

Stewardship Assets and Supplemental Information

STEWARDSHIP ASSETS

The Stewardship Assets cared for by the Department of the Interior are as varied and diverse as the nation itself. These assets range from huge expanses of National Park Land to small artifacts from ancient civilizations.

STEWARDSHIP LAND

The Department of the Interior oversees 439 million acres of public lands (Figure 22). These lands encompass a wide range of resources, including energy and minerals, timber, forage, wild horse and burro populations, fish and wildlife habitat, recreational areas, wilderness areas, and archeological and historical sites.

The majority of Public Lands managed by the Department are “public domain” lands, that is large areas of territory acquired by the nation between 1781 and 1867 (Figure 23). All areas of the nation other than the lands belonging to the original 13 colonies and the state of Texas were acquired as public domain. During this time, the Federal Government acquired land equal to 79.4 percent of the current total acreage of the United States, spending a total of only \$85.1 million, not including the value of commitments made to Indians under various treaties.

Over the course of the last 200 years, the Nation has disposed of a total of 1.14 billion acres of the 1.81 billion acres acquired. Dispositions include territory granted to States (328 million acres), land granted or sold to homesteaders (287 million), and lands sold or granted to indi-

viduals and corporations under various laws for various purposes. Land has also been transferred to the Department of Defense and to the Department of Agriculture’s U.S. Forest Service. Land retained by the Department of the Interior is devoted to National Parks and Wildlife Refuges or to other purposes under the management of the Bureau of Land Management.

The National Park System includes 369 units, encompassing more than 83 million acres of land in 49 states (all except Delaware), the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands. Federal ownership of the land consists of about 77 million acres in fee simple title and about 223,000 acres under less-than-fee title. Less-than-fee title includes scenic easements and rights-of-way across property owned by others. Other land within park boundaries is owned by State and local governments (about 1.2 million acres) or is in private ownership (4.3 million acres).

The objective of the National Park Service’s land acquisition program is to acquire land and interests in land to preserve and protect, for public use and enjoyment, the historic, scenic, natural, and recreational values of Congressionally authorized areas within the National Park System. The acquisition of land helps to meet the increasingly heavy visitor demand for federal recreation areas, conserves outstanding resources for public recreational use before they are converted to incompatible uses, and preserves the Nation’s natural and historic heritage. During 1996, the National Park Service purchased 9,137 acres and acquired 2,671 by other means. Future acquisition of privately-owned land will be based on park land protection plans.

The National Wildlife Refuge System is the world’s largest and most diverse collection of lands set aside specifically for wildlife. Administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Wildlife Refuge System comprises 509 refuges that vary in size from half-acre parcels to thousands of square miles. They encompass more than 92 million acres and play a vital role in preserving endangered and threatened species. Currently, 36 refuges provide critical habitat for 29 listed species. Of the Nation’s 965 threatened and endangered plant and animal species, 232 occur on refuges.

