

GAO

Report to the Chairman, Subcommittee
on National Parks, Historic Preservation,
and Recreation, Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate

August 1998

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The Condition of Lodging Facilities Varies Among Selected Parks



**Resources, Community, and
Economic Development Division**

B-280453

August 6, 1998

The Honorable Craig Thomas
Chairman, Subcommittee on National Parks,
Historic Preservation, and Recreation
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The National Park Service offers visitors to our national parks a variety of overnight lodging accommodations including deluxe, mid-scale, and economy rooms. In some cases, these are the only lodging facilities located in or near a park. Concessioners manage the operation of these lodging facilities under contract with the Park Service. According to the Park Service, the rates that concessioners can charge for staying in park lodging facilities are comparable to those of similar facilities within the region. However, all rates must be approved by the park superintendent.

Concerned about whether visitors to our national parks are receiving accommodations that are safe, clean, and well maintained, you asked us to provide you with information on (1) what, if any, standards the Park Service has for its lodging facilities and how they are applied; (2) how common industry standards for maintaining the condition of hotel and motel facilities compare to the Park Service's standards; and (3) the condition of lodging facilities in national parks when evaluated by common industry standards.

To respond to these objectives, we performed our work at a judgmental sample of 10 national parks that included Bryce Canyon, in Utah; Canyon de Chelly National Monument, in Arizona; Death Valley, in California; the Grand Canyon, in Arizona; Lake Mead National Recreation Area, in Arizona and Nevada; Mammoth Cave, in Kentucky; Mesa Verde, in Colorado; Shenandoah, in Virginia; Yosemite, in California; and Zion, in Utah. On June 1, 1998, we briefed you on the results of our inquiry and agreed to provide you with this report summarizing our findings.

Results in Brief

The Park Service has standards for lodging facilities located in national parks and generally conducts formal evaluations of the condition of these facilities at least twice a year. If problems are identified during these inspections, follow-up inspections are done to determine if the

deficiencies were corrected. A final evaluation of a concessioner's performance is also completed at the end of the year.

The Park Service's and industry's standards for inspecting the condition of lodging facilities are generally similar; however, industry's standards impose requirements for additional amenities, furnishings, safety, and security. We found that some of these additional industry requirements were available in many park lodging facilities. For example, while not required by the Park Service's standards, every room we inspected had a smoke detector although a few were not functioning. Park Service officials told us that not all of the industry's standards, such as providing a television in every room, should apply to lodging facilities in the national park system. However, the Park Service is currently revising its standards to include more industry requirements.

Generally, when evaluated by common industry standards, the condition of lodging facilities in national parks varies among parks and within parks. For example, facilities like those at Bryce Canyon and Zion National Parks are in very good condition. However, other facilities, such as some structures at Stovepipe Wells in Death Valley National Park, need substantial renovation.

Background

Since its establishment in 1916, the Park Service has acquired or constructed a number of lodging facilities, especially in isolated locations, so that visitors can stay in the parks. Lodging in the national park system consists of a variety of facilities, including hotels, motels, cabins, rustic lodging (lodging not accessible by automotive vehicles), hostels, and tents. Much of this lodging existed before the park units were established or was built during one of two major construction periods. The first construction period occurred in the 1920s and 1930s, when cabins and lodges were mainly built, and the second period was during a 10-year capital investment program between 1956 and 1966 called "Mission 66." As a result, many lodging facilities in the national parks are historic structures, such as the Old Faithful Inn, located in Yellowstone National Park. Currently, about 29 national parks offer visitors overnight lodging accommodations in hotel- or motel-type facilities.

Private businesses (concessioners) manage all overnight lodging accommodations in the national park system under contract with the Park Service. The Park Service evaluates the performance of the concessioners to ensure that visitor services and facilities are safe, sanitary, attractive,

and at levels that visitors would expect from the private-sector facilities outside of Park Service areas.

The Park Service Has Standards for Lodging Facilities in National Parks

The Park Service has standards for evaluating park lodging facilities. These standards are used to evaluate both the exterior and interior of the facilities. To assess the exterior of facilities, Park Service inspectors examine, among other things, the condition of structures, grounds, public signs, and public rest rooms. For example, to determine the condition of a structure, inspectors examine whether it is clean, well painted or otherwise treated, and in good repair. To assess a facility's interior, Park Service inspectors examine, among other things, room safety and security, furnishings, housekeeping, and maintenance. For example, the Park Service's security standards require that all doors and windows accessible to a room must have adequate, operable locking devices that are changed as necessary to preclude the duplication of keys and theft. Furthermore, the doors to rooms must have a double-locking system from the inside, and entryway doors must be sufficiently illuminated to allow easy access. Also, the Park Service's furnishing standards require that each bed be made-up with two sheets, one mattress pad, pillow(s), pillow case(s), a blanket, and a bedspread. All bedding must be clean, untoned, and free of stains, and of the proper size for the mattress.

Generally, the Park Service conducts a minimum of two formal evaluations of a park's lodging facilities each year by inspecting a sample of rooms. The actual number and timing of these inspections vary from park to park but are based on the type of park operation, seasonal or year-round; the size of the park operation in terms of gross revenue; and the previous year's rating of the concessioner's performance. For example, if a concessioner is having problems, the number of inspections increases. Inspections are usually conducted by a Park Service concessioner specialist or other Park Service employee who conducts the inspections in addition to other regular duties. If problems are identified during these inspections, follow-up inspections are done to determine if the deficiencies were corrected. A final evaluation of the concessioner's performance is also completed at the end of the year.

Industry's Standards Have More Requirements Than the Park Service's Standards

National travel organizations, such as the American Automobile Association and Mobil Travel Guide, as well as hotel and motel franchises, such as Holiday Inn and Days Inn, use standards to evaluate the quality and condition of lodging accommodations throughout the United States. Generally, these organizations use similar standards, but there are some minor differences. For example, some industry standards require that bed linens be changed daily, while others allow guests to determine how often bed linens are changed as part of an environmental/energy-saving program. We found that the Park Service's and industry's standards are generally similar, but there are some important additional requirements imposed by industry. For example, to assess the condition of rooms, both the Park Service's and industry's standards require an evaluation of room safety and security, furnishings, housekeeping, and maintenance. However, industry's standards have more room safety and security requirements, such as a requirement that each room have a smoke detector, dead-bolt lock, and door viewport/window. The Park Service's standards do not include these requirements, although most of the rooms we inspected had these items.

Some of the differences that we found in the standards are due to the Park Service's desire to maintain lodging facilities in a manner that is more consistent with the rustic, serene setting that guests anticipate when visiting a park. Therefore, while required by industry's standards, in-room amenities like a telephone, television, and an alarm/clock radio are not required by the Park Service. Other differences, however, such as the additional safety and security requirements imposed by industry's standards, are significant.

The Park Service is currently revising its standards and has established work groups to review industry's standards and identify those requirements that are appropriate for park lodging facilities, such as having a smoke detector in every room. Appendix I of this report contains a checklist of common industry standards and provides a comparison of these standards to the Park Service's current standards.

Conditions Vary Among Park Lodging Facilities

The condition of lodging facilities in national parks varies among parks and within parks when evaluated by common industry standards. On the basis of a judgmental sample of 10 national parks, we found that the exterior and grounds of most of the lodging facilities were generally in good condition. For example, facilities like those at Bryce Canyon and Zion National Parks were in very good condition. However, some facilities,

such as some of the structures at Stovepipe Wells in Death Valley National Park, needed substantial renovation. In addition, some lodging facilities, such as the Wawona Hotel in Yosemite National Park, can require a substantial investment to make needed repairs because they are historic structures. The renovation of a historic structure can be costly because certain requirements may have to be met. For example, in some cases, attempts are made to match the original appearance of the structure, and period materials and craftsmanship are used in performing the work. Appendix II provides a park-by-park summary of the overall results of our inspection of lodging facilities at 10 national parks.

We also found that some rooms in some parks raise safety and security concerns. Although the items are not specifically required by the Park Service's standards, most of the rooms we inspected had a smoke detector, a door with a dead-bolt lock, and a viewport or window convenient to the door. However, in the 10 parks that we visited, 4 had at least one room with a nonfunctioning smoke detector; 5 had at least one room without a functioning dead-bolt lock; 4 had at least one room with a nonfunctioning window lock; and 4 had at least one room without a viewport or window convenient to the door.

In addition, the condition of rooms with regard to furnishings, housekeeping, and maintenance varied among parks and within parks. In some parks, like Bryce Canyon, Canyon de Chelly, and Zion, the overall condition of the rooms was very good. However, at most parks, at least some furnishings required by industry's standards were not available, and some housekeeping and maintenance problems were found. For example, six parks had rooms without an alarm clock/radio, and three parks had no telephone in any guest room. Some Park Service officials consider the lack of a room telephone to be a safety concern because of the general aging of the population and the isolation of some rooms. Two parks had a large number of housekeeping problems, such as dirty and/or stained carpets and unclean windows. Finally, five parks had a substantial number of repair and maintenance problems, such as cracks, holes, or stains in bathroom walls and/or ceilings, and grout problems in showers. Appendix III provides details of the results of our room inspections in 10 national parks.

Agency Comments

We provided the Department of the Interior with draft copies of this report for review and comment. The Department acknowledged the need to repair, rehabilitate, and upgrade some of its lodging facilities and stated

that these situations will be addressed as funding becomes available. The Department noted that such problems may have resulted from the fact that some concession facilities are being managed under older contract language that includes a “mutual consent clause” that can prevent the Park Service from making changes to the concessioner’s maintenance plans unless there is mutual agreement by the concessioner. The Department stated that the Park Service’s revised standard concession contract language no longer includes mutual consent clauses. The Department also noted, as stated in our draft report, that the Park Service is currently reviewing its existing lodging standards with continuing active input from the hotel industry. The Department stated that additional safety requirements, along with new environmental standards, are being incorporated into revised Park Service standards, which the Park Service plans to issue in late 1998. Finally, the Department stated that the Park Service will conduct a follow-up of our evaluation results with all the parks that were included in this review to determine if the deficiencies that we found have been corrected. The Department’s specific comments are in appendix IV.

Scope and Methodology

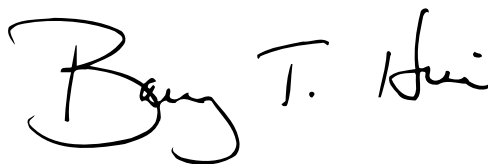
To determine whether the Park Service has lodging standards and how they are applied, we reviewed appropriate Park Service policies on and procedures for lodging and interviewed Park Service headquarters officials and various park superintendents, concessioner specialists, and representatives of concessioners. To determine how common industry standards for maintaining the condition of hotel and motel facilities compare to the Park Service’s, we obtained the standards used by two private-sector firms to evaluate the quality and condition of lodging accommodations across the country as well as standards used by a national hotel franchise and a national motel franchise to determine quality assurance. To determine the condition of lodging facilities in national parks when evaluated by common industry standards, we used the industry’s standards that we identified to develop a checklist of common standards for inspecting park lodging facilities. We showed this checklist to Park Service officials, who stated that it was reasonable but noted that not all of industry’s requirements, such as providing a television in every room, should apply to lodging facilities in the national park system. We applied our checklist of standards to facilities in a judgmental sample of 10 national parks. We made unannounced visits to these parks and generally conducted our inspections with representatives of the Park Service and the concessioner. We also documented the conditions we

found with photographs, some of which are presented in appendix II of this report.

Our study has a number of limitations. First, we did not examine the condition of hotel and/or motel rooms managed in the private sector to determine the extent of safety, furnishing, housekeeping, and maintenance problems in the industry. As a result, we do not know if the condition of the Park Service's lodging facilities is better than, worse than, or the same as that of industry's facilities. Second, our study was based on a judgmental sample of parks, so the results are not projectable to the national park system. In addition, our sample of rooms at a given park is not projectable to the overall condition of rooms in that park. We conducted our review from April through June 1998 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

We are sending copies of this report to the Secretary of the Interior; the Director, National Park Service; and the Director, Office of Management and Budget. We will also make copies available to others upon request. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (202) 512-8021. Major contributors to this report are listed in appendix V.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barry T. Hill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "B".

