

information; (3) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond; including through the use of appropriate automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

This Notice also lists the following information:

Title of Proposal: Statement of Voucher for Basic Annual Contribution—Leased Housing

OMB Control Number, if applicable: 2577-0061. Description of the need for the information and proposed use: This form is needed to provide essential financial information on the operations of PHAs, which is used for multiple purposes by HUD including identification of debts owed to the Department.

Agency form numbers, if applicable: HUD-52981.

Members of affected public: State, Local or Tribal Government Estimation of the total numbers of hours needed to prepare the information collection including number of respondents, frequency of response, and hours of response: 125 respondents, annually, .88 hours per response, 110 hours for a total reporting burden.

Status of the proposed information collection: Extension.

Authority: Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended.

Dated: August 29, 1995.

Michael B. Janis,

General Deputy.

Joseph Shuldiner,

Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Record of Decision; Final Environmental Impact Statement/General Management Plan; Grand Canyon National Park; Coconino and Mohave Counties, AZ

Summary: Pursuant to § 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1505.2), the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, has prepared a Record of Decision on the Final Environmental

Impact Statement/General Management Plan for Grand Canyon National Park, Coconino and Mohave Counties, Arizona. This Record of Decision is a concise statement of what decisions were made, what alternatives were considered, the basis for the decision, and the mitigating measures developed to avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

Decision: The National Park Service will implement the proposed general management plan for Grand Canyon National Park, as detailed in Alternative 2 of the Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement issued in July 1995. The draft plan and environmental impact statement was issued in March 1995. The proposal is described below as the Selected Action.

Selected Action: The selected action is a comprehensive proposal for future management and use of the park, including a regional, ecosystem planning focus, park management zones, visitor experience, expanded provision of alternative visitor transportation services, interpretation planning, park operations, and park facilities development.

Summary of Actions: The regional context of Grand Canyon National Park will be emphasized, and proposals for resource preservation and visitor use will take into account environmental effects on the park as well as the region. Planning outside the park will be done cooperatively, with an emphasis on disseminating information, preserving regional and park resources, and providing a quality visitor experience. The National Park Service will work jointly with adjacent entities to provide for many park needs outside park boundaries. A gateway information center, some community services, and up to 500 employee housing units will be provided in Tusayan. The most appropriate locations for facilities will be considered in a regional context, taking into consideration principles of sustainable design and the need to preserve resources while providing for a quality visitor experience.

Alternative modes of transportation (public transit, hiking, and biking) will be emphasized within the park. A primary orientation center and public transit hub will be constructed near Mather Point. From there several shuttle routes will provide efficient and quiet visitor transportation to Grand Canyon Village and other points on the South Rim. Visitor parking and a shuttle system will also be established on the North Rim.

To minimize impacts on natural and cultural resources within the park, existing structures will be adaptively

reused, and required new facilities will be built in previously disturbed areas wherever possible. The Kachina and Thunderbird lodges will be removed and the number and size of gift shops on the South Rim will be reduced. The RV campground and the existing helicopter base will be redesigned. Some disturbed areas will be revegetated.

To ensure a quality experience, the number of visitors admitted to certain areas will be limited during peak visitation periods based on recommendations derived from a carrying capacity monitoring program. The methodology for determining use limits will be the same throughout the developed areas of the park; however, visitor use limits for specific areas will vary considerably, and visitor use may be limited sooner in some areas than in others. Day use on the South Rim and the corridor trails will not need to be limited during the life of this plan, provided the recommended alternative visitor transportation services are fully funded and operational; day visitation on the North Rim will be limited by the year 2005 or 2010, depending on the effectiveness of management actions; and day use at Tuweep may be limited during peak times. In areas where reservations become necessary, visitors will be able to obtain reservations ahead of time (their reservations will be checked at park entrances). A monitoring system will be established to measure resource impacts, facility use, visitor satisfaction, and levels of visitor attendance in each park developed area. The reservation system will be adjusted as needed.

Summary of Impacts: A stable situation for the future will be provided for all the developed areas of the park, significantly improving management's ability to preserve and protect the natural and cultural resources, provide a high-quality visitor experience, and ensure quality living and operating conditions for park employees. Most development will in-fill on already disturbed areas. Historic structures will be adaptively reused, resource damage will be minimized, and local economies will be enhanced. Sustainable planning, design, and implementation will be encouraged within a regional context.

Alternatives Considered

No-Action Alternative—Existing Conditions / Ongoing Programs

Summary of Actions: Unlimited day visitation would continue in all park developed areas, with nearly every visitor facility in developed areas of the South Rim continuing to be

overcapacity during peak use periods. No major facilities would be built, and no major park functions would be relocated. Any required facility changes would be done in or adjacent to existing disturbed areas. The number of overnight accommodations, campsites, and all other visitor services remain the same in each developed area. Minor adjustments in management would be made to help reduce resource damage and to provide a safer visitor experience. Planning would be focused inside the park, primarily to solve existing problems. Issues related to planning and land management practices in areas immediately outside the park would be handled individually as the need arose, without an overall area vision or cooperative regional planning effort to guide the direction. Limited cooperative planning to distribute regional information to visitors would occur.