Figure 22



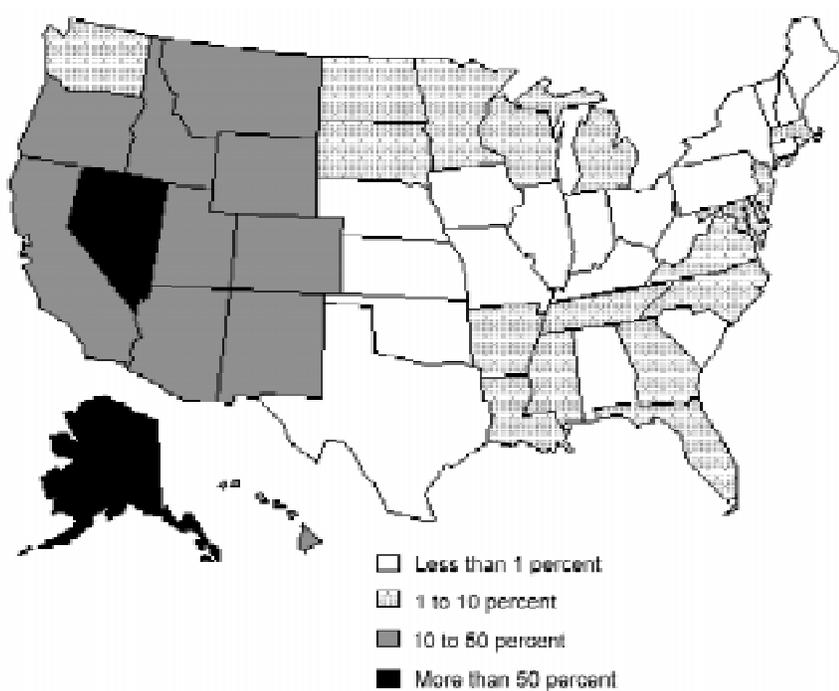
Figure 23

**Acquisition of the Public Domain of the United States
1781 through 1867**

Source	Acquisition Date(s)	Cost (\$ millions)	Land Acres Acquired (in millions)	Percent of Current U.S. Land Mass
Ceded from Original Colonies	1781-1802	\$ 6.2	233.5	10.2%
Louisiana Purchase	1803	23.2	523.4	22.9%
Red River Basin	1782-1817	-	29.1	1.3%
Ceded from Spain	1819	6.7	43.3	2.0%
Oregon Compromise	1846	-	180.6	7.9%
Ceded from Mexico	1848	16.3	334.5	14.6%
Purchased from Texas	1850	15.5	78.8	3.4%
Gadsden Purchase	1853	10.0	19.0	0.8%
Alaska Purchase	1867	7.2	365.3	16.3%
Total		\$ 85.1	1,807.5	79.4%

Figure 24

**Percentage of Each State's Acreage Managed by Interior
(as of September 30, 1994)**



The Bureau of Land Management has been entrusted with stewardship responsibility for the multiple-use management of natural resources on approximately 264 million acres of public land. The BLM also supervises mineral leasing and operations on over 560 million acres of mineral estate that underlie both BLM lands and other surface ownerships. In 1996, acreage administered by the BLM decreased by approximately 6,000 acres, resulting from the net effect of acquisitions, disposals, exchanges, withdrawals, and restorations, and right-of-way and easement transactions.

Wilderness is an area where humans are visitors who do not remain. These areas are generally greater than 5,000 acres which have retained their primeval character. All Fish and Wildlife Service and Park Service Lands not classified as “wilderness” are included here as “recreation and wildlife.” Figure 25 provides a summary of the park and refuge units that comprise the National Park System and the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Figure 25

National Park System and National Wildlife Refuge System				
Unit Type	Number	Federal Acreage	Non-Federal Acreage	Total Acreage
International Historic Site	1	22	13	35
National Battlefields	11	10,405	2,739	13,144
National Battlefield Parks	3	8,007	769	8,776
National Battlefield Site	1	1	0	1
National Historic Sites	72	17,683	5,438	23,121
National Historical Parks	37	113,196	49,292	162,488
National Lakeshores	4	145,213	83,716	228,929
National Memorials	26	7,963	84	8,047
National Military Parks	9	34,682	3,934	38,616
National Monuments	73	1,745,465	319,269	2,064,733
National Parks	54	49,314,049	2,386,888	51,700,937
National Preserves	15	21,436,937	2,168,872	23,605,809
National Recreation Areas	18	3,353,107	348,620	3,701,727
National Reserves	2	10,324	23,084	33,407
National Rivers	6	307,718	108,300	416,018
National Scenic Trails	3	114,012	69,621	183,632
National Seashores	10	477,366	115,234	592,600
National Wild & Scenic Rivers	9	71,918	147,581	219,498
Parks (other)	11	37,615	1,332	38,947
Parkways	4	163,212	7,511	170,723
National Wildlife Refuges	509	89,938,956	0	89,938,956
Refuge Coordination Areas	50	317,321	0	317,321
Waterfowl Production Areas	193	2,387,475	0	2,387,475
Wildlife Research Centers	6	647	0	647
Fisheries Research Centers	17	2,588	0	2,588
National Fish Hatcheries	69	18,846	0	18,846
TOTAL	1,213	170,034,727	5,842,295	175,877,022

One of the primary goals of land management in the Department is to preserve and maintain the health of the land. In achieving this objective, the Department monitors the land, identifying resources at risk and focusing resource protection and restoration efforts toward those lands. However, to better communicate the status of resources, the Bureau of Land Management, in collaboration with other federal land management agencies, is presently developing measurement indicators. These indicators will focus upon factors such as key indicator species, riparian areas and quality of water that in total may be used to assess the health and condition of federal lands.