Barry T. Hill
Associate Director, Energy,
Resources, and Science Issues

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Abbreviations

AAA	American Automobile Association
GAO	General Accounting Office
NPS	National Park Service

Comparison of GAO'S Checklist of Common Industry Standards to the National Park Service's Standards for Evaluating Lodging Facilities

This appendix describes the standards that we used to assess the condition of lodging facilities at 10 national parks and compares these standards with the National Park Service's (NPS) current standards.

The American Automobile Association (AAA), the Mobil Travel Guide, Holiday Inn, and Days Inn use standards to evaluate the quality and condition of hotel and motel accommodations throughout the United States. AAA's standards are used for evaluating the quality and condition of over 45,000 accommodations, restaurants, and other tourist attractions throughout the United States for travel publications and the delivery of electronic information. The Mobil Travel Guide's standards are used for evaluating the quality of furnishings, service, housekeeping, maintenance, staffs' attitude, and other characteristics of over 20,000 facilities, including hotels, motels, and other food and lodging facilities throughout the United States. Holiday Inn's standards are used to evaluate the condition and quality of Holiday Inn hotels across the country as required by the franchise's license agreement. Days Inn's standards are used to perform quality assurance evaluation reports on all Days Inn motel facilities across the country.

We used these industry lodging standards to develop a checklist of common industry standards for inspecting lodging facilities in national parks. AAA uses one to five diamonds in its rating system. A diamond rating is assigned to a property on the basis of the conditions noted at the time of inspection; five diamonds signifies the highest rating. All physical attributes and the quality of services are considered. In developing our checklist, we used AAA's one-diamond rating, which describes these properties as clean, safe, and well maintained. The Mobil Travel Guide has a rating system that uses one to five stars. In developing our checklist, we used Mobil's one-star rating characteristics, which state that a motel or lodge earning this rating offers a minimum of services but is an appropriate and comfortable place to spend the night. Holiday Inn's and Days Inn's standards are the same for all of their properties.

NPS' and industry's standards are generally similar in that both evaluate, among other things, the exterior and interior of lodging facilities. Specifically, NPS' and industry's standards for exteriors are generally the same. Both standards evaluate the condition of structures, grounds, public signs, and public rest rooms. The standards for assessing the condition of rooms are also generally the same. Specifically, both standards evaluate rooms for safety and security, furnishings, housekeeping, and maintenance. However, industry's standards have more requirements than

**Appendix I
Comparison of GAO'S Checklist of Common
Industry Standards to the National Park
Service's Standards for Evaluating Lodging
Facilities**

NPS'. For example, industry's standards require that rooms have a smoke detector, dead-bolt lock, and viewport/window convenient to doors. Common industry standards also require that every room have such items as a telephone, television, and alarm/clock radio. NPS officials stated that not all of industry's standards should apply to lodging in national parks. For example, NPS' standards let the park superintendent decide whether to include a television in every room.

Table I.1 presents the checklist of common industry standards that we developed and used to evaluate the condition of NPS' lodging. In table I.1, we also identified the industry's standards that are not required by current NPS' standards. NPS' standards are being revised to reflect additional industry requirements, such as the requirement that a smoke detector be in each room.

**Table I.1: Comparison of GAO's
Checklist to Park Service's Standards**

NAME OF FACILITY	
INDUSTRY STANDARD	PARK SERVICE STANDARD
FACILITY EXTERIOR	
STRUCTURE CONDITION	Same.
Well painted or otherwise treated	Same.
Clean	Same.
In good repair	Same.
GROUND	
Well maintained	Same.
Properly illuminated	Same.
Uncluttered and free of litter/debris	Same.
Trash containers	Same.
— Sufficient number	Same.
— Convenient	Same.
— Overflowing	Same.
Paved or gravel parking area	Same.
PUBLIC SIGNS	
Accurate	Same.
Appropriately located	Same.
Well maintained	Same.

(continued)

**Appendix I
Comparison of GAO'S Checklist of Common
Industry Standards to the National Park
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Facilities**

NAME OF FACILITY

PUBLIC RESTROOMS	Same.
Clean	Same.
Odorless/ventilated	Same.
Free of litter	Same.
Well maintained	Same.
— Toilet tissue	Same.
— Towels or functioning air-drying device	Same.
— Soap	Same.
Waste receptacle	Same.
Well illuminated	Same.
Mirror	Same.
Handicapped accessible	Same.

FACILITY INTERIOR

ROOM SAFETY AND SECURITY	Same.
Primary lock on all doors	Same.
Dead-bolt lock on all doors	Not required. However, NPS' standard requires that each room be equipped with a double locking system from the inside such as a primary door lock and a door chain.
Door has a viewport/window	Not required.
Locks on all windows	Same.
Smoke detector	Not required. However, NPS' draft revised standards require a smoke detector.
— Functioning	
Active light switch at main entry to unit	Same.
ROOM ILLUMINATION	Same.
Sufficient lamps to properly illuminate the room	Same.
Lamps for reading or writing must provide bulbs of at least 75 watts	Same. However, NPS' standard also states that the bulb wattage is not to exceed the specification printed on the specific light fixture.
ROOM FURNISHINGS	Same.
At least one chair	Same.
— In good condition	Same.

(continued)

**Appendix I
Comparison of GAO'S Checklist of Common
Industry Standards to the National Park
Service's Standards for Evaluating Lodging
Facilities**

NAME OF FACILITY	
Writing surface	Not required. ^a
— In good condition	
A night stand or equivalent	Not required. ^a
— In good condition	
Clothes hanging facilities; drawers or clothes storage area	Same.
— In good condition	Same.
Television (If provided)	If required by the park superintendent.
— Functioning	
Telephone (If provided)	If required by the park superintendent.
— Functioning	
— Direct dial or 24 hour switchboard	
OTHER ROOM REQUIREMENTS	
Waste basket	Same.
Ice bucket (If ice is available)	Same.
Electrical outlets	Same.
— Functioning	Same.
Alarm/clock radio	Not required.
Note pad	Not required.
Pen or pencil	Not required.
Free of extension cords	Not required.
Quiet—sufficient soundproofing	Not required. However, NPS' draft revised standards require room soundproofing.
Adequate space for one piece of luggage	Same.
Shades, draperies or blinds on all windows	Same.
Window coverings effectively shut out light from outside	Same.
Heating system	Same.
— Functioning	Same.
— Reasonably quiet	Same.
Air conditioning	If required by the park superintendent.
— Functioning	
— Reasonably quiet	
All room elements are color coordinated	Same.
Adequate free floor space for room size	Same.
OVERALL ROOM CLEANLINESS	
Free of insects/rodents	Same.

(continued)

**Appendix I
Comparison of GAO'S Checklist of Common
Industry Standards to the National Park
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Facilities**

NAME OF FACILITY	
No dust/dirt/litter	Same.
No cobwebs	Same.
No stains	Same.
Odorless	Same.
Clean windows	Same.
ROOM CARPETING	Same.
Not dirty/stained	Same.
Not worn out/torn	Same.
ROOM WALLS/CEILING	Same.
Clean	Same.
No peeling paint	Same.
Free of defects such as cracks, holes, or stains	Same.
MATTRESS	Same.
Non-sagging	Same.
Odorless	Same.
Sized to fit bed frame	Same.
Free of lumps and protruding tufts	Same.
BOX SPRINGS	Same.
Non-protruding	Same.
Quiet	Same.
Unbroken	Same.
OTHER BEDDING REQUIREMENTS	
Clean pillow(s)	Same.
Two clean sheets	Same.
One clean mattress pad	Same.
Clean pillow case(s)	Same.
Suitable, clean bedspread	Same.
Suitable, clean blanket	Same.
Bed linen changed daily. However, some industry standards are allowing guests to determine how frequently bed linens are changed as part of an environmental/energy saving program.	Not required. However, NPS' draft revised standards require bed linens to be changed daily or in accordance with the park's approved environmental policies.

(continued)

**Appendix I
Comparison of GAO'S Checklist of Common
Industry Standards to the National Park
Service's Standards for Evaluating Lodging
Facilities**

NAME OF FACILITY

BATH AREA

GENERAL

Private bath (with no carpeting in commode area)	Not required.
Adequate ventilation (fan/window)	Same.
Adequate lighting	Same.

TOILET

Functioning	Same.
Clean	Same.

SHOWER/TUB

Functioning	Same.
Clean	Same.
No grout problems	Same.
Adequate water pressure	Same.
Non-skid pad/strips	Same.
Adequate hot water	Same.
No cracks	Same.
Shower curtain/tub enclosure clean and free of tears and mildew	Same.

VANITY/SINK

Functioning	Same.
Clean	Same.
Mirror	Same.
Adequate water pressure	Same.
Adequate hot water	Same.
Adequate light fixture above vanity	Same.
Electrical outlet convenient to mirror	Not required.
— Functioning	

BATH TOWELS

One quality bath towel per person	Same.
One quality hand towel per person	Same.
One quality wash cloth per person	Same.
Towel rack	Same.

(continued)

**Appendix I
 Comparison of GAO'S Checklist of Common
 Industry Standards to the National Park
 Service's Standards for Evaluating Lodging
 Facilities**

NAME OF FACILITY

Towels changed daily. However, some industry standards are allowing guests to determine how frequently towels are changed as part of an environmental/energy saving program.	Not required. However, NPS' draft revised standards require towels to be changed daily or in accordance with the park's approved environmental policies.
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OTHER BATH REQUIREMENTS

One cloth bath mat	Same.
Spare toilet tissue	Same.
One wrapped drinking glass per person	Same.
Bathroom waste basket	Same.
One individually wrapped bar of soap per person	Same.
Facial tissue	Same.

OVERALL BATH AREA CLEANLINESS

No hair	Same.
No stains	Same.

BATH WALLS/CEILING

Clean	Same.
No peeling paint	Same.
Free of defects such as cracks, holes, or stains	Same.

^aNPS standards state that a room is to be adequately furnished to meet visitor needs. The standards do not specifically mention a writing surface or night stand.

Park Summaries on the Overall Results of GAO'S Inspections

This appendix presents a park-by-park summary of the overall results of our inspections of the lodging facilities at 10 national parks. To determine the condition of lodging facilities in national parks, we used common industry standards for inspecting lodging facilities (see app. I) to develop a checklist and applied it to a judgmental sample of 10 national parks. The checklist included criteria for both the condition of the exterior of the facilities and the condition of the rooms. Specifically, to assess facilities' exteriors, we examined the condition of lodging structures, grounds, public rest rooms, and public signs. In examining lodging structures, we determined whether they were well painted, clean, and in good repair. In examining grounds, we determined, among other things, whether they were well maintained, properly illuminated, and free of litter and debris. In examining public rest rooms, we made such determinations as whether they were clean, properly ventilated, and well maintained. Finally, in examining signs, we determined whether they were accurate, appropriately located, and well maintained.

To assess the condition of rooms, we examined (1) safety and security concerns, (2) the availability of furnishings, (3) the quality of housekeeping, and (4) the repair and maintenance of these rooms. To determine safety and security concerns, we examined whether the rooms were equipped with a functioning primary lock, dead-bolt lock, window locks, and a smoke detector; whether the door had a viewport or convenient window; and whether a functioning light switch was in the room's entryway. To determine the availability of furnishings, we examined such items as whether a room had at least one chair, a writing surface, nightstand, telephone, television, and air conditioning; the sufficiency of illumination; and the quality of bath towels and bed linens. To determine the quality of housekeeping, we examined the overall cleanliness of the room and bathroom; in doing so, we determined whether the windows, walls, ceilings, carpeting, and bathroom fixtures were dirty. To determine whether maintenance was being performed, we examined such items as the condition of furnishings and the functioning of the heating and air conditioning systems; we examined whether walls and ceilings were free of cracks, holes, and stains; and we examined the adequacy of water pressure.

