

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

BUDGET

CATO receives both base and non-base funding. Non-base funding is also known as “project or soft” money. The budget also has both appropriated and non-appropriated sources of revenue. There are 17 accounts through which the park executes its budget. With increasing frequency, the park must rely on appropriated or non-appropriated non-base funding. The park currently operates from an average of 25 different revenue sources annually. These sources combined to provide 30% of the park’s annual budget expenditure in Fiscal Year 2005.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Core Operations

Core Operations is an internal NPS review of park operations that will help us understand core operations work that we are currently performing at the park, what non-core operations we might reduce or outsource, and what we might stop doing because it is no longer necessary. This process will challenge us to find alternative ways of getting work done. It is a process that will help us support our position if we determine that additional funds are needed to cover our core work.

Core Operations is designed to:

- Focus employees and resources on functions that are the most essential to the purposes of the park.
- Accomplish core operations in the most effective and efficient way through:
 - Efficiency
 - Cost avoidance
 - Cost recovery
 - Elimination of low priority activities
- Provide a basis for long term budget allocation and long - term goals.
- Link expenditures to the organization’s annual and long - term goals.
- Identify management efficiencies to help us work smarter.
- Provide credibility for park budget requests.

Catoctin began Core Operations analysis beginning in 2007.

Competitive Sourcing

The National Park Service is currently undertaking a Preliminary Planning Effort (PPE) review of our Human Capital organization. This includes Human Resources, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Employee Development. While the current PPE assessment may affect the Human Resources function, approximately 70% of the other functions of the park have been deemed eligible under the Federal Activity and Inventory Review for competitive sourcing in the future.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

HUMAN RESOURCES

Contracting and Procurement

Contracting activities at Catoctin Mountain Park are controlled by the warrant level authority issued by the WASO contracting office. The park has two employees who currently possess contracting warrants: one at the \$100,000 level, which includes construction authority, and one at the \$10,000 level. Given the rising costs of construction, it has become evident that the \$100,000 level should be increased. Ideally, a \$500,000 warrant level would be more practicable and would allow the park to speed the entire contracting process from advertisement to award.

Another contracting authority that would benefit the park is for architecture and engineering (A/E) services, more commonly known as Title II services. Currently, this contracting authority is available only at the Regional Office. This slows the process and inhibits the park's ability to acquire these vital services in an efficient manner.

If contracting activities at Catoctin Mountain Park expand, the use of park staff as Contracting Officer's Technical Representatives (COTRs) would also have to increase. Depending on the length and scope of the contract, this could translate into many hours of on-site supervision. The park's four staff members who possess COTR credentials perform a myriad of other duties. In order for this disruption to be minimized additional park staff will have to be trained and certified as COTRs.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

HUMAN RESOURCES

Position Management

Effective position management at Catoctin Mountain Park is hampered by existing vacant positions in every operational division, as well as continuing budget constraints. The park's inability to fill vacant positions or to augment existing staff is a shortfall that impacts every aspect of park operations, including:

- law enforcement response for security, resource and visitor protection
- management of the white-tailed deer population
- information management program implementation and direction
- building services in visitor use areas
- employee and visitor safety
- cultural resource stewardship
- partnerships and increased volunteer projects
- improvement of the park's trail system
- resource education and visitor stewardship in camp facilities

Opportunities for position sharing between parks (i.e. Safety Officer, Information Technology Specialist, Environmental Protection Specialist) are being explored to reduce budget or staffing impacts to any one park. As future positions become vacant, a closer look must be taken to determine if the position should be refilled, or redescribed to answer a more critical park need.

Workforce planning, a tool for determining where to focus employee development and how to retain the knowledge of long-term employees, is also a vital tool in position management. Key steps in this process are assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation. The desired result is having the right employees in the right positions at the right time.

Diversity

In addition to aiding effective position management, workforce planning also enhances diversity. Catoctin's work force should reflect the diversity of the US population. In addition to meeting staffing needs, workforce diversity plays a vital role in the NPS by providing a way to meet the needs of increasingly diverse visitors. Many hiring authorities provide an avenue to reach diverse candidates. The Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) and Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) enable the NPS to hire qualified students. Veterans appointing authorities such as Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) and the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (VEOA) enable the NPS to reach qualified veteran candidates. The Peace Corps Volunteers and Peace Corps Employees authorities also aid in the recruitment process.



Many hiring authorities provide an avenue to reach diverse candidates. Photo by NPS.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

HUMAN RESOURCES

Recruitment and Retention

Over half (16 of 31) of Catoctin's permanent employees are or will be eligible to retire in the next 5 years. It is imperative that the park be able to both recruit new employees and retain current employees. One of the ways to help achieve this is by workplace flexibilities, such as job sharing, telework/telecommuting opportunities, and a flexible work schedule. Workforce planning is a tool for determining where to focus employee development and how to retain the knowledge of long-term employees. Key steps in this process are assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation. The desired result is having the right employees in the right positions at the right time.

Workforce planning also includes maintaining diversity. In addition to meeting staffing needs, workforce diversity plays a vital role in the NPS by providing a way to meet the needs of increasingly diverse visitors. Many hiring authorities provide an avenue to reach diverse candidates. The Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) and Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) enable the NPS to hire qualified students. Veterans appointing authorities such as Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) and the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (VEOA) enable the NPS to reach qualified veteran candidates. The Peace Corps Volunteers and Peace Corps Employees authorities also aid in the recruitment process.

