

Site: SHEN

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

Shenandoah National Park joins parks across the nation in embracing the goals of the Centennial Initiative. Shenandoah's management team believes that the five goals are inextricably intertwined and firmly embedded in its daily operations. Actions by park employees and volunteers are designed to model and inspire stewardship and environmental leadership. Professional excellence and strong leadership help to create recreational and educational experiences that further inspire stewardship. Our strategic planning efforts will continue to focus on the goals of the Centennial Initiative.

Our strategies include ways to reconnect people to the park through new and innovative uses of technology and media, as well as via traditional ranger programs. Continued development of our website will allow us to attract both virtual and actual visitors. Every contact is an opportunity to inspire stewardship and entice visitors to experience firsthand the outstanding opportunities for recreation, relaxation, and renewal available at Shenandoah.

A systematic approach to maintaining our high-priority assets, focused attention on natural and cultural resource management, and renewed efforts for developing partnerships and volunteerism in all aspects of our plans ensure continued stewardship of the park. Shenandoah's resource management strategies include establishing and maintaining adequate baseline data, systematically monitoring resource conditions and trends, developing comprehensive treatment options aimed at addressing the most significant threats, and finally taking appropriate management action. Responsible park management coupled with stewardship-based education programs and strong partnerships with our local schools and community groups will develop life-long learners and lovers of Shenandoah and the National Park Service.

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Chas Cartwright

Site: SHEN

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Restore native habitats by controlling invasive species and reintroducing key plant and animal species.

In its ongoing commitment to protecting natural resources, Shenandoah National Park plans to complete its strategy for controlling exotic plants and will continue control and eradication of identified exotics and subsequent restoration of native plant communities. We will develop a strategic planning document that outlines threats from exotic insects and diseases and implement monitoring, control, and education efforts. In partnership with local stakeholders, the park will soon complete the Rock Outcrop Management Plan and will begin to implement strategies, including education efforts and a Climbing Management Plan that will protect sensitive plantlife on cliffs and rock outcrops. We will prepare a comprehensive Vegetation Management Strategy addressing issues related to exotic plants, native plant restoration, cultural landscape management, vista management, and fire management that outlines desired future conditions. Once a viable plan is produced we will begin implementation. The park will continue planning and compliance for initial response to the threat of Chronic Wasting Disease in park deer and will outline response measures should the disease occur within the park.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Improve high-priority assets to acceptable condition, as measured by the Facility Condition Index.

The Skyline Drive is one of Shenandoah National Park's highest priority assets. In fact, when Shenandoah was established, Skyline Drive was billed as its "greatest single feature." The 75 overlooks along the Drive are famous world-wide for fantastic views of the renowned Shenandoah Valley and the rolling Virginia Piedmont. Many of these overlooks were constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Both the Skyline Drive and many of its overlooks are in need of repair. The park will continue to chip seal the Drive and expects to begin spot reconstruction of the road this summer. We will continue to seek funding for further rehabilitation. This year, the park's 'friends' group is funding the rehabilitation of one overlook, including repaving, and restoring an historic guiderail previously removed. This will return the overlook to the historic look and feel when it was first built by the CCC. The park will begin rehabilitation of 5 additional overlooks in FY2008 and as funding is made available will continue to rehabilitate and restore overlooks by removing inappropriate additions, ensuring structural integrity, and rebuilding their signature rock walls.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: SHEN

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Improve the natural resources in parks, as measured by the vital signs developed under the Natural Resource Challenge.

A long standing natural resource issue at Shenandoah National Park is air quality. The park will continue to monitor air quality to obtain the scientific documentation necessary to informed public education efforts. Only through strong and objective scientific research can we substantiate the need for increased protection of our air resources. We will work to improve air quality by collaborating closely with neighboring state authorities on the Prevention of Significant Deterioration reviews afforded under the Clean Air Act and to implement Regional Haze planning.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Complete all cultural resource inventories for designated priority resources.

Shenandoah National Park will complete current cultural landscape inventory efforts along the 101 miles of the Appalachian Trail which runs the length of the park, as well as begin archeological inventory efforts. We will also complete additional cultural landscape inventories and archeological inventory throughout the park.

Park staff plan to complete the National Historic Landscape designation for Skyline Drive in the near future.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Over the next several years, Shenandoah National Park will complete the current vegetation and geology classification and mapping efforts that are underway with state and USGS cooperators. We will complete soils classification and mapping and initiate an All Taxa Biotic Inventory effort focused on invertebrate and non-vascular species.

