

From: Director /s/ William Penn Mott, Jr.

Subject: Policy on Subscriptions to Publications and Services and Memberships in Societies  
and Associations

Special Directive 82-7, dated July 12, 1982, subject as above, is superseded and replaced by this revision. All copies of that directive should be removed from the files and destroyed.

Formal membership in societies and associations can be construed as general support of that organization or institution and its program. It is the intention of the National Park Service to be above reproach with respect to all organizations and institutions offering memberships. NPS will, therefore, as a matter of policy, elect to obtain publications, newsletters, or services through subscriptions and other cost-effective means such as cooperative agreements, which do not include formal membership and affiliation, and the subject of which lies within your particular area of program responsibility.

Where a formal membership is deemed to be the only means of obtaining the desired benefits, organizational and institutional memberships will be limited to bodies meeting the requirements for tax exemption under Sec. 501(c)(3) and (4) of the Internal Revenue Code, Chambers of Commerce, and travel associations and councils.

The Departmental Manual contains the following materials on this subject:

370 DM 252,1.1

Policy. The Department, recognizing the value of professional association activities as described in FPM 252, encourages the support of such associations by the granting of privileges by appropriate levels of management under the criteria contained in the FPM.

Payment of Membership Dues in Professional Societies and Associations. Payment of dues for organization membership in professional societies and associations is appropriate when it is administratively determined that membership will be of primary benefit to the agency and essential to carrying out the activities authorized by the appropriation charged (53 CG 429). Membership must be in the name of the organization. Direct benefits to the organization may accrue through (1) sharing of documents written by professional organizations; (2) contributing to improved conduct, supervision, or management of bureau or office activities; or (3) keeping abreast of the

latest scientific and/or administrative developments.

370 DM 252,1.5

Payment of Employee Membership Dues Incident to Training. Payment of employee's membership dues may be authorized by the officials having training approval authority when the membership fee is a necessary cost directly related to the training itself or the payment of the fee is a condition precedent to undertaking the training (5 USC 4109 and 4110; 370 DM 410,6.4(3)).

The following policies and standards supplement Part 370 DM 252,1.1 and 252,1.5 which govern official memberships and affiliations between the National Park Service and non-Government societies and associations:

1. The National Park Service will normally obtain professional publications, newsletters, and other products associated with memberships in societies, professional organizations, and similar institutions by paid subscriptions rather than institutional memberships, where feasible.
2. The National Park Service will pay for organizational or institutional memberships in organizations or institutions where such affiliation is (1) clearly advantageous to the Government; (2) necessary in order to obtain publications or other services of direct and tangible value to the Service; or (3) a direct benefit to the Service; and (4) such publications or services cannot be obtained through direct subscription or under a cooperative arrangement reflecting joint benefits from the exchange, or by unrestricted donation to the National Park Service.
3. In the interest of economy and efficiency, nearby offices will circulate materials and share both subscriptions and membership information to the extent feasible and timely in order to avoid duplications.
4. National Park Service staff is encouraged (but not required) to be personally active in local civic, charitable, and community organizations, clubs, and institutions where such participation offers opportunity for community involvement and leadership and would in other ways enhance the role and effectiveness of NPS managers and staff. Such memberships and affiliations, however, are private matters and will not be paid from NPS funds.
5. To facilitate a careful review of all requests for subscriptions and memberships, the Administrative Services Division has developed a plan in which, every 3 years, status reports from the Directorate and Field Directorate will be requested to determine the adherence to the standards in this Special Directive and to provide an opportunity for evaluation and adjustment.
6. Strict adherence to this Directive will be required.

The following are the channels and means of approval for memberships and subscriptions:

1. The Associate Directors, Regional Directors, and Service Center Managers are authorized to approve payment to publications and services or library membership in societies or associations concerned with the functions of the Service or the Department. This authority may not be redelegated.

2. Requests will be initiated by the requesting office by completing a DI-1 Requisition in accordance with NPS-62, Chapter 2. In addition, each DI-1 must contain a statement of the benefits to be expected as a result of the membership, a statement that the subscription cannot be obtained elsewhere, and must be signed as approved by the appropriate Associate Director, Regional Director, or Service Center Manager.

3. All memberships must be in the name of the organization, not an individual.

4. The authority to renew a membership may be requested on a separate memorandum at the same time as the original request for approval. However, a new DI-1 must be initiated and funded yearly. The memorandum authorizing the renewal must be attached to the DI-1. Authority for renewal for subscriptions shall not exceed 5 years from the date of the original subscription.

5. Associate Directors, Regional Directors, and Service Center Managers will annually review memberships and subscriptions within their area of responsibility to evaluate the usefulness and cost-effectiveness for the Service.

This policy shall be effective upon publication.