

Goal 2: Provide Recreation for America

The Department of the Interior provides recreational opportunities on federal lands. It also provides leadership and coordination and serves as a catalyst for recreation efforts by state and local governments and the private sector.

Federal lands provide outstanding recreational opportunities, including hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, boating, driving off-highway vehicles, mountain biking, and birding. Interior continues to promote and provide recreational opportunities that are consistent with other land uses and with maintaining the health of the land.

Interior-managed lands support tremendous recreational use. In 2001, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) public lands had approximately 51.5 million visits and the National Wildlife Refuge System and the National Fish Hatchery System about 41 million visits. The National Park Service had an estimated 286 million visits. The Bureau of Reclamation also provides visitors with water-based recreation opportunities at more than 300 reservoirs in the 17 western states. Annually, there are approximately 90 million recreation visits to Reclamation facilities. The total economic impact of recreational activities on Interior lands is enormous, contributing billions of dollars and thousands of jobs annually to the U.S. economy.

The Department employs the following strategies to achieve the goal of providing recreation for America:

- Establish partnerships and collaborative efforts to improve the management of congressionally designated areas such as national trails, wild and scenic rivers, wilderness areas, and heritage areas that cross jurisdictional lines.
- Provide grants to states, tribes, and localities for wilderness and recreation opportunities.
- Help states, tribes, territories, and non-profit groups promote recreation.
- Provide recreation management training and technical assistance to states, tribes, and local governments.
- Offer one-stop access to recreational information and services through the interagency federal recreation Web site, <http://www.recreation.gov>.
- Supplement appropriations through increased revenues and cost recovery for services.
- Know and understand visitor needs by conducting customer surveys to obtain a broad base of visitor information.
- Promote visitor safety by maintaining safe facilities, providing employee assistance, and educating visitors.

“The lands managed by the Department of the Interior provide unparalleled recreation opportunities.”

- Protect resources for others to enjoy by educating recreational visitors about the value of the land and its uses.
- Expand the use of volunteers and actively enroll new volunteer groups and associations.
- Increase concession revenue and expand concession opportunities consistent with applicable laws while ensuring that the returns received by the federal government are appropriate.

The major departmental activities to achieve the goal of providing recreation for America are shown in *Figure 6*.

Figure 6

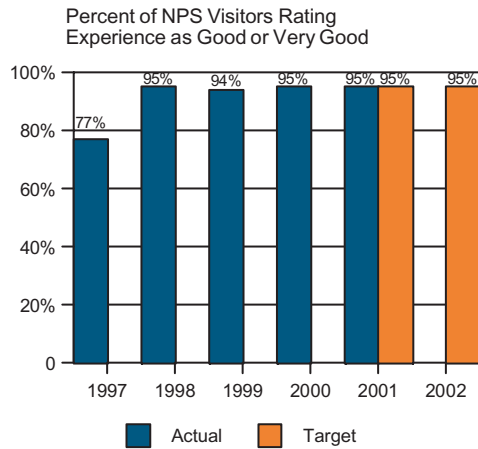
Goal 2 – Provide Recreation for America		
GPRA Program Activity	2001 Expenses (in millions)	2000 Expenses (in millions)
1. Visitor Enjoyment at National Park Facilities	\$1,504	\$1,447
2. Public Use and Enjoyment of Fish and Wildlife Resources	161	180
3. Opportunities for Environmentally Responsible Recreation on Public Lands	86	85
4. Recreation Opportunities Through Partnerships	258	204
5. Reclamation Land Management and Development	34	34
6. Partnerships in Natural Resources	3	0
Total - Goal 2	\$2,047	\$1,950

GPRA Program Activity 2.1: Visitor Enjoyment at National Park Facilities *(Provide for the enjoyment of National Park Service resources in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations)*

Background: The National Park Service manages nationally significant battlefields, parks, historic sites, monuments, lakeshores, memorials, parkways, preserves, recreation areas, riverways, and seashores. National park areas have long been favorite destinations for millions of Americans as well as people from around the world.

Performance Measure - Percent of Visitors Rating Experience as Good or Very Good. Enjoyment of the park units and their resources is a fundamental part of the visitor experience. Visitor enjoyment and safety are affected by the quality of park programs, facilities, and services, whether provided by the National Park Service, a concessionaire, or a contractor. Knowledge about the people who visit these NPS areas has become increasingly important because of the need to know if visitor expectations are being met. One mechanism for determining how well the NPS is serving the public is through findings of the NPS Visitor Services Project (VSP). The VSP is an ongoing research project that utilizes two main survey tools to provide the NPS with valuable visitor feedback: in-depth visitor studies and a customer satisfaction card. Since 1988, the VSP has conducted over 120 in-depth visitor studies in individual units of the National Park System. Approximately 10 studies are done each year. Because regular surveys are needed by park managers to better manage the visitor experience, the NPS adopted the Visitor Survey Card (VSC) as a means for assessing visitor satisfaction at all of the parks rather than just a few each year. The results from the VSC Project are used by park managers to improve facilities and services and better support the visitor experience. The more in-depth VSP surveys will continue to be conducted to collect visitor information, determine policy issues, gauge visitor use trends, and determine current visitor needs.