Land Use and Condition

Use of the public lands and the riches they contain has changed throughout our Nation’s history and continues to evolve. Identifying the predominate use of Department managed lands does not adequately portray the multiple use and sustained yield concept which guides the Department in accomplishing its basic mission. In adhering to this concept, the land management programs include significant efforts in the restoration of riparian wetlands; the preservation of significant cultural and natural features; creating opportunities for commercial activities; protecting endangered species; developing opportunities for recreation and leisure activities; public health, safety, and resource protection; wild horse and burro management; wildlife habitat and fisheries management; mining law administration; rangeland management; forest management, development and protection; and management of wilderness and wild and scenic rivers.

Fulfilling the responsibilities of the land management programs is often difficult. There is intense competition for the public lands among user and interest groups with conflicting needs and philosophical positions on natural resource management: coal companies want

Figure 26

Predominate Use and Condition of Land Managed by Interior (acres in millions)					
Use	Total Acres	Condition of Land	Bureau of Land Management	Fish and Wildlife Service	National Park Service
Grazing	170	Excellent/Good - 38% Fair - 39% Poor - 14% Unclassified - 9%	170	-	-
Commercial Forest Land	50	Good	50	-	-
Recreation, Wildlife and Other	151	Unclassified	39	72	40
Wilderness	68	Unclassified	5	20	43
TOTAL	439	-	264	92	83

to open mines, ranchers need grazing land, and environmentalists seek to preserve wilderness. The challenge to the Department is allocating public land resources in a manner that allows for each interest to enjoy the opportunities the public lands offer. Figure 26 provides a summary of usage and condition of lands administered by Interior.

HERITAGE ASSETS

The lands and resources administered by the Department of the Interior include some of the Nation's most ecologically and culturally diverse and scientifically important. We are responsible for protecting and preserving paleontological localities and archaeological and historical sites, including museum collections derived from these areas; wild free roaming horses and burros; wilderness and wilderness study areas; wild and scenic rivers; rare, vulnerable, and representative habitats, plant communities, and ecosystems; fish and wildlife refuges, national parks, monuments, and historic sites, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, and other outstanding natural and cultural areas.

Museum Collections

The Department's museum collection totals approximately

103.3 million objects, which includes 67.6 million museum objects and 22,191 linear feet of archival documents. The museum objects are managed at about 700 locations throughout the Department and in partnership with about 400 non-Federal institutions. The collections were acquired through mission related activities such as research and resource management, in compliance with environmental and historic preservation laws. They include:

- Archaeological material -- artifacts collected by archaeological techniques that provide evidence of past human activities.
- Archival documents -- non-record documents that record agency history and activities.
- Art and Ethnography -- including some of the largest and best collections of contemporary Native American art.
- History -- diverse cultural objects that help us to interpret the development and resources of the country.
- Botany and Zoology materials -- plant and animal material used for study.
- Geology -- rock and mineral samples used for study.

Figure 27

Types of Interior Museum Collections

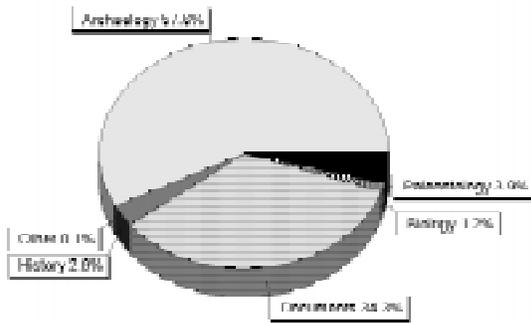
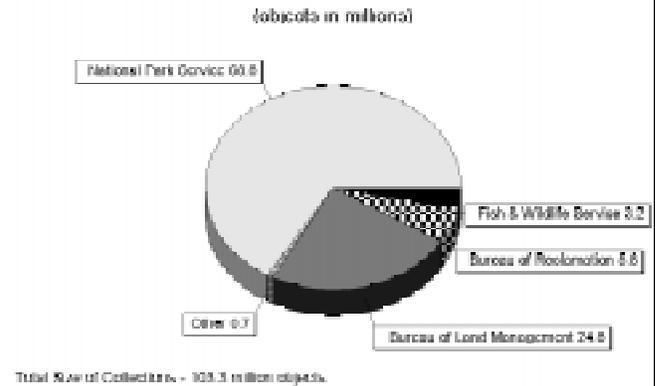


Figure 28

Total Size of Interior Museum Collections



- Paleontological material -- the fossilized remains or traces of plant or animal life.

