



United States Department of the Interior


NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO
P72 (2462)

JUN 10 2013

Memorandum

To: Regional Directors
Attn: Superintendents

From: Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection 

Subject: Planning for the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act in 2014

In 2014, America will celebrate “50 Years of Wilderness” as it commemorates the anniversary of the Wilderness Act of 1964 and the establishment of the National Wilderness Preservation System. The National Park Service stewards more than 44 million acres of designated wilderness in 49 national parks – over half of all lands included within the National Park System. In addition, more than 30 parks manage lands that are proposed or recommended for wilderness designation. Our wilderness lands are incredibly diverse, encompassing tundra, lava beds, hardwood forests, alpine meadows, swamps, deserts, glaciers, and coastal habitat. Much of this diverse landscape also reflects thousands of years of human residence, further enhancing our connection to these special places.

On August 23, 2012, the National Park Service joined the Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Forest Service, and several non-profit organizations in signing a memorandum of understanding to collaboratively recognize and celebrate the nation’s wilderness system in the months leading up to the Wilderness Act anniversary – September 3, 2014.

Despite our challenging fiscal environment, it is important that we recognize the importance of the Wilderness Act and the contribution of the past 50 years in furthering the concept of wilderness and stewardship in our parks and throughout the country. This story of wilderness and stewardship can be highlighted in all parks in 2014 – big and small, with or without wilderness.

To learn more about how we are preparing for the anniversary and ways to get involved, visit the [NPS WILD50 page](#)

The power to protect wilderness for the next 50 years lies in our commitment to wilderness stewardship, growing institutional knowledge, and promoting awareness and wilderness appreciation in our visiting public. Please join us in ensuring that the National Park Service is well poised for the next 50 years of wilderness preservation and stewardship.