2001 Results: The NPS met its performance target as 95 percent of visitors were satisfied with appropriate park facilities, services, and recreational opportunities.



GPRA Program Activity 2.2: Public Use and Enjoyment of Fish and Wildlife Resources *(Provide the public with opportunities to understand and participate in the conservation and use of fish and wildlife resources)*

Background: The Nation’s ability to sustain ecosystems, and the natural heritage of fish and wildlife resources within them, will increasingly depend on the public’s active participation in the stewardship of these resources. A growing number of American citizens lack the firsthand experience with fish and wildlife resources in their natural settings that past generations enjoyed. The growing diversity of the Nation’s population introduces many new population groups to this country that also lack firsthand experience with American fish and wildlife resources. These factors and others offer a challenge for the FWS to provide environmental information so that the public understands how their well-being is linked to the well-being of fish and wildlife populations and their habitat.

Performance Measures - Number of Volunteer Hours and Number of New Friends Groups. For nearly 100 years, the National Wildlife Refuge System and the National Fish Hatchery System has tapped into an almost unlimited reservoir of support from individuals, organizations, academia, nonprofit groups, community leaders, and businesses for assistance in carrying out its daily work. These hands-on experiences provide tremendous benefits to refuges and hatcheries while increasing public understanding and appreciation of wildlife resources and their management.



Refuges are places where visitors can observe, learn about, and enjoy plants and animals in natural surroundings (photo by FWS).

2001 Results: Volunteer participation hours totaled 1,267,830 in 2001, or about 93 percent of the performance target. The number of volunteers that can be accommodated may be near the saturation point. Lack of staff time to nurture and develop volunteer programs may be the cause of this stabilization. The cumulative number of new friends groups at the end of the year was 149, or about 87 percent of the performance target. Large increases in the number of friends groups are showing signs of diminishing as groups are already in place at larger, more heavily visited refuges. Remaining refuges are less likely to attract sufficient interest to form these officially organized support groups. Additionally, it is very difficult for smaller refuges which do not have the necessary personnel to organize and support these groups since numerous administrative tasks are associated with managing the groups.

Performance Measures	1997	1998	1999	2000	Plan 2001	2001	Plan 2002
Percent increase in volunteer participation hours from 1997	-	15%	-4%	<1%	2%	-5%	5%
Number of new friends groups (cumulative)	63	95	120	135	171	149	183

GPRA Program Activity 2.3: Opportunities for Environmentally Responsible Recreation on Public Lands *(Provide the public with diverse opportunities to recreate on the public lands while maintaining the lands and facilities in good environmental condition)*

Background: The public lands provide visitors with a wide array of recreational opportunities. These include hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, boating, operating off-highway vehicles, mountain biking, birding, and visiting natural and cultural heritage sites. The BLM provides these opportunities where they are compatible with other authorized land uses, while minimizing risks to public health and safety and maintaining the health and diversity of the land.

Performance Measures - Percent of Recreation Users Satisfied with the Quality of Their Recreation Experience and Percent of Recreation Users Satisfied with the BLM's Interpretation and Environmental Education in Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs). As BLM recreation areas experience greater usage, an increase in the expectations of the American public regarding the quality of their recreation experience is inevitable. The BLM uses a national survey of recreation users to obtain information on customer satisfaction with the quality of their recreation experience.

2001 Results: Based on a sample of 1,603 respondents from 25 BLM recreation sites, the overall recreation satisfaction rate was 90 percent, short of the performance target of 94 percent. The satisfaction rate for BLM's interpretation and environmental education in SRMAs was 66 percent, falling short of the performance target of 76 percent.

Performance Measures	1997	1998	1999	2000	Plan 2001	2001	Plan 2002
Percent of recreation users satisfied with the quality of their recreation experience on the public lands	77%	91% *	93%	93%	94%	90%	94%
Percent of recreation users satisfied with the BLM's interpretation and environmental education in Special Recreation Management Areas	N/A	N/A	N/A	76%	76%	66%	76%

* In 1998, satisfaction survey was conducted at only premiere recreation fee sites.

GPRA Program Activity 2.4: Recreation Opportunities Through Partnerships *(Strengthen and preserve natural and cultural resources and enhance recreational opportunities managed by partners)*

Background: The National Park Service implements a broad range of programs that assist others to preserve our natural, cultural, and recreational resources. These programs encompass formal partnership programs with other federal agencies, states and territories, local governments, Indian tribes, foreign governments, private organizations, friends groups, academic institutions, and the general public. The NPS strives to increase the number of significant historic and archaeological properties protected and to improve customer satisfaction with technical assistance provided by the Park Service.