We showed the checklist to NPS' Concessioner Program Manager, who stated that the checklist was reasonable but noted that not all of the industry standards that we included in our checklist are required by current NPS standards. Furthermore, he stated that not all industry

standards, such as the presence of a television and air conditioner in every room, should apply to lodging facilities in the national park system.

We selected a judgmental sample of 10 national parks that included Bryce Canyon, in Utah; Canyon de Chelly National Monument, in Arizona; Death Valley, in California; the Grand Canyon, in Arizona; Lake Mead National Recreation Area, in Arizona and Nevada; Mammoth Cave, in Kentucky; Mesa Verde, in Colorado; Shenandoah, in Virginia; Yosemite, in California; and Zion, in Utah. We made unannounced visits to the parks and applied our checklist to the lodging facilities and a sample of rooms. The types of facilities that we inspected varied by park and included hotel, motel, and lodge rooms as well as cabins. These facilities had varying room rates. All of the facilities were managed by concessioners. Some of the facilities were owned by NPS, while others were owned by concessioners.

Bryce Canyon National Park

The lodging facilities at Bryce Canyon National Park, located in southwestern Utah, consist of a lodge, which includes a restaurant, gift shop, and 4 suites; 40 cabins; and a motel with 70 rooms. These lodging facilities are owned by NPS and managed by a concessioner—AmFac Parks and Resorts. The lodge was built in the 1920s, and the cabins, which are over 60 years old, are historic. The motel is 12 years old. Lodging facilities in Bryce Canyon are open year around, and room rates vary by the number of persons staying in a room. The motel room rates range from \$83 to \$98 per night; the cabin rates range from \$93 to \$103 per night; and the lodge suites are \$115 per night.

Condition of the Exterior and Grounds at Bryce Canyon

We found the exterior and grounds at Bryce Canyon to be in very good condition. Specifically, we found the following:

Structures

All of the lodging structures in the park—the lodge, motel, and cabins—were in very good repair, and were well painted and clean. The lodge and cabins, shown in figure II.1, were renovated in 1985.

Figure II.1: Well-Maintained Lodge and Cabins at Bryce Canyon National Park



Grounds

The grounds were very well kept and landscaped and very clean. The parking areas are paved and well illuminated.

Public Rest Rooms

The public rest room, located in the lodge, was very clean and well maintained.

Public Signs

The public signs that we observed were accurate, well maintained, and appropriately located so that visitors can easily find the lodging facilities and services.

Condition of the Rooms at Bryce Canyon

We inspected a total of nine rooms at Bryce Canyon—six motel rooms, one suite, and two cabins—for safety and security concerns, the availability of furnishings, the adequacy of housekeeping, and the repair and maintenance of these facilities. We found the rooms to be in very good condition. Specifically, we found the following:

Safety and Security

One of the suites in the lodge did not have a viewport or window convenient to the door so that a guest can tell who is at the door. Viewports or windows are required by industry's standards but not by NPS. None of the other rooms that we inspected had any safety and security concerns.

Furnishings

In accordance with the park's policy, none of the rooms in the park had a television or air conditioning. We also noted that none of the rooms had notepads for guests to use. The NPS concessioner specialist told us that

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NPS' standards do not require notepads and that it is not the concessioner's practice to provide them.

Housekeeping

Of the nine rooms that we inspected, we found only one housekeeping problem—a rusty shower rod—in one room. The concession manager immediately called maintenance to get this replaced.

Repairs and Maintenance

There were no repair and maintenance problems in any of the rooms we inspected. Figure II.2 shows the condition of a typical motel room at Bryce Canyon National Park.

Figure II.2: Motel Room in Very Good Condition at Bryce Canyon National Park



NPS officials and the concessioner manager at Bryce Canyon had a number of observations about why their lodging facilities were in very good condition. First, the park has an excellent working relationship with the concessioner manager, who has a very positive attitude toward managing the lodging facilities. In turn, the concessioner manager told us that he has excellent staff, who work very hard at keeping the facilities in good condition. Supporting these statements is the fact that we found no repair

and maintenance problems and only one housekeeping problem in the nine rooms we inspected. Second, the concessioner is willing to take extra steps to provide more pleasant accommodations for guests, such as placing chocolates on guest bed pillows. The NPS concessioner specialist noted that the park did not receive a single guest complaint letter about lodging in 1997. Finally, park officials stated that another reason why the lodging facilities are in such good condition at Bryce Canyon is that the new contract with the concessioner, which was amended in 1995, established a special account that required the concessioner to withhold 8.5 percent of the gross revenues for capital improvements. The concessioner has reinvested these funds into improving the lodging facilities.

Canyon de Chelly National Monument

Canyon de Chelly National Monument, located in northeastern Arizona, has one lodging facility within the monument's boundary—Thunderbird Lodge. The lodge is owned and operated by a concessioner—White Dove, Inc. The lodge consists of 72 rooms and 1 two-room suite. The oldest rooms were constructed in the 1920s, and additional rooms were built in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Room rates range from \$58.50 to \$106 per night; and the suite ranges from \$90.50 to \$178 per night. Room rates vary depending on the season and the number of people occupying a room.

Condition of the Exterior and Grounds at Thunderbird Lodge

The lodging structures and grounds at Canyon de Chelly were generally in very good condition and were well maintained. Specifically, we found the following:

Structures

The structures at Thunderbird Lodge consist of a motel office, a cafeteria, a gift shop, and seven lodging buildings. These buildings were generally very clean and in good repair. We did note some minor paint chipping around the exterior of some room windows and minor stains/marks where water had run down exterior walls. Figure II.3 shows the landscaping and some of the lodging structures at Thunderbird Lodge.

Figure II.3: Well-Maintained Lodge Buildings and Grounds at Canyon de Chelly National Monument



Grounds

The grounds, which consist of lush green lawns and additional landscaping, were very neat and well maintained. The grounds were free of litter and debris, were well illuminated, and contained a sufficient number of trash containers. The parking area was paved and in good condition.

Public Rest Rooms

The public rest room in the lodge office building where guests check in was clean, odorless, and well maintained.

Public Signs

We did not find any problems with the accuracy, location, or maintenance of the public signs we observed.

Condition of the Rooms at Thunderbird Lodge

We inspected a total of 12 rooms at Thunderbird Lodge for safety and security concerns, the availability of furnishings, the adequacy of housekeeping, and the repair and maintenance of these facilities. The rooms we inspected were generally clean and very well maintained. We found only one safety and security concern in one room. Most rooms had all the furnishings required by industry's standards. Those that did not have all the required furnishings had only one item that was not available. In general, the rooms that we inspected were clean and neat. For example,

4 of the 12 rooms that we inspected had no housekeeping deficiencies. Most of the remaining eight rooms had only one or two such problems. In addition, the rooms were very well maintained. We found a total of only five repair and maintenance problems in three rooms. Specifically, we found the following:

Safety and Security

We found only one safety and security concern in the rooms we inspected. Specifically, one room had a window without a functioning lock.

Furnishings

Seven of the 12 rooms that we inspected had all the furnishings required by industry's standards. The remaining five rooms each had one furnishing problem. Specifically, two rooms did not have a functioning fan in the bathroom. Additionally, three rooms did not have a quality (no holes or frayed edges) hand or bath towel for each person. While these three rooms were supplied with the appropriate number of towels, one of the towels was worn or frayed in each room.

Housekeeping

Generally, the quality of housekeeping at Canyon de Chelly was very good. The rooms that we inspected were generally clean and neat. For example, four rooms that we inspected had no housekeeping problems, and five of the remaining eight rooms had just one or two deficiencies. Housekeeping problems that we did find included windows that were dirty (four rooms) and stains on carpets (two rooms).

Repairs and Maintenance

The rooms that we checked were very well maintained. For example, 9 of the 12 rooms had no repair and maintenance problems. The remaining three rooms had a total of five repair and maintenance deficiencies, including a chair with a worn finish, a room in which the heating system was not working at the time of our visit, and another room without hot water. The Park Service ranger who conducts room inspections as a collateral duty contacted a concessioner employee, who addressed the latter two problems during our visit.

In regard to the overall good condition of the rooms at Canyon de Chelly, the NPS representative stated that Thunderbird Lodge's ownership and management take pride in their operations, share a concern for the community and visitor, and have established high training standards for their employees in maintaining the facilities and caring for the safety and enjoyment of the public.

Death Valley National Park

Death Valley National Park, located in California, has concessioner-operated accommodations at Stovepipe Wells Village. Stovepipe Wells Village consists of about 14 different facilities, including a gift shop, restaurant, gas station, and general store. The lodging facilities, which are motel-type rooms, are owned by NPS and managed by a concessioner—AmFac Parks and Resorts. The lodging facilities were originally built in the 1930s, and some additional units were built in the 1980s. The lodging consists of three types of units: 8 patio rooms, which cost \$38 per night; 28 standard rooms, which cost \$58 per night; and 47 deluxe rooms, which cost \$80 per night.

Condition of the Exterior and Grounds at Stovepipe Wells

The overall condition of the exterior and grounds of Stovepipe Wells could be improved. Specifically, we found the following:

Structures

Some of the lodging structures at Stovepipe Wells need work. For example, at least two of the facilities needed exterior paint. In addition, some of the sidewalks were cracked and sunk and needed to be repaired or replaced. At one facility, the front doors on two rooms had about a 1-inch gap between the bottom of the door and the doorsill. Furthermore, as illustrated by figure II.4, the exteriors of several other rooms needed to be repaired as evidenced by a broken window temporarily repaired by duct tape and a broken back door handle and screen in another room.

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Figure II.4: Needed Exterior Repairs at a Lodging Structure at Stovepipe Wells in Death Valley National Park



Duct tape on broken window



Broken handle and screen on back door

An NPS representative who oversees the concessioner operations at Stovepipe Wells as a collateral duty and a representative of the concessioner agreed that the exterior of these facilities needed repairs. They noted that the damaged sidewalks were scheduled for replacement this summer and that the 10-room facility, which included the room with the broken window, was scheduled for a major \$200,000 renovation. Subsequently, the NPS representative informed us that the renovation of these rooms is under way and should be completed by mid-July. The NPS representative also noted that other needed repairs would be made to the facility's exteriors as soon as money was available and that discussions with the concessioner on these issues would take place this winter season.

Grounds

The grounds at Stovepipe Wells were properly illuminated, were generally free of clutter and debris, and had an adequate number of convenient trash containers. In addition, guest parking areas were paved. However, certain aspects of the grounds needed to be better maintained. For example, as

shown in figure II.5, a barrier is needed to block the view of employee housing from guest rooms. According to the NPS representative, an aesthetic barrier between the visitor and employee facilities is planned.

Figure II.5: View of Employee Housing at Stovepipe Wells From the Rear Patio of Guest Rooms



Public Rest Rooms

The public rest room at Stovepipe Wells was clean, free of litter, and well maintained.

Public Signs

The public signs that we observed at Stovepipe Wells were accurate, appropriately located, and well maintained. In addition, when a guest checks in, he/she is given a detailed map of Stovepipe Wells Village, which shows the location of all rooms and services.

Condition of the Rooms at Stovepipe Wells

According to NPS and concessioner representatives, 26, or over 30 percent, of the 83 guest rooms at Stovepipe Wells need to be renovated. This includes all 8 patio rooms, 10 of the 28 standard rooms, and 8 of the 47 deluxe rooms. The remaining rooms have already been renovated, and those that we inspected were generally in good condition. However, the room rates charged to guests are the same whether they stay in a renovated room or not.

The renovation of 10 standard rooms is scheduled for this summer. NPS and the concessioner have not determined a plan for the patio rooms.

Currently, visitors are told that the rooms are just a place to “rest their head” and are encouraged to inspect the room before paying to spend the night. The eight deluxe rooms that need renovation are not scheduled for repair at this time.

We inspected 11 rooms at Stovepipe Wells for safety and security concerns, the availability of furnishings, the adequacy of housekeeping, and the repair and maintenance of these facilities. We found few safety and security concerns; however, the guest rooms that we inspected do not have many of the furnishings required by industry’s standards available. Furthermore, we found a large number of housekeeping problems in over half of the rooms that we inspected and several repair and maintenance problems in four of the rooms. Specifically, we found the following:

Safety and Security

We found safety and security concerns in three rooms; two rooms did not have a dead-bolt lock nor a viewport so that a guest can tell who is at the door. Two rooms did not have a functioning window lock. Furthermore, one room did not have an entryway light switch.