Summary of Impacts: Uncontrolled growth would continue within the park, with only limited improvements to visitor services. Damage to natural and cultural resources would continue to worsen, and the visitor experience would become degraded. Communication with visitors to help them plan their trip so they could have a quality experience in the park would continue to be minimal, resulting in negative experiences for park visitors. Extensive quantities of substandard housing would remain, along with an ever-increasing shortage of park housing, forcing more and more employees to find housing in adjacent areas, perhaps long distances from the workplace. The lack of operational space would become severe, reducing employee effectiveness. Over the long term the economy of the area could be damaged due to the worsening image of Grand Canyon National Park and the poor visitor experience.

Alternative 1—Minimum Requirements

Summary of Actions: Unlimited day visitation would continue in all developed areas of the park until visitor congestion, resource damage, and public safety warranted restricting access during peak visitation. This would be accomplished by implementing reservation systems based on the capacity of existing parking and eating facilities on the South and North Rims. Regional information programs would explain the park's reservation systems to visitors. Overnight accommodations would not be affected. Visitor use at Tuweep and on the corridor trails would not be limited under this alternative.

Existing land use patterns would be retained—no major facilities would be built, no major park functions would be relocated, and most park facilities would remain where they are now. A few minor facilities would be added. Any required facility changes would be done in or adjacent to existing disturbed areas. Planning would be focused inside the park, primarily to solve existing problems. Issues related to planning and land management practices in adjacent areas outside the park would be handled individually as the need arose, without an overall area vision or integrated regional planning effort to guide the direction.

Summary of Impacts: Park resource damage and a worsening visitor experience at Grand Canyon would be alleviated by limiting the number of people visiting developed areas on the North and South Rims at any one time. Tuweep would continue to experience uncontrolled use, possibly leading to deteriorated natural resources and a degraded visitor experience over the long term. Some impacted areas would be rehabilitated, helping to restore resources within the park. The visitor experience would improve compared to the no-action alternative because fewer people would be competing to use facilities. However, visitors would continue to be frustrated by not being able to easily find places they want to see. Information, orientation, and education about park themes would remain ineffective because of inadequate and poorly located facilities. Visitors would not be well distributed throughout the park, reducing the number of people who could enjoy the park at any one time, and more and more visitors would be turned away.

An increasing number of employees would not be able to live in the park, and many would have to find their own housing, often over an hour from the park. Housing in some developed areas would be improved, and the need for additional housing would be reduced by limiting visitation. Some improvements would occur outside the park due to NPS assistance to outside entities for regional visitor information. However, many park problems would fall to regional entities, for example, visitors parking outside the park and using private transit services to enter the park, disappointed visitors being turned away at the gate, and housing for park employees.

Alternative 3—Reduced Development Within the Park

Summary of Actions: Alternative 3 would emphasize the preservation of park resources by placing all new

facilities and relocating many existing functions outside the park. Cooperative regional planning would ensure that NPS functions occurring outside park boundaries demonstrated environmentally sensitive planning and design. The National Park Service would expand its regional information services, as described for alternative 2. On the South Rim all day visitor vehicles would be removed, and a major public transit system would be provided. No new lands within the park would be disturbed, and historic uses of existing structures would be retained wherever possible. Overnight accommodations would be reduced on the South Rim but increased on the North Rim by adaptively reusing historic structures. Planning for the park would be done in a regional context to minimize negative impacts resulting from park uses being placed in areas outside the park. Communications would be expanded, as described for alternative 2. Wherever possible, facilities placed outside the park would be clustered in disturbed areas and linked to existing systems. Alternative modes of transportation would be emphasized regionally as well as in major high use areas of the park, the same as alternative 2.

Summary of Impacts: There would be an emphasis on preserving natural and cultural resources within the park, and many park disturbed areas would be rehabilitated. The visitor experience within the park would be highly controlled on the South Rim, and strict limitations of the number of visitors on the North Rim and at Tuweep would force many visitors to plan far in advance to experience those areas. Many more acres would be disturbed outside the park than any other alternative as a result of park-related facility development; services, housing, and operational facilities within the park would be limited. Many visitors would be inconvenienced since no private vehicles could be driven through the park.