Performance Measures - Miles of Recreational Trails Added; Miles of Recreational River Corridor Added; and Acres of Recreational Park Land and Open Space Added. The National Park Service helps communities find appropriate strategies for meeting recreational demand by protecting trail corridors, open space resources, rivers and watersheds, and historic and cultural resources that define their sense of place. The Park Service becomes involved when formally asked by local officials, landowners, and other citizens who share the desire to protect or to improve their communities. The NPS also brings technical expertise in public involvement, publications, organization building, project design, and site restoration. All projects are founded on cost-sharing, cooperation, and community initiative. Projects are implemented largely by using local, state, and private funds, with NPS assistance typically leveraged many times over.



National recreation trails provide for numerous outdoor recreation activities in a variety of urban, rural, and remote areas. There are over 800 national recreation trails (ranging from 1/4 mile to 485 miles) on federal, state, local, and privately owned lands (photo by NPS).

2001 Results: The NPS exceeded its performance targets as 6,465 acres of trails, 3,172 linear miles of river corridor, and 726,900 acres of park and open space were added.

Performance Measures	1997	1998	1999	2000	Plan 2001	2001	Plan 2002
Miles of recreational trails added	N/A	700	2,116	4,343	4,800	6,465	5,200
Miles of recreational river corridor added	N/A	1,100	1,504	2,540	2,850	3,172	3,700
Acres of recreational park land and open space added	N/A	33,700	45,425	655,511	691,900	726,900	786,800

GPRA Program Activity 2.5: Reclamation Land Management and Development *(Provide the greatest overall benefit from existing land resources in a manner that is efficient and effective, uses sound conservation practices, and protects the environment)*

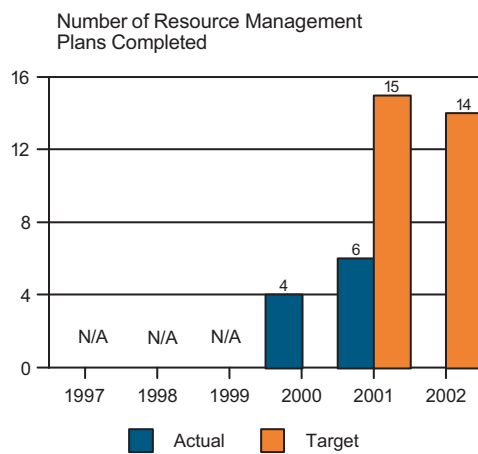
Background: The Bureau of Reclamation strives to manage lands in cooperation with others to improve, protect, and enhance land use, cultural, recreational, and environmental values. Using an ecosystem-based management approach, Reclamation assures that lands are managed in an economically and environmentally sound manner to benefit the American people.

Performance Measure - Number of Resource Management Plans Completed. Public Law 102-575 authorizes Reclamation to develop Resource Management Plans (RMPs). RMPs are important tools in land use decisionmaking because they act as a road map for land managers by identifying preferred land uses, priorities, and strategies.



Volunteers are an important part of the overall successful operation of Lake Cascade's adjacent lands. Civic groups, Boy Scouts, and retired citizens volunteer time each year to improve the landscape with natural plantings and construction of bird nesting areas (photo by BOR).

2001 Results: Reclamation did not meet its performance target as only six RMPs were developed or completed in 2001. Delays were experienced as a result of the scheduling and completion of required actions associated with the Environmental Impact Statement process, particularly the public comment process. In a number of cases, public comments were significantly more extensive and controversial than expected. This required additional resources and time to address the issues.



GPRA Program Activity 2.6: Partnerships in Natural Resources *(Support and strengthen partnerships with tribal governments, states, local governments, and others in their efforts to conserve and enjoy fish, wildlife, plants, and habitats)*

Background: This GPRA program activity was established as a result of feedback received during the fall of 1999 from strategic planning stakeholder and employee consultation sessions. These sessions addressed the statutory mandates and agreements where the FWS has responsibility or can assist in the conservation of natural resources. It reflects FWS’s commitment to support its partners in conserving fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats.

Performance Measure - Number of Federal Aid Staff Trained in FAIMS (Federal Assistance Information Management System) and Percent of FAIMS Phase 1 Implementation. The FWS envisions FAIMS as being a state-of-the-art electronic grants management system that provides efficient, effective delivery and tracking of grants and standardization of documentation for accountability, reporting, and auditing. The automation of grants processes will reduce data entry errors and expedite the process for approving grant funding requests.

2001 Results: The FWS met its performance targets as 20 Federal Aid staff were trained in the use of FAIMS and 95 percent of FAIMS Phase 1 implementation was completed. Training in FAIMS is critical because of system complexity, changes, and updates, as well as a need for consistent treatment of data. Phase 1 consists of the full development and implementation of the internal system, which serves as the backbone for the entire grants management process in federal assistance, including the electronic processing of funds.

Performance Measures	1997	1998	1999	2000	Plan 2001	2001	Plan 2002
Number of Federal Aid staff trained in using the Federal Assistance Information Management System (FAIMS)	N/A	N/A	N/A	60	20	20	20
Percent of FAIMS Phase 1 implementation	N/A	N/A	N/A	80%	95%	95%	100%