Furnishings

The rooms that we inspected at Stovepipe Wells did not have many of the furnishings required by industry’s standards. For example, none of the rooms had a television, a telephone, an alarm clock/radio, a pen/pencil, or notepad. According to the NPS representative, the park superintendent does not require that rooms be equipped with a television and telephone. She noted, however, that park officials have always supported installing telephones in individual rooms but that until the mid-1980s, there was only toll station service available at Stovepipe Wells and a total of three telephones for the entire complex. Improved equipment has expanded the telecommunications options available at Stovepipe Wells and now, according to the NPS representative, funding is an impediment, since the various options for getting phones installed in individual rooms range in cost between \$300,000 and \$500,000.

In regard to televisions, the NPS representative stated that the park has only allowed their installation in about half of the deluxe units and none of the standard or patio rooms. She said this policy is based on space limitations in the smaller rooms and visitors’ requests that televisions not be provided so they can more readily focus on enjoying the park. Finally, it is the concessioner’s practice not to provide an alarm clock/radio, pen/pencils and notepads for guests. The NPS representative noted that these items are not required by NPS’ standards and that guests can ask the front desk staff to wake them up with a knock on the door.

Three of the 11 rooms that we inspected did not have nine or more furnishings required by industry's standards. For example, these rooms had no writing surfaces, inadequate lighting, no place to put luggage, no vanities in bath areas, and a lack of nonslip pads or strips in the bath. According to the concessioner, all three of these rooms need to be renovated.

Housekeeping

We found some housekeeping problems in most of the 11 rooms that we inspected; however, 5 rooms had six or more problems. These problems included dust, dirt, and litter in rooms; unclean windows; dirty and stained carpeting; dead insects; and stains in the bath area. The NPS and concessioner representatives told us that housekeeping is a general problem at Stovepipe Wells. They stated that because the facilities are located in Death Valley, it is difficult to hire and retain quality personnel to perform this service.

We also noted that it was the concessioner's policy to change bed linen every third day (after 2 nights) for stay-over guests unless otherwise requested. According to the NPS representative, this practice is becoming an industry standard, particularly in the southwest, for water conservation purposes. She noted that the concessioner places a notice in the rooms advising guests of this policy.

Repairs and Maintenance

Seven of the rooms that we inspected at Stovepipe Wells had very few or no repair and maintenance problems. Most of these rooms had been recently renovated. However, four of the rooms that we inspected had a number of repair and maintenance problems. These problems included such items as cracks in bathroom walls, inadequate drinking-water pressure, broken shower fixtures, and peeling paint. Some of these problems are illustrated in figure II.6.

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Figure II.6: Repair and Maintenance Problems in Rooms Located at Stovepipe Wells



Corroded drinking water facility and damaged wall



Plastic bag holding broken shower facility



Holes in bedsread

The NPS and concessioner representatives agreed that all four of these rooms need to be renovated. However, they noted that the concessioner was also having difficulty hiring and retaining an adequate number of quality maintenance personnel, given the location of the park. In addition, the NPS representative stated that it is not easy to get parts to make repairs in a timely manner, given the distance of the park to a community with needed supplies. For example, Las Vegas—the nearest large city—is over 125 miles away.

Grand Canyon National Park

Six lodging facilities located near the south rim of Grand Canyon National Park are within the park's boundaries—Bright Angel Lodge (89 rooms), El Tovar Hotel (78 rooms), Kachina Lodge (49 rooms), Thunderbird Lodge (55 rooms), Maswik Lodge (278 rooms), and Yavapai Lodge (358 rooms).

We inspected rooms at Bright Angel Lodge, Kachina Lodge, Thunderbird Lodge, and Yavapai Lodge. Bright Angel Lodge, built in 1935, is the oldest of these four facilities. Some rooms at Yavapai Lodge were built in 1960, and the remaining rooms were built in 1973. Kachina and Thunderbird Lodges were built in 1972.

Bright Angel Lodge contains a variety of rooms, including rooms with no private bathrooms, powder rooms (e.g., vanity/sink and toilet but no bath/shower), historic cabins, standard rooms, and suites. Room rates at Bright Angel range from \$40 to \$225 per night. Kachina, Thunderbird, and Yavapai lodges contain standard rooms that range in price from \$81 to \$115 per night, depending on the location of the room. AMFAC Resorts, LLC, doing business under the name of Grand Canyon National Park Lodges, is the concessioner and owner of the lodging facilities at the south rim of the park.

Condition of Exterior and Grounds at Grand Canyon National Park

The lodging structures and grounds that we inspected at Grand Canyon National Park were generally in good condition and well maintained. Specifically, we found the following:

Structures

The lodging structures that we inspected were generally in good condition. We did note some peeling paint on the roof flashing above one of the entrances to the Yavapai Lodge lobby. The Yavapai lobby also contained some badly worn furniture. We also noted that the exterior of some buildings at Bright Angel Lodge had some flaking paint. Finally, the entryway to Thunderbird Lodge had a few cracked floor tiles and dirt.

The NPS concessions management specialist who accompanied us during our inspections stated that NPS had identified the poor condition of the Yavapai lobby furniture prior to our visit. She stated that the furniture is being replaced and that she expects the delivery of these items soon. She also noted that prior to our visit, NPS identified the condition of the exterior of Bright Angel Lodge as needing work. She stated that the concessioner had hired a historical architect to conduct an inspection and develop a building condition assessment report. That report has been completed, and the planning process for a major exterior renovation of Bright Angel Lodge, including painting, is proceeding.

Grounds

The grounds at Yavapai and Thunderbird Lodges were in good condition. They were well maintained, sufficiently illuminated, and generally free of litter and debris. The only problem we observed at Kachina and Bright Angel Lodges was a small amount of litter, such as paper and cigarette butts.

Public Rest Rooms

We found that the men's rest rooms at Yavapai and Bright Angel Lodges were not clean. For example, the men's rest room in the Yavapai lobby had walls that were not entirely clean and were marked with graffiti; dirt, and grime around the baseboard; and stalls that needed repainting. In addition, the tile counters, floor, and exhaust fan in the men's rest room at Bright Angel Lodge contained dirt and dust. The public rest room in Thunderbird Lodge was clean and well maintained but was not accessible to the handicapped.

The concessions management specialist stated that the need for renovating the Yavapai rest room had been identified by NPS prior to our visit. She noted that the concessioner had requested funding for the project, which was approved by NPS. She also noted that the cleanliness and graffiti issues had been addressed by the concessioner. She explained that the need to renovate and expand the Bright Angel rest room had been included in the park's general management plan. She explained further that because both of these rest rooms are overloaded by public demand, it is difficult to close them for cleaning during the day. She pointed out that the general management plan had recognized the need for more public rest rooms and that the park is planning for these improvements.

Public Signs

We did not observe any problems with the accuracy, location, or maintenance of public signs at the lodges we inspected.

Condition of Rooms at Grand Canyon National Park

We inspected a total of 33 rooms in four lodges at Grand Canyon National Park. We evaluated these rooms for safety and security concerns, the availability of furnishings, the adequacy of housekeeping, and repair and maintenance. Generally, we found the rooms to be in good condition, clean, and well maintained. We found very few safety and security concerns. However, while the rooms had most of the furnishings required by industry's standards, no room had all the required furnishings. For example, no room had lights of at least 75 watts for reading, as required by NPS' standards. In addition, none of the rooms had an alarm/clock radio, and only Thunderbird and Kachina Lodges had air conditioning in every room as required by industry's standards. The quality of housekeeping at

Grand Canyon was very good. Many rooms had no housekeeping problems, and those that did had only one or two such deficiencies. Finally, the rooms were generally well maintained; over a third had no repair and maintenance problems, and only one or two such problems were in most of the remaining rooms. Specifically, we found the following:

Safety and Security

A total of five rooms had safety and security concerns. These included one room without a functioning primary lock, one room without a dead-bolt lock, and three rooms without a functioning light switch near the rooms' entrance. According to the NPS concessions management specialist, the malfunctioning primary lock was fixed the day of our visit.

Furnishings

The rooms that we inspected had most of the furnishings required by industry's standards. However, two or more furnishings were not available in all the rooms. For example, no rooms at the four lodges we inspected had lights of at least 75-watts for reading, as required by NPS' and industry's standards. When we raised this issue, the NPS concessions management specialist noted that lower-wattage bulbs provide for energy conservation, which NPS stresses in its environmental awareness approach to operations. She also stated that the rooms that we inspected had adequate illumination and that, as far as park officials know, there have never been any visitor complaints about inadequate lighting in these accommodations.

We also found that no rooms had an alarm/clock radio. Furthermore, 23 of the 33 rooms did not have air conditioning, although many of these rooms were equipped with a fan. In addition, five rooms at Bright Angel Lodge had no television, one room at Yavapai had no writing surface or chair, and three rooms at Bright Angel had no fan or window in the bathroom.

In regard to the lack of alarm/clock radios, the concessions management specialist noted that they are not required by NPS' standards and that wake up calls are available through the front desk. She also pointed out that because of the park's remoteness, radio reception is very poor and radios would be an unsatisfactory addition to the rooms. As for air conditioning, she stated that most rooms in the park were not designed with this feature because it is rarely, if ever, needed. Specifically, at a 7,000-foot elevation, summer temperatures at the park are mild, and the park has found that by simply moving the air, electric fans provide adequate cooling. She also explained that there are no televisions in motel-type rooms at Bright Angel Lodge because of a concern for noise. This facility, she noted, has inadequate sound insulation owing to its historic characteristics.

Furthermore, she stated that televisions in park accommodations could easily be considered a controversial addition and that the park would encourage visitors to enjoy the natural resources available to them and attend interpretive programs rather than spend time in their rooms viewing television.

In regard to the room at Yavapai with no writing surface or chair, the NPS concessions management specialist stated that this room was equipped with a studio bed that provides a multi-person seating area intended to accommodate the needs of larger families. She said that these rooms are not large enough to have both a studio bed and desk. Finally, she stated that because of the historic architecture at Bright Angel Lodge, there are bathrooms without windows and that these rooms generally have an exhaust system in place.

Housekeeping

The rooms that we inspected had very few housekeeping problems. For example, over half of these rooms had no housekeeping deficiencies. Those rooms that did have housekeeping deficiencies had only one or two such problems. The deficiencies that we did find included cobwebs in four rooms, windows that were dirty in eight rooms, and hair on the bathroom wall of two rooms.

Repairs and Maintenance

The rooms that we inspected were generally well maintained. For example, over one third of the rooms had no repair and maintenance problems. All but three of the remaining rooms that did have repair and maintenance deficiencies had just one or two such problems. The most prevalent problem that we found was small stain spots on the bathroom walls/ceilings of 14 rooms. The NPS concessions management specialist stated that these spots were a housekeeping problem and should not be classified as a repair and maintenance deficiency. She stated that the spots were caused by water condensation and that the housekeeping staff remedied this problem by switching from a biodegradable cleaner to a stronger cleaning product. She added that in the future, the stronger product will be used when the biodegradable product fails to produce satisfactory results. Other repair and maintenance problems that we found included cracked tiles and dirty or missing grout in the shower/tub area.