Job Sharing

Due to current and expected budget constraints, as well as personal needs, such as child care and/or elder care responsibilities, job sharing and other part-time arrangements can be beneficial to both the employee and Catoctin Mountain Park. Catoctin would benefit by retaining the talents of current, experienced employees, as well as attracting potential employees.

Mentoring

A high percentage of Catoctin employees will be eligible to retire soon. This reflects a condition prevalent throughout the National Park Service. As an agency, we have to be able to find creative ways to continue to meet our mission. One such method is mentoring. Experienced employees approaching retirement work with junior employees to pass along "institutional knowledge". Specific goals are developed so objectives can be met. The senior employee spends some time each week imparting park specific knowledge to junior employees. Example: A park has more than 100 buried utilities that the senior electrician installed. Upon his retirement, ongoing development will be hindered without knowledge of existing utilities. In addition to schematics, the electrician spends time with the junior employee to convey all relevant information. The specific goal developed includes: amount of time spent mentoring, requirements that the junior employee must meet (reviewing/updating schematics), visiting utility sites, meeting with electrical company etc. and guarantees that vital information is conveyed so that the park experiences a smooth transition from the retiring employee to the advancing electrician.

Telecommuting/telework:

Computers, remote connectivity, voice and electronic communications, paperless work processes, and other innovations make information and work increasingly mobile. As a result, telecommuting is now possible more than ever. Catoctin has recently had two employees telecommute. One was due to a medical issue, the other related to child care. Telecommuting can be seen as benefiting both the employee and the environment. Telecommuting can increase employee productivity, as they face fewer interruptions and more focused time. Employees have more energy and less stress when they work on telework, and traffic congestion and pollution decrease for everyone.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

HUMAN RESOURCES

All Hazard/Special Event Incidents

The National Park Service is responding to increasing numbers of out of park incidents across the United States. Catoctin Mountain Park participates in All Risk incident assignments and supports the National Capital Region and other nearby units of the NPS in special event and/or incidents. These responses require training to maintain Incident Command System qualifications and response availability. These mutual aid assignments impact normal park operations. There may be times when priorities in park operations change to support ongoing emergency responses. The interpretive operation does take the opportunity to present programs and develop interpretive media to inform visitors of Catoctin Mountain Park's role as a part of the National Park System and its responsibilities to provide support during emergency situations

Homeland Security and Closures

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the increased concerns about homeland security, Catoctin Mountain Park has seen direct and indirect impacts. The location of the Presidential Retreat within the park has had direct impacts on staff and the park itself. These impacts include frequent closures of significant portions of the park which affect hiking, camping, and other visitor activities. Interpretive staff produces press releases for every closure, posts information on the park webpage and bulletin boards, and answers questions and respond to complaints from visitors. Additionally, because two of the three permanent park interpreters also provide law enforcement services, the Resource Education mission is impacted when staff is handling homeland security concerns. Administrative staff also support incidents with logistics for press events and billing for facility use.

Beyond the park's boundaries, an increase in Homeland Security's threat level may require the park's law enforcement rangers to travel to Washington, D.C. or other areas with higher threat levels. This deployment of park staff could potentially cause the Visitor Center or the entire park to be closed. Interpreters assist park managers through dissemination of accurate information to the public.

Health and Safety

The National Park Service strives to provide its employees and visitors with a safe work environment. Employees and managers must demonstrate an unwavering commitment to health and safety by incorporating safety into the decision-making process and into the overall planning cycle. Catoctin's Safety Officer will be the lead official to help insure a safe work environment by coordinating monthly inspections of all areas of the park, assisting in regional safety audits, and continually monitoring and updating the Safety Management Information System. We will endeavor to publicize hazards that exist in natural environments as well as human-caused problems and present information that prevent, mitigate or avoid such problems.

By partnering with outside businesses and agencies through the Tri-State Safety Council and the annual Health and Safety Fair, Catoctin will help insure that it is up to date with current polices and best management practices relating to safety. Development of written Job Hazard Analyses for all employees will help to eliminate at-risk behaviors and control job hazards. Conducting safety and occupational health training like Hazard Communication, Blood Born Pathogens, and Respiratory Protection on a recurring basis, Catoctin will help insure a safe and healthy work force. Medical testing and surveillance is another key component to safety and is required for arduous duty employees, and those with exposures to hazardous materials and environments.

Our five year average for FY 06 for accidents is 10.06 per 100 employees or about 4 accidents per year. Catoctin wishes to reduce our number of injury compensation hours to zero. Despite often working under hazardous conditions that may be beyond our control eg., weather we will endeavor to work as safely as possible.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

HUMAN RESOURCES

Integrated Pest Management

The Resources Management staff conducts Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to prevent health problems posed by mice, bats, yellow jackets, and roaches. These animals are abundant in the park's natural environment and become pests when they move into buildings such as offices, cabins, and kitchen facilities.

Basic IPM principles are followed when dealing with pest problems. Periodic monitoring is conducted for early detection. Initially, the IPM approach for control attempts to alter the environment to make it less useable or accessible for the pests. Building entry points are sealed with caulk or wire mesh, or covered with molding. If excess moisture is contributing to the pest problem, steps are taken to repair leaks and/or divert external runoff away from the building. Vegetation may be trimmed or removed if it is providing essential pest habitat. Pheromones or predators may be used to disrupt mating cycles or reduce population levels.

The second level of IPM involves trapping and removing the actual pests. This is often needed in combination with an environmental action. If needed, application of a pesticide is utilized as a third level IPM action. The least toxic material is employed first, such as boric acid for roach control, or *Bacillus thuringensis* for control of gypsy moth. More lethal products and/or professional exterminator service is employed after all other efforts have failed to produce the desired results.