These collections are related to the public lands and are held in public trust in perpetuity to support the missions of the Department and its bureaus.

Recent changes in the Department’s museum collections reflect increased attention to stewardship as a result of the Department’s new guidance in the Departmental Manual. Large bureaus have located “lost” collections in the non-federal institutions as they have increased consultation with Indian tribes in compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Focus on collections in bureau facilities has resulted in the collection and processing of archival documents that are important for reference use and public interpretation of our resources. Figures 27 and 28 provide additional information concerning Interior’s vast museum collections.

Historic Structures

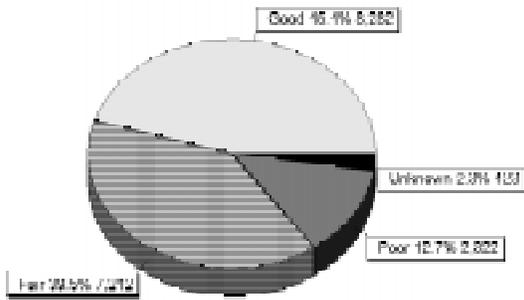
The Department is custodian of over 18 thousand historic structures located in the 369 parks of the National Park System. Historic structures include our nation’s most significant buildings, forts, monuments and statuary. In total, these structures commemorate the great people and events of our nation. Historic structures are

often exposed to harsh environments and high levels of visitation and use, with the major forces of decay being weather, age and erosion. The goal of the Department’s preservation effort is to save the very fabric and fiber of these important structures. To meet this goal, the National Park Service regularly inventories and assesses the condition of historic structures under its management, with 73 percent of historic structures inventoried in the past four years. In total, approximately 43 percent of historic structures are rated at moderate to high risk of deterioration. In spite of this, over 85 percent of all structures are in good or fair condition. Unfunded costs associated with the treatments that have been approved for inventoried structures total over \$1 billion. Figures 29, 30, and 31 provide summaries of the condition of Interior’s historic structures.

Maintained by the National Park Service, the National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation’s cultural resources worthy of preservation. Properties listed on the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. In addition to those Interior properties that are listed, other properties under the ownership or control of the Department may be eligible for listing. Figure 32 shows the distribution of National Register properties by Interior bureau.

Figure 29

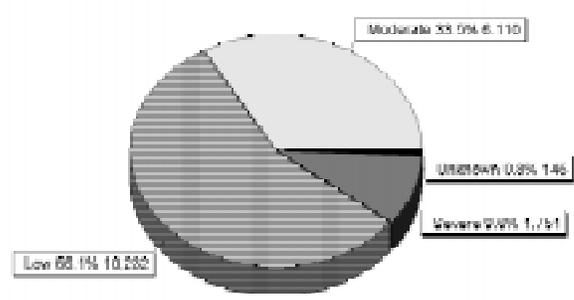
Condition of NPS Historic Structures



Total of 18,239 Structures

Figure 30

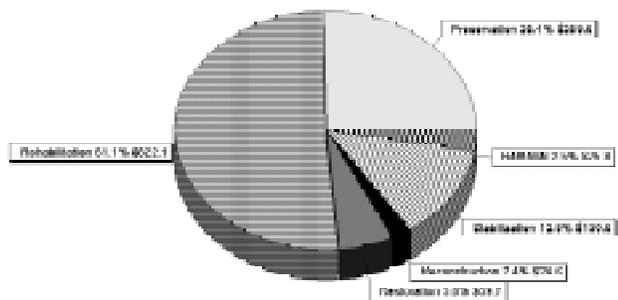
Levels of Impacts on NPS Historic Structures



Total of 18,239 Structures

Figure 31

Treatment Costs for NPS Historic Structures



Total Number of Structures - 18,239
Estimated Treatment Cost - \$1,022.0 million

Figure 32

Interior National Register of Properties
Distribution by Bureau