In addition, the park plans to complete museum collection cataloging for artifacts and archival material and develop an approach for resolving cataloging issues related to natural history specimens.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: SHEN

STEWARDSHIP

Assure that no compelling chapter in the American heritage experience remains untold and that strategically important landscapes are acquired, as authorized by Congress.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Shenandoah National Park will continue to research and develop ways to interpret the untold stories of the park. Two important topics currently under development are the Civilian Conservation Corps and the historic desegregation of Shenandoah National Park. Without the work of the boys of the Civilian Conservation Corps, Shenandoah National Park would not exist as it is today. The CCC devoted thousands of man-hours to the development of the park while participating in a program that brought hope to a struggling nation. The park will complete a curriculum based education program in accordance with the Virginia State Standards of Learning and hopes to establish an artifact and oral history rich CCC museum in the park at the Panorama site. The second untold story is the story of segregation and desegregation at Shenandoah National Park. The Lewis Mountain area included a campground, picnic ground, lodge and cabins as a separate but equal accommodation for African American visitors in the late 1930s. This story of segregation in a National Park reflects the history of civil rights in our nation. The park will continue to conduct research at Lewis Mountain, including collecting oral histories.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: SHEN

STEWARDSHIP

Serve as the Preeminent resource laboratory by applying excellence in science and scholarship to understand and respond to environmental changes.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Shenandoah National Park will continue implementation of the park's Long Term Ecological Monitoring Program and will make program improvements in the areas of conceptual design, reporting, power analyses, and addition of selected components (Shenandoah Salamander). We will work cooperatively with the Smithsonian Institution and other cooperators to gain participation in the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON)(National Science Foundation proposal).

The park hopes to rehabilitate the Pinnacles Research Station to better accommodate visiting scientists and will work to foster more science and scholarly study by improving management of files, improving access to data, and significantly expanding the park's website for these audiences.

Park staff will continue preparation of written and graphic material for posting on the park's website related to park resources. We will unify this material among the three functional areas of natural, cultural, and wilderness resources.

The park will develop museum collection finding aids to assist the public and academic communities in locating material, including archival material, for personal enlightenment and scholarly study.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: SHEN

ENVIRONMENT

Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.

Reduce the environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality.

Shenandoah National Park has and will continue to benefit from EPA settlements with two power companies, Ohio Edison and Dominion/VEPCO. We will complete the Ohio Edison settlement planning with an emphasis on improving air quality and will implement actions outlined in that plan.

The park will continue to implement action items included in the VEPCO Mitigation Plan aimed at reducing emissions from the park's motor vehicle fleet and heavy equipment, including the purchase of alternative fuel vehicles for park operations.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: SHEN

ENVIRONMENT

Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

Establish programs to showcase exemplary environmental practices and increase visitor awareness of how the practices apply to their daily lives, as measured by surveys.

In order to increase visitor awareness of how responsible practices apply to their daily lives the park will design and fabricate an Air Quality Discovery Station, which would be included in a new visitor center, and an Air Quality Learning Center, which would be installed at the air quality monitoring site. These two exhibits would communicate messages about air quality and how the public needs to be involved in this important issue.

Park staff will develop bulletin board material on park resource issues and ways the public can help resolve those issues.

In addition, the park will continue to provide workshops for the public on Leave No Trace principles to encourage appropriate behavior in backcountry and wilderness settings.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Demonstrate environmental excellence through increased use of alternative energy and fuels at every park.

Shenandoah National Park will be an example of environmental excellence to park visitors by implementing the action items included in the VEPCO Mitigation Plan: purchasing hybrid vehicles for inclusion in the park fleet, conversion to bio-diesel fuel, and retrofitting heavy equipment to use bio-diesel.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: SHEN

RECREATION

Establish "volun-tourism" excursions to national parks for volunteers to help achieve natural and cultural resource protection goals.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The park will continue to seek areas where volunteers can play a vital role in assisting park staff. The park has introduced a "Save the Meadow" weekend during which visitors can learn about and volunteer to participate in the identification and control of invasive exotic plants. Over 25% of the documented plant species in the park are not native and this program explains to visitors how we fight back against these invasive plants and how visitors can avoid environmental problems at home. We expect to continue this very successful program.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: SHEN