Lake Mead National Recreation Area

Lake Mead National Recreation Area, located in southern Nevada and northwestern Arizona, consists of 1.5 million land acres and two large lakes. Lake Mead is 110 miles long and has 500 miles of shoreline; Lake Mohave has 200 miles of shoreline along its 69-mile length. These lakes

provide many recreation activities, such as boating, swimming, fishing, scuba diving, water skiing, sightseeing, hiking, picnicking, and camping. Five lodging facilities are within the boundaries of the recreation area. They are Cottonwood Cove Resort, with 24 rooms; Echo Bay Resort, with 52 rooms; Lake Mead Resort, with 43 rooms; Lake Mohave Resort, with 51 rooms; and Temple Bar Resort, with 22 rooms. These facilities are not close to one another; they are located in different parts of the recreation area. We inspected rooms at three of these facilities—Cottonwood Cove Resort, Lake Mead Resort, and Lake Mohave Resort. Cottonwood Cove Resort was built in the early 1970s; Lake Mead Resort was built in the 1930s, and some rooms were added in the 1950s; and rooms at Lake Mohave Resort were built in the 1950s, in 1965, and in 1983. Forever Resorts, Inc., is the owner and concessioner at Cottonwood Cove Resort, while Seven Crown Resorts is the owner and concessioner at Lake Mead and Lake Mohave Resorts. NPS owns none of the lodging facilities operating within the recreational area. All of the lodging facilities in the recreation area are open year round.

Room rates at Cottonwood Cove range from as low as \$35 per night for any room during the off season to \$95 per night for deluxe rooms during the regular season (June through Oct.). Rates at Lake Mead Resort range from \$50 per night to \$125 per night, depending on the type of room. Rates at Lake Mohave Resort range from \$60 per night to \$83 per night, also depending on the type of room.

**Condition of Exterior and
Grounds at Lake Mead
National Recreation Area**

The lodging buildings and grounds at the three facilities we visited at Lake Mead National Recreation Area were generally in good condition and were well maintained. Specifically, we found the following:

Structures

The lodging structures at these three facilities were well painted or otherwise treated, clean, and in good repair.

Grounds

The grounds at these facilities, which consisted mainly of lawns and landscaping, were also generally in good condition. We did note that at Lake Mead Resort, a large nautical rope that was part of the grounds' decor was worn and frayed and that some of the posts supporting the rope were leaning over and in need of repair or were missing. According to the NPS chief of concessions management at the recreation area, this deficiency had also been recently identified in an NPS inspection report and

the concessioner removed the ropes and posts in the time frames required by NPS. The buildings and grounds at Cottonwood Cove Resort were very well maintained.

Public Rest Rooms

The public rest room that we observed at Lake Mead Resort was generally clean and well maintained.

Public Signs

We did not observe any problems with the accuracy, location, or maintenance of public signs at these facilities.

Condition of Rooms at
Lake Mead National
Recreation Area

The 27 rooms that we inspected at Lake Mead National Recreation Area were generally in good condition. We checked nine rooms at each of the three facilities for safety and security concerns, the availability of furnishings, the adequacy of housekeeping, and repairs and maintenance. We found a total of seven safety and security concerns in five of the rooms that we inspected. While the rooms had most of the furnishings required by industry's standards, no room had all the required furnishings. For example, only 1 of the 27 rooms that we inspected had 75-watt lights to read by as required by industry's and NPS' standards. In addition, at Lake Mead Resort, none of the rooms had a telephone. Overall, we found few housekeeping problems in the rooms that we inspected at these lodging facilities. We did, however, find a relatively large number of repair and maintenance problems (23 in total) at Lake Mohave Resort. Specifically, we found the following:

Safety and Security

At the Lake Mead Resort, three of the nine rooms that we inspected had safety and security concerns. Specifically, one room had a nonfunctioning primary lock on the door, a window lock that was not working, and a nonfunctioning smoke detector. A second room did not have a functioning dead-bolt lock, and a third room had a window lock that was broken. We identified no safety and security concerns at Cottonwood Cove. At Lake Mohave Resort, two rooms did not have a functioning light switch near the room's entrance as required by industry's and NPS' standards.

Furnishings

The rooms that we inspected had most of the furnishings required by industry's standards. However, some required furnishings were not available in each room. For example, although all rooms at Cottonwood Cove and Lake Mohave Resorts had a telephone, none of the rooms at Lake Mead Resort did. None of the rooms at Lake Mead Resort had wastebaskets in the main living area as required by industry's standards, although they were available in the bathroom. Only one room that we

inspected in the three lodging facilities had reading lamps with bulbs of at least 75 watts as required by NPS' standards. In addition, none of the rooms that we checked at Cottonwood Cove were supplied with an alarm clock/radio. Furthermore, only one room at the three lodging facilities offered the guest a pen/pencil as required by industry's standards, and no rooms at Lake Mead and Lake Mohave Resorts were equipped with a notepad. Finally, the rooms that we inspected at Lake Mohave Resort did not have individually wrapped bars of soap as required by industry's standards. Each room did, however, have a wall-mounted soap dispenser.

The NPS concessions chief for the recreation area pointed out that while NPS' standards require 75-watt bulbs for reading or writing, they also state that the bulb's wattage should not exceed the light fixture's specifications. She noted that some fixtures in the rooms that we inspected may have been rated for lower-wattage bulbs. However, she added that she intends to review this issue further with the concessioner during the next room inspection.

The NPS concessions chief noted that the soap dispensers at Lake Mohave Resort provide a sanitary source of soap, while being less wasteful than small, individually wrapped bars of soap. As for the lack of telephones at Lake Mead Resort, the concessions chief explained that there is no policy in the recreation area requiring a room telephone. She noted that a room telephone is not required by NPS' lodging standards and that it may not necessarily be an enhancement to visitors coming for recreation. Finally, she pointed out that public telephones are available to guests within a short walking distance of the rooms. As to why an alarm clock/radio, pens/pencils, and notepads are not available in many of the rooms at the resorts, the concessions chief said that such items are not required by NPS' standards and that providing them is at the concessioner's discretion.

Housekeeping

In general, the rooms that we inspected were clean and neat. For example, over a third of the rooms we inspected had no housekeeping deficiencies. Those that did generally had only one or two problems. Examples of the housekeeping deficiencies that we observed included windows that were not completely clean, stains in the toilet, small mildew spots on bath walls/ceiling, and some insects in four rooms.

Repairs and Maintenance

We found a total of 23 repair and maintenance problems in the nine rooms that we inspected at Lake Mohave Resort. Two rooms had a particularly high number of repair and maintenance deficiencies, including such items as a telephone that was not working, a table with a broken leg, inadequate

hot water, a shower/tub stopper that was jammed closed, and peeling paint and cracks on bathroom walls/ceilings. We found far fewer repair and maintenance deficiencies at Cottonwood Cove and Lake Mead Resorts. For example, at Cottonwood Cove, we found five rooms with no repair and maintenance deficiencies and only one such deficiency in each of the other four rooms that we inspected. Although only two rooms at Lake Mead Resort had no repair and maintenance problems, no room that we inspected had more than two problems. The types of problems that we found at Lake Mead Resort included loose dresser veneer in one room, sagging mattresses in two rooms, and some peeling paint in the bathroom of two rooms. The concessions chief explained that the motel at Cottonwood Cove Resort is significantly newer than the lodging facilities at Lake Mead and Lake Mohave and that the difference in the age of construction materials and furnishings makes a difference in the concessioner's ability to provide a higher level of maintenance.

Mammoth Cave National Park

Mammoth Cave National Park, located in Mammoth Cave, Kentucky, has 4 types of lodging facilities—a hotel with 42 rooms, 10 hotel cottages, a lodge with 2 separate buildings—and a total of 20 rooms and 21 cabins. The ownership of these facilities is mixed between NPS and the concessioner—National Park Concessions, Inc. NPS owns one of the Sunset Point Lodge structures, all 10 of the hotel cottages, and 16 of the cabins. The concessioner owns one of the Sunset Point Lodge structures, five of the cabins, and the hotel complex. The concessioner manages all the lodging facilities in the park and provides other visitor services, such as operating a gift shop and restaurant and providing bus transportation for visitors touring the park's cave. The cabins and cottages were built in the 1940s; the lodge was built in the 1950s; and the hotel was built in 1965. The hotel rooms range in price from \$62 to \$68 per night, depending on the number of persons staying in the room. However, because of low occupancy, the concessioner has recently started a \$45 per night rate for guests staying at the hotel during the week. The cabins' rates for guests range from \$36 to \$60 per night, the cottages' rates range from \$45 to \$52 per night, and rates for the rooms in the lodge range from \$45 to \$86 per night. The hotel is open year around. The cabins at Mammoth Cave are currently undergoing a complete, \$300,000 renovation and were not open at the time of our visit; so we did not inspect them for compliance with industry's standards.

Condition of the Exterior and Grounds at Mammoth Cave

The overall appearance of the exterior and grounds at Mammoth Cave National Park could be improved. Some of the lodging facilities look old and are in need of repairs, while others are currently being renovated. Specifically, we found the following:

Structures

The exterior of the hotel was generally in good repair; however, the hotel lobby's furnishings were old, and some were torn and stained. The exterior of the lodge, shown in figure II.7, needs to have the roof repaired, and the wooden overhang of the roof had peeling paint that needs to be repaired. In addition, much of the paint on the roof's walkway at the lodge was mildewed. The concessioner agreed that these problems needed to be fixed and stated that the repairs would be made this summer. Subsequently, an NPS representative told us that the contract to repaint Sunset Point Lodge has been awarded and that the roof is scheduled for replacement this year. We found that the cabins recently had an extensive rehabilitation of the electrical and plumbing systems. However, we also noted that some of the hotel cottages' storm windows were left half open and that debris had collected between the storm windows and regular windows.

Figure II.7: Needed Exterior Repairs at Mammoth Cave Lodge



Grounds

The grounds at Mammoth Cave appeared to be in decent condition. The grounds were well illuminated and generally free of litter, and the parking area was paved. However, we noted weeds and a lack of mulch in some

landscaped areas around the hotel and noted that a trash container was needed in front of the west end of the hotel.

Public Rest Rooms

The public rest room at the hotel was not clean at the time of our inspection. For example, the soap dispenser, which was located between two sinks, had nothing underneath it, so soap dripped on the floor. As a result, there was soap scum and rusted metal on the wall and floor under the soap dispenser.

Public Signs

Public signs at Mammoth Cave appeared to be appropriately located, accurate, and well maintained.

Condition of Rooms at Mammoth Cave

We inspected 12 rooms at Mammoth Cave—6 hotel rooms, 4 rooms at the lodge, and 2 cottages—for safety and security concerns, the availability of furnishings, the adequacy of housekeeping, and the repair and maintenance of these facilities. Overall, the rooms at Mammoth Cave have been characterized as appearing “old and tired.” The current decor of these rooms appears to be much the same as when they were built in the 1950s and 1960s. The only exceptions to this are four new handicap-accessible rooms in the hotel. Park officials told us that modernizing lodging facilities at Mammoth Cave will require an investment of funds that, to date, has not been made by the concessioner.

In the hotel, we found safety and security concerns that involved a number of nonfunctioning smoke detectors. In addition, all of the rooms that we inspected had some missing furnishings and housekeeping problems. We also found a limited number of repair and maintenance problems in some rooms. Specifically, we found the following:

Safety and Security

During our inspection of the hotel rooms, we found two rooms on the front side of the second floor of the hotel that had a nonfunctioning smoke detector. As a result, we checked several additional rooms for potential smoke detector problems in addition to our sample of 12 rooms. We found that none of the smoke detectors on the front side of the second floor of the hotel—about nine rooms—were functioning. The concessioner manager immediately called maintenance, which found that a tripped circuit breaker had caused a loss of power to all smoke detectors in that area of the hotel. The NPS representative, who oversees the concession operations at Mammoth Cave as a collateral duty, instructed the maintenance worker to monitor this problem. The NPS official also noted that the smoke detectors' malfunction was not a recurring problem. In

fact, this was the first time since their installation that such a problem had been observed. We found no other safety and security concerns in any room we inspected at Mammoth Cave.

Furnishings

None of the rooms that we inspected had all the furnishings required by industry's standards. For example, pencils/pens and notepads, which are not required by NPS' standards, are not made available to guests at Mammoth Cave as a general practice. In addition, six rooms that we inspected did not have a wastebasket in both the living area of a room and bathroom; four rooms did not have an alarm clock/radio; and two cottage rooms did not have a telephone.

Housekeeping

Eight of the 12 rooms that we inspected had three or more housekeeping problems. These problems included such items as dirty or stained walls and ceilings, unclean windows, soap scum in showers/bathtubs, and dead insects in lighting fixtures. Housekeeping problems were found in all three of the lodging facilities that we inspected. The NPS representative told us that the concessioner no longer has a head housekeeper to inspect rooms to see if they were properly cleaned. We also noted that it is the concessioner's policy to change bed linens every other day for stay-over guests. NPS officials stated that the concessioner has yet to implement the energy-saving program of allowing the guest to participate in the decision of when bed linens and towels are to be changed/laundered.

Repairs and Maintenance

Although 4 of the 12 rooms that we inspected had no repair and maintenance problems, 6 of the rooms had two or more such problems. For example, the two cottages had draperies that did not close effectively and therefore did not shut out the outside light; one cottage also had a sagging bed and a desk drawer that fell apart when it was opened. Other repair and maintenance problems that we found included air conditioners that made excessive noise when operating, cracks in ceiling plaster, and stains on the walls and ceilings of rooms.

NPS officials at Mammoth Cave had a number of observations about their lodging facilities. First, it is unclear whether all the lodging facilities that are currently available are needed, since a gateway community—Cave City, Kentucky—is only 10 miles from the park's entrance. Visitors can stay in this community at newer facilities for a lower price. NPS officials noted that overnight accommodations at the park are from 35 to 50 years old as compared with facilities in Cave City, which are primarily 1 to 30 years old. The occupancy rate for rooms in the park averages just over 50 percent. Second, the current concessioner contract at Mammoth Cave,

which was agreed to about 20 years ago, limits the park's ability to get the concessioner to invest money in modernizing the lodging facilities. This contract expires in 2002. Finally, Mammoth Cave officials believe there is a need for better training of park managers in business management so they can better deal with concession management issues, such as contract negotiations. For example, they believe that there should be better planning and agreement up front for what are necessary and appropriate services for the concessioner to offer and believe that those agreements should be reflected in the contract.

Mesa Verde National Park

Mesa Verde National Park is located in southwestern Colorado. Far View Lodge is the only lodging facility within the park's boundaries. The lodge was originally built in the late 1960s, and additions were built up to about 1983. Many of the 150 rooms at the lodge have been renovated since 1990. All rooms, which are similar in layout and furnishings, are priced at \$94 per night. The lodge is open from April through October each year. NPS holds title to this facility, which is managed by a concessioner—ARAMARK—under the name Mesa Verde Company.

Condition of Exterior and Grounds at Far View Lodge

The lodging buildings and grounds at Far View Lodge were in good condition and were well maintained. Specifically, we found the following:

Structures

The structures at Far View Lodge consist of the main lodge and 17 buildings that contain rooms. Except for minor paint chipping and fading on some of the buildings, these structures were well painted or otherwise treated, clean, and in good repair.

Grounds

The grounds at Far View Lodge consist of natural vegetation with no formal landscaping. We observed no problems with the grounds—they were well maintained, sufficiently illuminated, and free of litter and debris. The parking lots at the lodge complex were paved but had some loose gravel.

Public Rest Rooms

The public rest room that we inspected was generally clean and well maintained. We did note minor wear on the mirror.

Public Signs

The public signs that we observed at the lodge complex were accurate, appropriately located, and well maintained.

Condition of Rooms at Far View Lodge

The 12 rooms that we inspected at Far View Lodge were generally in good condition. We evaluated these rooms for safety and security concerns, the availability of furnishings, the adequacy of housekeeping, and room repair and maintenance. We found only one safety and security concern in the 12 rooms we inspected. Some furnishings required by industry's standards, such as televisions, air conditioners, and telephones were not available. Generally, we found the rooms to be very clean as evidenced by the low number of housekeeping deficiencies that we observed. There were, however, a total of 22 repair and maintenance problems, most of which dealt with problems in the shower/tub area.

Safety and Security

We found only one safety and security problem in 1 of the 12 rooms that we inspected—a broken window lock. According to the park's concessions management specialist, this lock was fixed shortly after our inspection.

Furnishings

While the rooms that we inspected contained most of the furnishings required by industry's standards, no rooms were supplied with a telephone, television, or air conditioner. Phones were available, however, outside each lodge building and in the main lodge. There was also a television in the main lodge. We also found that two rooms had light bulbs for reading that were less than the 75 watts as required by industry's and NPS' standards. These light bulbs were replaced shortly after our inspection, according to the concessions management specialist.

Park officials noted that the main reason why there was no phone in the rooms is that it is very difficult to get phone lines installed in the park. Park officials stated that they will continue to work with the concessioner and phone company on this issue. The park officials also noted that since the weather at Mesa Verde is not very hot for any length of time, and since guests tend to be touring during the middle of the day, they do not feel that an air conditioner is needed in the rooms. Finally, because of the thinness of the walls at the park's lodging facilities, park officials do not feel it would be appropriate to install a television in the rooms.

Housekeeping

The rooms at Far View Lodge were very clean. Eight of the rooms that we inspected had no housekeeping deficiencies. The remaining four rooms had only one or two minor deficiencies, such as a small amount of hair present in one bathroom, a minor stain in the carpet of one room, and cobwebs on the window blinds in another room. Park officials believe that proper training of housekeeping staff is responsible for the low number of housekeeping problems at Mesa Verde National Park.

Repairs and Maintenance

We found a total of 22 repair and maintenance problems in the rooms that we inspected. All but one room had problems with the grout in the shower/tub area, such as missing grout or grout with some mildew. The concessioner's regional general manager noted that missing grout is a maintenance problem caused by the contraction and expansion that occurs when room temperatures drop below freezing during the winter months and rise in the spring and summer. The NPS concessions management specialist noted that the concessioner has and will continue to address this problem by regrouting and by replacing some bath/tub tiles with bath enclosures. The other repair and maintenance problems that we observed included minor peeling paint, a small number of cracked shower tiles, and minor cracks in bathroom walls.

Shenandoah National Park

Accommodations at Shenandoah National Park, located in western Virginia, include lodging and restaurants at Skyland Lodge and at Big Meadows Lodge. At the time of our review, Big Meadows Lodge was closed, so we did not inspect that facility. Skyland Lodge consists of about 28 different facilities that range in age from 10 to 50 years old. Some of the facilities are historic structures.

Skyland Lodge has about 177 rooms. Most of these, about 157 rooms, are motel rooms located in about 14 different structures. The remaining 20 rooms are located in 10 individual cabins. The motel rooms range in price from \$79 to \$105 per night, depending on the time of year and amenities offered. Suites range in price from \$112 to \$160 per night, and cabins range from \$48 to \$88 per night. Except for five cabins, all lodging facilities at Skyland are owned and operated by a concessioner—ARAMARK. The five cabins are owned by NPS and operated by the concessioner.

Condition of the Exterior and Grounds of Skyland Lodge

Overall, we found the exterior and grounds of Skyland Lodge to be in decent condition. Specifically, we found the following:

Structures

The structures were generally in good condition. According to the NPS concessioner specialist, peeling paint is a general problem in Shenandoah National Park because of the humid climate. We did not notice any problems other than one facility that had sectors of the rain gutters down on both the front and back of the building.

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Grounds

The grounds were generally well maintained, properly illuminated, and free of litter and debris. The grounds had a sufficient number of trash containers, which were convenient and covered. The parking lot was paved, in good condition, and well lit.

Public Rest Rooms

The registration building at the lodge had no public rest room, but there were two rest rooms in the adjoining restaurant for use by the public. The upstairs rest room was clean and well maintained. However, the downstairs rest room needed repairs. Specifically, we found rust on the porcelain of one urinal, which appeared to be caused by a valve that had been leaking for a long period of time. (See fig. II.8.) Furthermore, the sink counter was poorly maintained as evidenced by grout problems and numerous stains and burns. The concessioner told us that these problems would be fixed. The NPS concessions management specialist noted that these rest-room deficiencies had just been identified on the latest NPS inspection report and that the concessioner had been given a correction date for this project. The official stated that under NPS standards, deficiencies identified during a periodic evaluation are generally to be corrected within 15 days of the inspection. This period can be reduced or extended, depending on the type of deficiency and its impact on visitors and/or employees and the resource. NPS officials noted that this process agrees with industry standards for corrective action.

**Figure II.8: Leaking and Stained Urinal
in Public Rest Room at Shenandoah
National Park**



Public Signs

Generally, the public signs that we observed were accurate, appropriately located, and well maintained. However, the lodging facility that we stayed in had no signs to direct guests to ice or public phones. The NPS concessioner specialist stated that we should have been informed at check-in of the location of these facilities; however, this did not occur.

Condition of the Rooms at Skyland Lodge

We found that the condition of the rooms that we inspected at Skyland Lodge varied. We inspected 13 rooms at Skyland for safety and security concerns, the availability of furnishings, the adequacy of housekeeping, and room repair and maintenance. We found some safety and security concerns and a large number of repair and maintenance problems. The concessioner told us that these problems occurred because the park was hit by a severe ice storm before the lodging facilities opened this season. The storm forced the closing of roads and made it impossible for the concessioner to get maintenance crews to do their usual repairs.

We found very few housekeeping problems at Skyland Lodge. However, some furnishings required by industry's standards, such as a telephone in

every room, were not available because the park's policy states that such items are not needed.

Safety and Security

Only 4 of the 13 rooms that we inspected had no safety and security concerns. The main concerns that we found were that three rooms did not have a dead-bolt lock and nine rooms did not have a viewport or window convenient to the door as required by industry's standards so that a guest can determine who is at the door. The concessioner told us that the staff were in the process of inserting a viewport on all lodging doors at Skyland Lodge in a phased approach. The NPS concessions management specialist noted that dead bolts are not a current requirement under NPS' standards. She stated that NPS' standards require only that doors have a double-locking system from the inside, which is the case at Skyland. Therefore, the NPS specialist stated that the concessioner complies with NPS' standards.

In addition to viewport concerns, we also found that 2 of the 13 rooms we inspected did not have a functioning smoke detector. The batteries in these smoke detectors needed to be replaced, and the concessioner took immediate action to correct the problem. Finally, one room did not have an entryway light switch.

Furnishings

Generally, the rooms that we inspected in Shenandoah National Park had most of the furnishings available to guests that are required by industry's standards. However, because of the park's policy, none of the rooms have air conditioning or a phone. The NPS concessioner specialist for Shenandoah told us that air conditioning is not needed in this park because of the high altitude and breezes. NPS and the concessioner are, however, reconsidering the policy that a phone should not be available in all rooms, and the concessioner has obtained bids for the cost of installation. It is also the park's policy to have a television only in rooms that have adequate soundproofing. Two of the 13 rooms that we inspected did not have a television. None of the rooms that we inspected had pencils/pens and notepads as required by industry's standards. The concessioner told us it was not the company's practice to supply these items.

A few rooms that we inspected did not have furnishings that were required by industry's standards. For example, one room did not have a lamp at a desk, two rooms did not have a wastebasket in the bathroom, and two rooms did not have a writing surface. Another room had no alarm clock.

Housekeeping

Most of the rooms in Skyland Lodge did not have housekeeping problems; in fact, 8 of the 13 rooms that we inspected had no housekeeping problems. We did note that it was the concessioner's policy to change bed linen every third day (after 2 nights) only for stay-over guests, unless otherwise requested. The concessioner told us that this policy is part of an environmental program. We noticed that some of the rooms had cards informing the guests of this policy and others did not. One room that we inspected did have a number of housekeeping problems, including mildew in the shower, stains on the bathroom walls, and a dirty air vent in the bathroom, but this appeared to be an exception to the overall clean condition of the rooms.

Repairs and Maintenance

Over half of the rooms that we inspected at Skyland Lodge had repair and maintenance problems. For example, 7 of the 13 rooms had chairs that were in poor condition and needed to be repaired or replaced. The concessioner told us that many new chairs had already been purchased for this season but because of the ice storm, maintenance crews had not had adequate time to put them in the rooms. Four of the rooms that we inspected had five or more repair and maintenance deficiencies, including such items as lamps without light bulbs, no hot water, peeling and/or stained paint on bathroom ceilings, grout problems in shower areas, and cracks in room ceilings. Only 4 of the 13 rooms that we inspected did not have repair and maintenance problems. Again, the concessioner told us that the reason for these problems at Skyland Lodge facilities was the late winter ice storm, which prevented maintenance crews from getting to these facilities. The NPS concessioner specialist noted that concessioners who operate on a seasonal basis are required to completely close lodging facilities at the end of the season and then can face significant difficulties in getting the facilities open and ready for the new season, including weather constraints and damage that occurred during the period when the facilities were closed.

**Yosemite National
Park**

Yosemite National Park, located near the eastern border of central California, offers a variety of lodging to meet the needs of its visitors. There are deluxe, mid-scale, and economy rooms with a bath, plus cabins and tent-cabins without a bath. About 43 percent of all rooms in Yosemite have a bath. We inspected three lodging facilities located in the park—the historic Wawona Hotel, Yosemite Lodge, and Curry Village. The Wawona Hotel is owned by NPS, while Yosemite Lodge and Curry Village are owned by the park's concessioner—Yosemite Concession Services Corporation. The concessioner manages all of these lodging facilities.

The Wawona Hotel has 104 rooms located in 6 structures that were built from 1876 to 1918. Yosemite Lodge has 240 rooms that include cabin units, motel units, and cottage units. This lodging facility had almost 500 rooms, but over half were lost in a January 1997 flood. Yosemite Lodge itself is over 100 years old. Curry Village consists of 18 motel rooms and 185 cabins. These rooms range in age from 60 to 100 years old.

Room rates in Yosemite National Park vary by the time of year and the number of guests in a room. The rates for rooms at the Wawona Hotel, of which 54 are without a private bath, range from \$87 to \$122 per night. The room rates at Yosemite Lodge range from \$92 to \$118 per night. Curry Village's motel room rates range from \$86 to \$100 per night. The cabins in Curry Village, of which 85 are without a private bath, range in price from \$65 to \$118 per night.

Condition of the Exterior and Grounds of Lodging Facilities at Yosemite National Park

The condition of the exterior of the three lodging facilities varied, while the grounds at all the facilities were well maintained. Specifically, we found the following:

Structures

The Wawona Hotel lodging structures are old, and the exteriors need work. For example, as shown in figure II.9, the roof is currently being replaced on the main Wawona Hotel. According to a park official, the cost of this repair will be about \$300,000 because the hotel is a historic structure and maintenance crews are using roofing material and craftsmanship that is not readily available on the commercial market. We found that some of the Wawona structures had peeling paint on exterior walls and porches, paint damaged by broken steam pipes, and porches that need wood replaced. Furthermore, soundproofing of the rooms is a general problem. We were also told that the boiler is not big enough to provide hot water for both showers and washing dishes and that the electrical systems of some units need to be replaced. The cost of these repairs will be substantially higher than normal because the structures are historic. Although the NPS concessioner specialist and hotel manager agreed that these repairs are needed, they stated that, currently, there is no time frame for getting them completed because funds are not available. Yosemite Park officials stated that the concessioner experienced a substantial reduction in revenues in 1997 because of the flood and that, combined with an existing debt load, money is not being made available to make needed repairs throughout the park.

The exterior of the lodging facilities at Yosemite Lodge and Curry Village were generally in good condition.

Figure II.9: Roof Replacement at the Historic Wawona Hotel in Yosemite National Park



Grounds

The grounds at all three lodging facilities were well maintained. The grounds were generally free of litter and debris and had an adequate number of convenient trash containers. In addition, the visitors' parking lots were paved and adequately illuminated.

Public Rest Rooms

As noted above, many of the rooms at the Wawona Hotel and Curry Village are without a private bath. We inspected the public rest rooms at these two lodging facilities and found that they were well maintained. For example, we observed that they were clean, odorless, and free of litter; had a sufficient number of waste receptacles; and were well illuminated.

Public Signs

The public signs that we observed at Yosemite National Park were accurate, appropriately located, and well maintained.

Condition of the Rooms at Yosemite Lodging Facilities

We examined 32 rooms at Yosemite's lodging facilities for safety and security concerns, the availability of furnishings, the adequacy of

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housekeeping, and the repair and maintenance of these facilities. Specifically, we inspected 12 rooms in Yosemite Lodge, 10 rooms in Curry Village, and 10 rooms at the Wawona Hotel. As illustrated in figure II.10, the overall condition of the rooms at Yosemite was good. We found a few safety and security concerns in Curry Village and Yosemite Lodge but none at the Wawona Hotel. Some furnishings required by industry's standards, such as a television and air conditioner in every room, were not available because the park's policy states that such items are not needed. However, most of the rooms at Curry Village did not have additional furnishings, such as a telephone, ice bucket, alarm clock/radio, notepads, and pen/pencils, available to guests. The quality of housekeeping varied among the lodges; Yosemite Lodge had the most problems. We found very few room repair and maintenance problems at any of the lodging facilities that we inspected.

Figure II.10: Typical Room in Good Condition at the Wawona Hotel



Safety and Security

None of the 10 rooms that we inspected in Curry Village had a dead-bolt lock as required by industry's standards. Seven of these rooms were cabins, and three were motel rooms. We also found one room in Curry Village with a nonfunctioning smoke detector. At Yosemite Lodge, 4 of the 12 rooms that we inspected did not have an active light switch at the main

entry into the rooms. We found no safety and security concerns in any of the rooms that we inspected at the Wawona Hotel.

Furnishings

The rooms at Yosemite National Park did not have all the furnishings required by common industry standards. For example, none of the rooms had air conditioning or a television, and the rooms in the Wawona Hotel and Curry Village did not have a telephone. According to NPS' standards, park superintendents decide whether these items should be provided, and at Yosemite, it is the park's policy that these items not be required. Also, at the historic Wawona Hotel, over half of the rooms in the hotel did not have a private bath. At Curry Village, about half of the cabins were without a private bath. Furthermore, with limited exceptions, the rooms in Curry Village did not have an alarm clock/radio, an ice bucket, pen and pencils, and notepads. These items are not required by the park, and it is not the concessioner's practice to provide them at these facilities.

Housekeeping

The quality of housekeeping varied among the Yosemite lodges. The overall cleanliness of the rooms in the Wawona Hotel and Curry Village was very good. For example, we found no housekeeping problems in about half of the rooms that we inspected in each of these two lodging facilities and only a few in the remaining rooms. We did note, however, that it is the concessioner's policy to change bed linen every third day (after 2 nights) only for stay-over guests unless otherwise requested. According to representatives of the concessioner, this policy was implemented for environmental reasons.

We found that the quality of housekeeping in the rooms at Yosemite Lodge varied. Several housekeeping problems, such as an unclean bathtub/shower, sinks, walls, and ceilings, existed in about half of the rooms inspected. The remaining rooms did not have any housekeeping problems. According to the NPS concessioner specialist, it has been difficult for the concessioner to hire and retain quality housekeepers because of the poor condition of housing for concessioner employees within the park and the long distance between the surrounding communities and the park's lodging facilities. The NPS representative stated that the 1997 flood washed away about 50 percent of the concessioner's employee housing. As a result, a large number of employees have had live in crowded, unheated tents since early spring, which is not conducive to retaining quality personnel.

Repairs and Maintenance

Most of the rooms that we inspected at Yosemite had very few repair and maintenance concerns. Specifically, 29 of the 32 rooms either had none or

only one repair and maintenance problem. Those problems that we noted included such items as sagging mattresses, grout problems around a bathtub, inadequate or no ventilation in bathrooms, and various defects such as cracks, holes, and stains in some of the bathroom walls or ceilings.

Zion National Park

The lodging facilities at Zion National Park, located in southwestern Utah, consist of a lodge, 40 cabins, and a motel with 81 rooms. The lodge and cabins are owned by NPS, and the motel is owned by the park's concessioner—AmFac Parks and Resorts. The concessioner manages all three facilities. The lodge itself has no rooms but is used for guest registration and general activities and houses a restaurant, snack bar, and gift shop. Built in the 1920s, the original lodge burned down in the early 1960s and was rebuilt in 1965; the facade was renovated in the 1980s. The cabins were built in the early 1930s and are historic, and the motel rooms were built in the early 1980s. Lodging accommodations are open year around, and rates vary, depending on the number of persons per room. Cabin rates range from \$93 to \$103 per night, and motel room rates range from \$83 to \$122 per night.

Condition of the Exterior and Grounds at Zion National Park

Overall, we found the exterior and grounds of lodging facilities at Zion to be in very good condition. Specifically, we found the following:

Structures

As shown in figure II.11, the exterior of the cabins and motel was in very good condition. All the facilities were painted this year. The lodge and motel were clean and in good repair. The cabins had just been remodeled and were in excellent condition.

Figure II.11: Well-Maintained Cabins and Motel at Zion National Park



Grounds

The grounds were also in very good condition. They are well maintained, properly illuminated, and generally free of litter and debris, and there were an adequate number of convenient trash containers. The guest parking areas were paved and well illuminated. We did note that during the recent renovation of the cabins, the grass was lost and had been reseeded.

Public Rest Rooms

The public rest room, which was located in the lodge, was clean, odorless, and well maintained.

Public Signs

The public signs that we observed in Zion were accurate, appropriately located, and well maintained.

**Condition of the Rooms at
Zion National Park**

Overall, the rooms at Zion were in excellent condition. We inspected 10 rooms—7 motel rooms and 3 cabins—for safety and security concerns, the availability of furnishings, the adequacy of housekeeping, and facility repair and maintenance. We found very few concerns.

Safety and Security

We found no safety and security concerns in the rooms that we inspected.

Furnishings

None of the rooms that we inspected had a television or notepads as required by common industry standards. According to the NPS concessioner specialist, it is the park superintendent's policy not to have a television in the rooms. As for the notepads, it is not the concessioner's practice to provide this item for guests. These were the only two items

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required by common industry standards that were not made available to guests at Zion National Park.

Housekeeping

We found no housekeeping problems in any of the rooms that we inspected in Zion.

Repairs and Maintenance

We found only one maintenance problem in the 10 rooms that we inspected; one room had a sagging mattress. The NPS concessioner specialist noted that this mattress was scheduled to be replaced this year.

Figure II.12: Typical Motel Room in Very Good Condition at Zion National Park



According to park officials at Zion, its lodging facilities are in very good condition for a number of reasons. First, the park has a specialist, located on-site, to deal directly with the concessioner. The NPS concessioner specialist at Zion has a lot of experience in working in this industry. It was noted that experience or adequate training is essential to properly perform this job and not all parks have such personnel available. Second, Zion park officials and the concessioner have a good working relationship, and the park superintendent supports the NPS concessioner specialists when items

that need to be corrected are identified. Park officials stated that the concessioner at Zion puts a lot of effort in maintaining the facilities at the park and corrects problems when they are identified, the result of which is that facilities stay in good condition. Third, the NPS concessioner specialist inspects all rooms at least twice a year and frequently makes site visits during the year. Fourth, the concessioner's staff are well trained and receive enough benefits that allow the core of the staff to remain on the job year around, which is different from the situation at seasonal parks. Finally, the NPS concessioner specialist told us that the contract with the concessioner provides for a special account that requires the concessioner to withhold 10 percent of gross revenues for capital improvements. In accordance with the park's approval and determination as to how this money is to be spent, the NPS concessioner specialist told us that the concessioner has reinvested this money in the lodging facilities.

Results of Room Inspections in 10 National Parks

This appendix presents the detailed results of our room inspections in 10 national parks, as shown in figure III.1. To assess the condition of rooms, we discussed with industry officials at AAA, Mobil Travel Guide, Holiday Inn, and Days Inn their procedures for evaluating the condition of lodging facilities. To determine the number of rooms to inspect, we used the practice generally followed by Holiday Inn inspectors. That is, if a facility has fewer than 175 rooms, 9 rooms are inspected; if a facility has from 176 to 300 rooms, 12 rooms are inspected; and if a facility has over 300 rooms, 15 rooms are inspected. To obtain our sample of rooms, we generally requested a list of vacant and just cleaned but not yet occupied rooms from the concessioner and randomly selected rooms to inspect. We inspected a total of 171 rooms within the 10 parks. We made our inspections with representatives of NPS and the concessioner present except at Canyon de Chelly, where representatives of the concessioner did not attend.

**Appendix III
Results of Room Inspections in 10 National
Parks**

Figure III.1: Results of GAO's Inspections of Rooms in 10 National Parks

	Bryce Canyon	Canyon de Chelly	Death Valley	Grand Canyon	Lake Mead	Mammoth Cave	Mesa Verde	Shenandoah	Yosemite	Zion	Total
Items inspected											
Number of rooms inspected	9	12	11	33	27	12	12	13	32	10	171
ROOM-GENERAL											
SAFETY AND SECURITY											
No/nonfunctioning primary locks				1	1						2
No/nonfunctioning dead bolts			2	1	1			3	10		17
No viewport or window	1		2					9			12
No functioning window locks		1	2		2		1				6
No smoke detector											0
Not functioning					1	2		2	1		6
No active light switch			1	3	2			1	4		11
Subtotal	1	1	7	5	7	2	1	15	15	0	54
ILLUMINATION											
Lamps not sufficient								1	3		4
Wattage--less than 75 watts			1	33	26	1	2	1	4	1	69
Subtotal	0	0	1	33	26	1	2	2	7	1	73
FURNISHINGS											
At least one chair not available				1							1
Not in good condition		1	1	2				7			11
No writing surface			1	1				2	9		13
Not in good condition					3	1					4
No night stand											0
Not in good condition			1						1		2
No clothes facility											0
Not in good condition			1		1						2
No television	9		11	5			12	2	32	10	81
Not functioning											0
No telephone			11		9	2	12	13	20		67
Not functioning					1						1
No direct dial/24-hour switchboard											0
Subtotal	9	1	26	9	14	3	24	24	62	10	182
OTHER											
No waste basket					9	3					12
No ice bucket									10		10
No electrical outlets											0
Not functioning			1								1
No alarm clock/radio			11	33	11	4		1	7		67
No note pad	9		11		18	12		13	10	10	83
No pen or pencil			11		26	12		13	7		69
Extension cords used									1		1
Subtotal	9	0	34	33	64	31	0	27	35	10	243

**Appendix III
Results of Room Inspections in 10 National
Parks**

	Bryce Canyon	Canyon de Chelly	Death Valley	Grand Canyon	Lake Mead	Mammoth Cave	Mesa Verde	Shenandoah	Yosemite	Zion	Total
Items inspected											
Number of rooms inspected	9	12	11	33	27	12	12	13	32	10	171
GENERAL											
Room not quiet								2	2		4
No luggage space			1								1
No shades/draperies											0
Outside light not blocked						2					2
No heating system											0
Not functioning		1						1			2
Not reasonably quiet											0
No air conditioning	9			23			12	13	32		89
Not functioning											0
Not reasonably quiet						1					1
Room not color coordinated			1								1
Inadequate floor space			1								1
Subtotal	9	1	3	23	0	3	12	16	34	0	101
OVERALL ROOM CLEANLINESS											
Not free of insects/rodents		2	5		4	6	2				19
Not free of dust/dirt/litter			6			2			2		10
Not free of cobwebs			1	4	2	2	1		2		12
Not free of stains			5			3					8
Not free of odors											0
Unclean windows		4	6	8	4	6			7		35
Subtotal	0	6	23	12	10	19	3	0	11	0	84
CARPETING											
Dirty/stained		2	7			2	1		1		13
Worn/torn			2	2							4
Subtotal	0	2	9	2	0	2	1	0	1	0	17
WALLS/CEILING											
Unclean			3		1	2					6
Peeling paint		1	2	1	1	1	2	1			9
Defects			3		2	1	1	2	2		11
Subtotal	0	1	8	1	4	4	3	3	2	0	26
BEDDING											
Mattress											
Sagging			2		2	4			2	1	11
Not free of odors											0
Not sized to fit frame			1						1		2
Lumps/protrusions			2						1		3
Subtotal	0	0	5	0	2	4	0	0	4	1	16

**Appendix III
Results of Room Inspections in 10 National
Parks**

	<i>Byrce Canyon</i>	<i>Canyon de Chelly</i>	<i>Death Valley</i>	<i>Grand Canyon</i>	<i>Lake Mead</i>	<i>Mammoth Cave</i>	<i>Mesa Verde</i>	<i>Shenandoah</i>	<i>Yosemite</i>	<i>Zion</i>	<i>Total</i>
Items inspected											
Number of rooms inspected	9	12	11	33	27	12	12	13	32	10	171
Box springs											
Protruding									1		1
Not quiet			3		3	3		3	1		13
Broken									1		1
Subtotal	0	0	3	0	3	3	0	3	3	0	15
Other											
Unclean pillow											0
Two clean sheets not available											0
One clean mattress pad not available											0
Unclean pillow case(s)											0
Unsuitable, unclean bedspread			1	1							2
Unsuitable, unclean blanket											0
Bed linens not changed daily			11			12		13	32		68
Subtotal	0	0	12	1	0	12	0	13	32	0	70
BATH AREA - General											
No private bath				1					7		8
Inadequate ventilation		2	1	4	1	1	1		4		14
Inadequate lighting			3					1			4
Subtotal	0	2	4	5	1	1	1	1	11	0	26
Toilet											
Not functioning											0
Unclean		1	1		4						6
Subtotal	0	1	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	6
Shower/tub											
Not available				1							1
Not functioning					1						1
Unclean		4	3	1	1	3		1	2		15
Grout problems			2	8	3		11	5	3		32
Inadequate water pressure			2		1						3
Non-skid pad/strips not available			3		1				1		5
Inadequate hot water		1			1	1		2			5
Cracks			3	4	4	1	2	2			16
Shower curtain/tub enclosure											0
Unclean and torn/mildew	1			1	2			3	3		10
Subtotal	1	5	13	15	14	5	13	13	9	0	88

**Appendix III
Results of Room Inspections in 10 National
Parks**

	<i>Bryce Canyon</i>	<i>Canyon de Chelly</i>	<i>Death Valley</i>	<i>Grand Canyon</i>	<i>Lake Mead</i>	<i>Mammoth Cave</i>	<i>Mesa Verde</i>	<i>Shenandoah</i>	<i>Yosemite</i>	<i>Zion</i>	<i>Total</i>
Items inspected											
Number of rooms inspected	9	12	11	33	27	12	12	13	32	10	171
VANITY/SINK											
Not available			3			2					5
Not functioning			1		1			2			4
Unclean		3	1	1	3	2			1		11
No mirror											0
Inadequate water pressure					1						1
Inadequate hot water		1			1			2			4
No or inadequate light above vanity			2			1		1	1		5
No electrical outlet convenient to sink					1						1
Not functioning											0
Subtotal	0	4	7	1	7	5	0	5	2	0	31
TOWELS											
Not one quality bath towel/person		1									1
Not one quality hand towel/person		2					1				3
Not one quality wash cloth/person				1							1
No towel rack											0
Towels not changed daily											0
Subtotal	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	5
OTHER											
No cloth bath mat											0
No spare toilet tissue											0
No wrapped drinking glass/person											0
No waste basket						3		2			5
No wrapped soap bar/person					9						9
No facial tissue											0
Subtotal	0	0	0	0	9	3	0	2	0	0	14
OVERALL BATH CLEANLINESS											
Not free of hair		1		2	0		1				4
Not free of stains			2	0	1			1			4
Subtotal	0	1	2	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	8
BATH WALLS/CEILING											
Unclean		1	3	1	3		1	5	4		18
Peeling paint			4	3	5		1	1			14
Defects--cracks, holes, stains			4	14	7		5	3	7		40
Subtotal	0	1	11	18	15	0	7	9	11	0	72
Total	29	29	169	161	181	99	68	134	239	22	1131

Comments From the Department of the Interior



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20240

JUL 12 1998

Mr. Barry T. Hill
Associate Director, Energy Resources & Science Issues
United States General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Hill:

This is in response to your July 6, 1998, letter requesting our review and comments by July 8, to the draft report that has been prepared entitled, "National Park Service: The Condition of Lodging Facilities Varies Among Selected Parks (GAO/RCED-98-238R)." Our comments are limited and general in nature due to the short period of time allowed for our review.

The National Park Service (NPS) concessions evaluation program was developed about 20 years ago and includes operational standards for 23 types of services, including lodging. The lodging standards were developed with the assistance of various lodging industry officials from the American Automobile Association (AAA) and lodging chains such as Holiday Inn and Best Western, which were undergoing similar efforts to improve quality assurance. The NPS concessions evaluation program has resulted in significant improvements in park lodging. In fact all but 2 of the 17 lodging facilities in the 10 parks covered by the General Accounting Office (GAO) review already received a good or better rating from either or both AAA and Mobil.

We are seeing changes in the standards used by hotel chains. As a consequence, the NPS has been conducting a review of its existing lodging standard this year in order to revise it, with continuing active input from the hotel industry. The GAO draft report reflects that the industry-lodging standard has more room safety and security requirements than the former NPS standards. These additional standards affect devices such as smoke detectors, deadbolt locks, and door viewport/windows. These additional safety requirements, along with new environmental standards, are being incorporated into the revised NPS standards as a consequence of our review this year. It should be noted that, in some instances, these standards may have to be modified to meet historic structure requirements/restrictions.

In addition to specific lodging standards, the NPS evaluation program includes General Operating Standards that apply to all services. These General Standards also include general safety issues and are used in combination with the lodging standard.

The report reflects that some areas appear to be in need of more major repair, rehabilitation and upgrading than others. These situations are being addressed as funding becomes available. In a few cases throughout the program, such problems may result from the fact that some concession facilities are being managed under older contract language which includes a "mutual consent clause" that can prevent NPS from making changes to the concessionaire's Maintenance Plans unless there is mutual agreement by the concessionaire. The NPS revised Standard Concession Contract language no longer includes mutual consent clauses. Also, it should be noted that this GAO review was conducted at the beginning of the visitor season, and, in some cases, furnishings identified in need of replacement had been already scheduled for replacement this visitor season. In these instances, furnishing needs did not represent an unknown element.

**Appendix IV
Comments From the Department of the
Interior**

Mr. Barry T. Hill

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Only NPS personnel, full-time or collateral duty, who have received training in the proper use of the Concession Evaluation Program may establish the periodic rating. Personnel responsible for assigning ratings are also required to receive refresher training in the evaluation process.

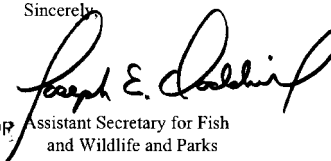
The number of evaluations is not based on gross sales. A minimum of two (2) periodic evaluations, a general industry standard, is to be conducted for all facilities/services. The number may be increased for the entire operation or specific parts of it if identified problems are not corrected. The evaluation program also requires follow-up evaluations to be conducted (normally 15 days) to determine whether or not deficiencies have been corrected. Evaluators have the flexibility to set any correction date, which may be fewer or more than 15 days, as conditions warrant. If corrections are not made, the score is downgraded.

The report reflects that the NPS lodging standard does not require telephones, televisions, radios, air-conditioners, writing pads, desks, etc. The NPS lodging standard states that rooms are to be adequately furnished to meet visitor needs. It is up to the Superintendent to determine what amenities are needed. For example, many parks are located in such isolated areas that the cost for installing telephone lines and making telephones available in all lodging rooms would cause a substantial cost increase to the concessionaire's operation. This increase in operational cost would result in the visitor paying more for the rooms. However, the NPS will look at this on a park-by-park basis and give consideration to having more telephones installed where feasible.

Radios/televisions are not specifically required due to the remoteness of many parks and the poor reception that would be available. Air-conditioners are not always needed in lodging facilities in national parks due to the geographical area where they are located and where weather conditions are such that air-conditioners may rarely be needed. In those areas where air-conditioners are needed, they are required and addressed in the lodging standard.

The National Park Service will conduct a follow-up of the evaluation results with all parks that were included in this review.

Sincerely,


Assistant Secretary for Fish
and Wildlife and Parks

EOP

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