Alternative 4—Increased Development Within the Park

Summary of Actions: Alternative 4 proposes actions to improve visitor convenience by placing major park visitor services inside the park wherever reasonable and by distributing visitors throughout the developed areas of the park. No day use limitations would be established unless the visitor experience was being significantly degraded. The type of vehicular use allowed in some areas would be restricted, and high use areas would be accessible only by transit vehicles or hiking or biking (the

same as alternative 2); other developed areas would be accessible by private vehicles. Overnight accommodations would be increased in all developed areas on the North and South Rims by constructing some new facilities and adaptively reusing existing structures. New facilities would be placed either in or adjacent to disturbed areas. Planning outside the park would emphasize regional information, as described for alternative 2. Cooperative planning with outside entities would focus on disseminating information, providing trip planning assistance, and distributing visitor use.

Summary of Impacts: Allowing all visitors to enter the park and developing facilities to accommodate their needs would result in continuing resource damage. This alternative would produce more resource impacts inside the park than any alternative and would set a precedent for continued resource impacts in the future. The greatest resource impacts would be caused by widening roads and developing additional parking. Visitor convenience would be significantly enhanced. Park operations and development would continue to expand to meet visitor demand. After 2010 the visions and management objectives for the developed areas might not be attainable due to the increases in facilities and visitors. Impacts to regional resources would increase over the long term as a result of growth inside and outside the park to meet visitor needs. Due to ever-increasing needs for park construction, new employee housing, and larger visitor facilities, the regional economy would continue to increase.

Basis for Decision: The selected action was formulated to address problems and management concerns related to the protection and preservation of natural and cultural resources, the provision of appropriate visitor experiences, and the fulfillment of identified management objectives. The management objectives reflect the park purpose, significance, and park area vision statements. They provide a standard against which progress on the implementation of the plan can be measured. The management zoning concept set forth in the March 1995 draft plan (and refined in the July 1995 final plan) is adopted, which will enhance management's ability to direct future park actions in specific areas within the context of an overall management philosophy.

The selected action also adopts the ongoing implementation plans within the park (for example, the Resource Management Plan, Backcountry Management Plan, Colorado River Management Plan, Fire Management

Plan, and Land Protection Plan), and provides direction, through the management objectives, for future revisions of those plans. The selected action provides for a monitoring program that will provide an appropriate park management presence and an adjustable, sustainable carrying capacity for people and vehicles in developed areas within the park with minimal disturbance to park resources.

No protests or other comments were received on the final plan and environmental impact statement during the 30-day no action period that the document was available to the public.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative: Alternative 2 is the environmentally preferred alternative. It balances the statutory mission of the National Park Service to provide long-term resource preservation while still allowing for appropriate levels of visitor use and appropriate means or forms for visitor enjoyment. Within the range of alternatives presented in the plan, alternative 2 corrects the existing infrastructure deficiencies in the park and provides for the projected growth in visitation through the year 2010 by adaptive use of existing historical structures and provision of visitor transportation services other than private automobiles. A long-term monitoring program to determine appropriate use levels and carrying capacities within the developed areas of the park will be established to ensure protection of the natural and cultural resources of the park and to maintain a quality visitor experience.

Alternative 2 also provides the best combination of long- and short-term regional economic and community proposals that will favorably affect the tourism industry and communities in northern Arizona and southern Utah. An emphasis in alternative 2 is to promote economic development in surrounding communities by not providing all tourist related facilities inside the park.

Measures to Minimize Harm: All practicable measures to avoid or minimize environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the selected action have been identified and incorporated into the selected action. These include, but are not limited to, protection of viewsheds and wilderness values, and natural resources including the protection of populations of threatened plant species in the developed zone. As specific aspects of the selected action are further developed or implemented, the National Park Service will consult with the Fish and Wildlife Service regarding threatened or endangered species. Also

impacts to the integrity of historic properties, ethnographic resources, and archeological sites will be avoided or minimized. A programmatic agreement has been signed by the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Park Service which provides a framework for further consultation and discussion when implementing the selected action.

Conclusion: The above factors and considerations warrant selecting Alternative 2, identified as the proposed action in the draft document (and as modified in the final general management plan and environmental impact statement). Additional copies of the approved Record of Decision may be obtained from the Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park, P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023. The officials responsible for implementing the selected action are the Field Director, Intermountain Field Area, National Park Service and the Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park.

Approved: August 21, 1995.

Stanley T. Albright,

Field Director, Pacific West Field Area.

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Interagency Desert Management Plan Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Inyo and San Bernardino Counties, CA; Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement

SUMMARY: In accordance with 40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22, of the regulations of the President's Council on Environmental Quality for the National Environmental Policy Act (Pub. L. 91-190), the National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) are initiating the preparation of a management plan and environmental impact statement for the Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert.

Background

The purposes of this interagency desert management plan are to guide protection, public use, and development of a 7.7 million acre region in parts of Inyo and San Bernardino counties of southern California. Once approved, the plan will provide broad guidance over the next two decades for management of federally owned lands in the Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert. The plan also will contain more detailed plans for two major units of the National Park System and for BLM lands. Specifically, the existing Death Valley general