RECREATION

Expand partnerships with schools and boys and girls associations to show how national park experiences can improve children's lives.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Shenandoah National Park has several successful partnerships with local schools and other organizations. Through these contacts, the park's education division would like to draw participants for a series of Family Recreation Seminars. These seminars would introduce families to hiking and camping in the park. Objectives of the seminars would include safety, to give those unfamiliar with the outdoors a level of comfort, and resource protection ethics such as Leave No Trace principles. This seminar series would encourage safe and responsible use of the park's resources while introducing families to the fun of hiking and camping together.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: SHEN

RECREATION

Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Shenandoah National Park is set along the beautiful Shenandoah Valley and will partner with the Shenandoah Valley Travel Association to attract more visitors to our region. Through an agreement with the association, the SVTA will begin applying for marketing grants through the National Scenic Byway Program and will work with the park for creative ways to encourage and inspire a visit to the park and the Skyline Drive.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: SHEN

EDUCATION

Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Shenandoah National Park has a three-pronged approach to Education: Partnering with numerous agencies and organizations to create opportunities to bring children into the outdoors; developing opportunities for professional development for teachers so they have the resources necessary to provide the strongest environmental education possible; and nurturing life-long learning through civic engagement and adult seminars that focus on shared resource issues. Shenandoah hopes to join others in the "No Child Left Indoors" initiatives by developing a series of Family Recreation Seminars focused on Leave No Trace principles for hiking and camping. The park would like to become known as THE resource for teachers throughout the state by expanding its teacher training program through web-based materials and partnerships with the Smithsonian, Chesapeake Bay, and state agencies. Plans for additional curriculum materials include a virtual tour of Rapidan Camp, expansion of the current park-based high school environmental education modules, and additional units in our new Jr. Ranger II program aimed at teens.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: SHEN

EDUCATION

Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Shenandoah National Park in conjunction with park partners, the Shenandoah National Park Association and the Shenandoah National Park Trust, is creating a new way to deliver interpretive messages to the public. The GPS Ranger is a hand held mobile guiding device that delivers interpretive messages sharing the meanings and stories of the park's resources to visitors as they hike. The GPS Ranger can be programmed with unlimited content. It is a lightweight, rugged, water resistant computer with a sunlight viewable screen. The GPS Ranger automatically delivers audio, video, text, or still photos when a visitor approaches the pre-programmed GPS coordinates that correspond to points of interest within the park. It allows for updates, multiple languages, content changes, and environmental and safety messages.

The park will also continue to develop its website to make it a more interactive and exciting tool for virtual visitors to learn about Shenandoah and trip plan. The park's media specialists will continue to keep abreast of technological advances looking for appropriate ways to utilize it for sound interpretive techniques.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: SHEN

EDUCATION

Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Shenandoah National Park hopes to reinstate its Resource Seminar Program. Last fall we held a successful Civic Engagement Seminar with local government leaders, planners, and tourism partners. From that seminar we gained a greater understanding of ways we can all collaborate to increase responsible tourism and work together. We would like to find ways in the near future of putting ideas gathered from that seminar to practice. Additional seminars that deal with shared resource issues were recommended by those attending as a way to further promote life-long learning and family-oriented activities in the park while drawing visitors to the area.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: SHEN

EDUCATION

Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Shenandoah National Park's interpretive staff, including seasonals, SCAs, and volunteers all receive training in the Interpretive Development Program. Personal programs and media are regularly evaluated to be sure that they meet service-wide standards for communicating the National Park Service's mission while exploring multiple perspectives and facilitating a meaningful connection between the resources and the visitor. The park's Comprehensive Interpretive Plan for 2005-2010 outlines plans and strategies for communicating with visitors through personal programs and media the importance of their involvement and ownership of their national parks and their precious resources. Several additional exhibits as well as new waysides along Skyline Drive are listed in the current CIP's action plan. This media will increase visitors' understanding of the NPS and their role in its stewardship.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: SHEN

PROFESSIONALISM

Make national parks the first choice in philanthropic giving among those concerned about environmental, cultural, and recreational values.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The park will continue to help grow the fledgling Shenandoah National Park Trust as they move out from under the wing of the National Park Foundation. The 17 Trustees are committed to raising funds for important park projects like rehabilitation of park overlooks, introduction of creative delivery methods for interpretation, and the development of a stabilization plan for the Mount Vernon Furnace, one of the most significant cultural resources in the park. The Trustees are also committed to raising awareness about the value of park resources to the American public.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS