

# living history

in the national park system

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## A WINDOW TO THE PAST

From its earliest days, the hallmark of the National Park Service has been the personal services of its rangers and interpreters; the man on the trail who explains the giant redwoods at Muir Woods National Monument, or tells how 36 big guns opened the battle along Antietam Creek; the man in the museum who shows films of rare flowers and wide canyons, or traces the routes of soldiers and Indians across great contour maps. Through the years these men and women have developed innumerable methods and techniques to communicate the park story to visitors: museums, guided tours, motion pictures, talks, campfire programs, publications, signs, way-side exhibits, and many other facilities and activities.

One of the most dramatic and popular aspects of National Park Service interpretation is a program called Living History. Not exactly new, but slowly evolving through the years, it is a demonstration of a historic feature of the park, and it has created a whole new field of activities for the interpreters; they have become specialists in skills and crafts long forgotten. For example, they may show the operation of the ironworks at Saugus, or a whisky still at Catoctin Mountain, or they may instruct mountain climbers at Grand Teton. Some demonstrations deal with a single action or craft, such as firing an 18-century musket or weaving an Indian basket, while others illustrate the everyday life of a military camp, a farm, or a period home.

Live demonstrations arouse more excitement and interest than just a narrative. In most cases they supplement the interpretive motion picture and exhibits. For example, the Grist Mill at Cades Cove, Tenn., in the heart of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, does far more than words or pictures to show how sorghum molasses and cornmeal are made, some of it right before visitors' eyes. Seventeenth-century glassblowing at Jamestown instructs as it interprets the history of the early community and one of America's first industries.

Many historical properties managed by the National Park Service have military backgrounds: Revolutionary War, Civil War, forts of the Westward Expansion, etc. Each preserves the scene of a significant battle, military post, or event in our history. The interpretive demonstration at each of these can add much to the enjoyment of visitors. Most deal with military life, uniforms, and weapons. One of the first demonstrations in the parks was the firing of military weapons. Today this extends, in some cases, to the manufacturing of period ammunition, such as at Chickamauga-Chattanooga where minie balls are cast in an authentic Civil War mold and made available to visitors as a part of the interpretive program.

Farming demonstrations are becoming increasingly popular. In the fast-moving urban world of 20th-century America, fewer people work in agriculture. The unfamiliarity of city dwellers with agricultural practices and problems is complicated by the fact that even farms visible from a car window are inaccessible and far removed from inspection. Farming demonstrations, therefore, offer an especially valuable opportunity to show the public the use of the soil.

Several period farms have been developed, including Lincoln Boyhood home, George Washington Birthplace, the home of Booker T. Washington, and at Pipe Spring. All grow appropriate crops and all have farm animals—pigs, sheep, cattle, horses, chickens—whatever best tells the story of the original farm. In the Washington, D.C., area, the Oxon Hill Children's Farm was developed specifically for young people, particularly those of the immediate urban area. It emphasizes that agriculture is basic to man's existence and is intended primarily for those who have never seen a farm.

Here is an index of national parks where the past is brought to life:

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## LIVING FARMS



As America has become more urban and industrial, farming has slipped out of sight. Everyone knows that milk can easily disappear from the grocery shelves because of a strike, but very few stop to think any more about the effects of anthrax. City people are out of touch with farm problems and practices. Even when they see farms from the car window, they frequently know little about them. Farms are private property of people who are, mostly, total strangers to the traveler. Farming demonstrations, therefore, offer an especially valuable opportunity to interpret the time when people lived more closely to the land.

**Booker T. Washington National Monument, Route 1, Box 195, Hardy, VA 24101.**

Plowing, planting, and other 19th-century farm operations. Nineteenth-century varieties of crops are grown. Cattle, pigs, sheep, and a horse. Continuous operations all year. Costumes.

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**George Washington Birthplace National Monument,** c/o Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, P.O. Box 679, Fredericksburg, VA 22401.

Eighteenth-century plantation operation with typical tobacco and other farm products. Plowing with wooden-beam plow and other farm chores. Yoke of oxen. Foundation herd of Morgan horses, the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Richard M. Colgate, Home Farm, Oldwick, N.J. Hostesses in Colonial costume. Continuous operations all year.

**Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial,** Lincoln City, IN 47552.

An early 19th-century pioneer farm. Crops of corn, cotton, tobacco, flax, pumpkins, and gourds in the fields, and beans, black-eyed peas, green beans, squash, watermelons, potatoes, and herbs in the garden. Household chores such as cleaning, cooking, sewing. Farm and homestead work such as feeding the animals, gathering eggs, milking, getting water for the cabin, and chopping firewood. Occasional demonstrations of barking rails, splitting shingles, curing meat, and using a Kentucky rifle. Continuous operations all year. Costumes.

**Oxon Hill Children's Farm,** c/o National Capital Parks—East, 5210 Indian Head Highway, Oxon Hill, MD 20021.

An operating early industrial farm of about 1900. Pigs, sheep, cows, and horses. Cornfields, oats, garden vegetables. Horse-drawn machinery and threshing with a steam engine. Typical farm chores. Making apple butter and cider, shelling corn, painting farm equipment. Occasional hay rides. Continuous operations all year. Costumes.

**Pipe Spring National Monument,** Moccasin, AZ 86022.

An operating Mormon ranch with a telegraph station. Special seasonal events such as the spring branding. Continuous operations all year. Costumes.

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## THE FIRST AMERICANS



A special group of crafts being demonstrated in the national parks is a very important part of the American Indian tradition. Often performed by Indians themselves, the demonstrations are providing a means for preserving certain skills and customs from past cultures that are in danger of being lost. In most instances the original processes are duplicated, using native materials such as grasses and birchbark. Generally, items produced through park demonstrations are offered for sale to visitors. There is always great demand for decorative silver jewelry, baskets, rugs, and blankets. At Hubbell Trading Post, on the Navajo reservation, Indian-produced items are traded and sold much as they were in the early days of our westward expansion, and at Grand Canyon the original dances are performed in full costume.

**Grand Canyon National Park, Box 129, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023.**

Hopi Indian dances. Scheduled programs all year. Costumes.



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**Grand Portage National Monument**, P.O. Box 666, Grand Marais, MN 55604.

Trade musket firing and loading; Indian crafts. Items produced are offered for sale. Scheduled programs in summer. Costumes.

**Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site**, P.O. Box 388, Ganado, AZ 86505.

Fully operating Indian trading post of the historical period on the Navajo Reservation. Trading for wool, jewelry, rugs, and other Indian products which are offered for sale to the public. Pawn operations. Sale of groceries and other supplies to the Indians. Continuous operations all year with special activities such as wool trading seasonally.

**Lassen Volcanic National Park**, Mineral, CA 96063.

Indian basketmaking and description of the way of life of the Atsugewi Indians. Scheduled programs in summer. Costumes.

**Mesa Verde National Park**, Mesa Verde National Park, CO 81330.

Indian dances. Scheduled programs in summer. Costumes.

**Nez Perce National Historical Park**, P.O. Box 93, Spaulding, ID 83551.

Indian arts and crafts: moccasins, bags, purses, necklaces. Items produced are offered for sale. Scheduled in summer. Costumes.

**Pipestone National Monument**, Box 727, Pipestone, MN 56164.

Making Indian pipes out of red pipestone, occasional quarrying of the pipestone, occasional bead-making. Continuous demonstration in summer. Occasional costumes but not while working stone.

**Russell Cave National Monument**, Bridgeport, AL 35740.

Occasional demonstrations of archaic man's weapons.

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**Sitka National Monument, P.O. Box 738, Sitka, AK 99835.**

Arts and crafts of the Tlingit Indians: wood carving, silverwork, beadwork, carving totem poles, skinwork, basket weaving, blanket weaving, food preparation. Occasional items produced may be offered for sale; items may be commissioned. Continuous operation all year but not in all crafts at once. Occasional costumes.

**Yosemite National Park, P.O. Box 577, Yosemite National Park, CA 95389.**

Indian crafts: basketry, bow and arrow making. Scheduled programs in summer.

## **ART AND LIFE OF THE NATION**



For every nation and every people life must be more than work. Life must be graced with pleasure in the enjoyment of art, home, neighbors, countryside, song, and story. In some ways all of these joys are timeless; in other ways, however, each time gives its special stamp to the pleasure of living.

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For the westering American, there was a special melody in movement. We have grouped here, not only the classic arts, but also the special art that America loves so much—the art of travel. America is a carousel and here are the carousels and the barge rides and ferry boats, the journeys over mountains and plains.

All of us sing in our hearts; some sing with hands and with voices. But time and place mark them all.

**Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site**, P.O. Box 581, La Junta, CO 81050.

Demonstration of frontier muzzle-loading musket. Programs all year. Costumes.

**Catoctin Mountain Park**, Thurmont, MD 21788.

An operating whisky still, distilling water. Normally unmanned. June 20th to Labor Day: biweekly "Folk Craft Weekend" programs, demonstrations of blacksmithing, carpentry, and the making of clothing, applebutter, soap, and charcoal.

**Chesapeake and Ohio Canal**, c/o George Washington Memorial Parkway, 1400 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 102, Arlington, VA 22209.

Barge rides behind a mule tow. Scheduled trips in summer.

**Cumberland Gap National Historical Park**, P.O. Box 840, Middlesboro, KY 40965.

Emphasis on women's role in traveling through the Cumberland Gap from Virginia to Kentucky at the end of the 18th century. Talks about life on the road, demonstrations of riding saddle and cooking utensils, discussion of social and economic factors influencing westward movement. Scheduled programs in summer. Costumes.

**Custis-Lee Mansion**, c/o George Washington Memorial Parkway, 1400 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 102, Arlington, VA 22209.

Costumed hostesses in summer. Musical programs scheduled twice monthly all year.

**Ford's Theatre**, c/o National Capital Parks—Central, 1100 Ohio Drive SW., Washington, DC 20242.

Repertory theater during the theater season.

**Fort Raleigh National Historic Site**, P.O. Box 457, Manteo, NC 27954.

Lost Colony pageant. Scheduled programs in summer. Costumes.

**Grand Teton National Park**, P.O. Box 67, Moose, WY 83012.

Operation of the old ferryboat across the Snake River. Occasional demonstration in summer.

**Great Falls Park**, c/o George Washington Memorial Parkway, 1400 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 102, Arlington, VA 22209.

Carousel of the early 20th century. Operation in summer.

**Mammoth Cave National Park**, Mammoth Cave, KY 42259.

Two old ferryboats across the Green River. Continuous operation all year.

**Mount McKinley National Park**, P.O. Box 9, McKinley Park, AK 99755.

Work dogs and sled demonstration. Scheduled programs in summer.

**Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site**, Windsor, VT 05089.

Sculptor-in-residence working on various projects. Continuous operation in summer.

**Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site**, Hyde Park, Dutchess County, NY 12538.

Hostesses in turn-of-the-century costumes in summer. Occasional operation of Vanderbilt's 16-cylinder, 1933 Cadillac.



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## CRAFTS AND SKILLS



Today in highly developed countries, clerical and service occupations employ more and more people. Fewer and fewer people, proportionally, make anything. Instead, people buy and sell things; they move things around from city to city, and they keep track of inventories and cash balances, and only a very few create tangible goods. Even those who do work in industry seldom see things through. Machinists may well work on equipment they will never see completed and would not know how to use. The detachment of the assembly line is well known. Construction workers commonly never enter finished buildings they have worked on. Even artists and designers are often separated from original works of art by a variety of founders, chemists, printers, and others. Consequently all of our people are both detached and dependent at the same time. Craft demonstrations help greatly to reduce the detachment.

Many crafts were commonplace just a short while ago. Men are still active who were trained in crafts no longer practiced. The rising generation, however, is almost totally ignorant of these crafts. Skills once found in every community are now concentrated in great factories where cloth is woven, shoes are made, food canned, and glass blown. Containers of pottery or basketry are being replaced by plastics and paper bags. In many cases, 18th-century processes are the same as those of the 20th century, but the scale of production is so much larger that it's hard to see the whole process any more. That is true, for example, with cloth, glass, paper, and many other products.

The many craft demonstrations given in the National Park System are intended not only to understand historical environments, but to show processes still basic to survival in the modern world.

**Blue Ridge Parkway**, P.O. Box 1710, Roanoke, VA 24008.

Blacksmithing, sorghum making, and apple butter making. Items produced are offered for sale. The Mabry gristmill is operated and corn meal and buckwheat products sold. Contemporary rural dress. Craft demonstrations at Brinegar Cabin and Cone Manor in 19th-century costume. Continuous operation all year with some seasonal activities.

**City of Refuge National Historical Park**, Honaunau, Kona, HI 96726.

Demonstrations of Hawaiian life and crafts: thatching, net dyeing, games, crab catching, surround netting, making coconut broom, or food preparation. Scheduled summer programs. Costumes.

**Colonial National Historical Park**, P.O. Box 210, Yorktown, VA 23490.

Seventeenth-century glassblowing at Jamestown. Continuous operation all year. Spinning, weaving, and other domestic crafts at Yorktown. Scheduled programs in spring and summer. Glassware, kitchen crafts, publications, flower arrangements, candles, and soap are offered for sale. Costumes.

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**Fort Clatsop National Memorial**, Route 3, Box 604FC, Astoria, OR 97103.

Demonstrations related to the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Loading and firing a flintlock rifle, moccasins making, clothing, expedition equipment, and procedures for food gathering. Scheduled programs in summer. Costumes.

**Fort Necessity National Battlefield**, Route 1, Box 360, Farmington, PA 15437.

Spinning demonstration in the Washington Tavern. Occasional programs in summer.

**Great Smoky Mountains National Park**, Gatlinburg, TN 37738.

*At Cades Cove, Tenn.:* Gristmill in operation. Sorghum making, weaving. Items produced are offered for sale. Muzzle-loading "hog rifle" demonstration including bullet making. Millers in costumes.

*At Oconoluftee, N.C.:* Pioneer farmstead with gardening, weaving, sorghum making, blacksmithing, shake making, and rail splitting demonstrations. Farm animals. Continuous operation all year with scheduled programs in summer. Costumes.

**Homestead National Monument**, Beatrice, NB 68310.

A small, home-style gristmill for grinding corn is demonstrated occasionally by the staff and is available for visitors to operate themselves.

**Hopewell Village National Historic Site**, R.D. 1, Elverson, PA 19520.

Demonstrations of a 19th-century ironmaking village: collier, moulder, blacksmith, and office store clerk. Domestic skills in the village: open-hearth cooking, candlemaking, and soapmaking. Kitchen garden. Wagon ride. Continuous operation in summer. Costumes.

**Mammoth Cave National Park**, Mammoth Cave, KY 42259.

Mountain crafts including broom making, basket weaving, and use of the loom. Scheduled programs in summer.



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**Old Stone House**, 3051 M St. NW., Washington, DC 20007.

Home crafts of the 18th century such as candle-making, quilting, wafer-making, weaving, spinning, and dressmaking. Operations all year. Costumes.

**Pierce Mill**, Rock Creek Park, c/o National Capital Parks—North, P.O. Box 8758, Washington, D.C. 20011.

Restored mill and operating millwheel. Park guides conduct tours through and around mill.

**Salem Maritime National Historic Site**, Custom House, Derby St., Salem, MA 01970.

Seamen's crafts of the early 1800's. Occasional demonstrations in summer. Costumes.

**Saugus Iron Works National Historic Site**, 244 Central St., Saugus, MA 01906.

Ironmaking in the 17th century. Demonstrations include the use of six waterwheels, a giant hammer, two forges, and a rolling and slitting mill. Scheduled programs May through October.

## **OUTDOOR LIFE**





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For those who have lived most of their lives in cities, the outdoor life presents an unfamiliar challenge. A few demonstrations have been developed to present some of the simpler and some of the more strenuous opportunities. For all of them, we hope the demonstrations will erase some of the strangeness and encourage people to try new adventures with confidence, safety, and a wiser appreciation of the resources they are using.

**Cape Cod National Seashore, South Wellfleet, MA 02663.**

Demonstrations of recreational activities such as shellfishing, surf casting, and surfing. Surf rescue demonstrations. Scheduled programs in summer.

**Devils Tower National Monument, Devils Tower, WY 82714.**

Rock climbing techniques: free climbing, tension or direct-aid climbing, and the rappel. Scheduled programs in summer.

**Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, P.O. Box 1057, Page, AZ 86040.**

How to fish: selection of equipment and lures, casting and trolling, safety precautions. Use of the lifejacket. Fire extinguishers for boaters and campers: selection and use. How to inspect your boat for safety. Photo tour including instruction in composition, films, exposure, and general use of cameras in the desert and on the lake. Rock hounding: how to recognize and collect fossils and other rocks. Scheduled programs in summer.

**Grand Teton National Park, P.O. Box 67, Moose, WY 83012.**

Mountaineering demonstrations: use of ropes and other specialized mountain-climbing equipment. One- to three-day courses (fee) culminating in a climb of the Grand Teton. Scheduled in summer.

**Lake Mead National Recreation Area**, 601 Nevada Hwy., Boulder City, NV 89005.

Instructions in boat handling and safety, swimming, life saving, scuba diving, rock hounding, hiking, and climbing provided by Red Cross, Coast Guard, and others. Scheduled programs in summer.

**Rocky Mountain National Park**, Estes Park, CO 80517.

Mountaineering: equipment and techniques, summer, by request (fee). Backpacking, fly fishing: equipment and techniques, scheduled occasionally.

**Wind Cave National Park**, Hot Springs, SD 57747.

Subterranean program: demonstration of spelunking (cave exploration) gear and techniques. Scheduled programs in summer.

**Yosemite National Park**, P.O. Box 577, Yosemite National Park, CA 95389.

Junior ranger program: fire, search, rescue tools, and techniques. Use of horses and pack animals. Scheduled summer programs. Rock and ice climbing techniques and equipment (fee). Programs all year.

## **MILITARY LIFE**



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A large proportion of the historical parks have a military message. They preserve the scene of great American battles like Gettysburg or Saratoga; or they preserve famous military posts like Fort Laramie or Fort Davis.

**Antietam National Battlefield Site**, Box 158, Sharpsburg, MD 21782.

Demonstration of Civil War firearms. Occasional operation in summer.

**Castillo de San Marcos National Monument**, 1 Castillo Drive, St. Augustine, FL 32084.

Cannon-firing demonstrations. Scheduled program in season.

**Chalmette National Historical Park**, P.O. Box 429, Arabi, LA 70032.

British and American firearms demonstrations. Military drumming. Scheduled programs in summer. War of 1812 British uniforms; buckskins for Kentucky and Tennessee riflemen; costumed hostesses and guides.

**Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park**, Fort Oglethorpe, GA 30741.

Rifle-firing demonstrations. The minié ball is recovered after being fired through a 4-inch board and against a plate of steel. Its destructive power is made obvious. Minié balls are offered for sale. Scheduled programs in summer.

**Custer Battlefield National Monument**, P.O. Box 416, Crow Agency, MT 59022.

Demonstrations of the 7th Cavalry uniform, accoutrements, and weapons. Scheduled programs in summer. Cavalry uniform.

**Fort Davis National Historic Site**, P.O. Box 785, Fort Davis, TX 79734.

Demonstration of 10th Cavalry uniform and accoutrements. Response of man dressed as a uniformed trooper to recorded retreat parade. Recorded bugle calls. Programs offered all year. Cavalry uniform.

**Fort Donelson National Military Park**, P.O. Box F, Dover, TN 37058.

Civil War soldier life is portrayed. Musket-firing demonstration by men dressed as Union and Confederate corporals. Scheduled programs in summer. Infantry uniforms.

**Fort Frederica National Monument**, P.O. Box 816, St. Simons Island, GA 31522.

A muzzle-loading flintlock pistol is demonstrated. Scheduled programs in season.

**Fort Laramie National Historic Site**, Fort Laramie, WY 82212.

Military and civilian life on a frontier military post portrayed, including small-arms loading and firing demonstrations, and traders operations in re-furnished post traders store. Scheduled programs in summer. Cavalry and infantry uniforms and trader's clerk costume.

**Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine**, Baltimore, MD 21230.

Manual of arms and musket firing of the War of 1812. Scheduled programs in summer. Infantryman's uniform. Sunday nearest September 14 of each year: special expanded drilling, musket firing, raising and lowering of reproduction 1814 flag that inspired the writing of the "Star Spangled Banner."

**Fort Union National Monument**, Watrous, NM 87753.

Demonstration of cavalry uniform, accoutrements, and firearms. Scheduled programs in summer. Cavalry uniform.



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**Fort Washington**, c/o National Capital Parks—East, 5210 Indian Head Hwy., Oxon Hill, MD 20021.

Demonstration of the infantry uniform of the 1850's with a firing of smooth-bore and rifled muskets. Artillery demonstration of a 6-pound field-piece. Programs all year. Army uniform.

**Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park**, P.O. Box 679, Fredericksburg, VA 22401.

Firing a 24-pound Coehorn mortar and mule packing at Chancellorsville visitor center. Trench digging on Fredericksburg battlefield. Scheduled programs in summer. Civil War uniforms.

**George Rogers Clark National Historical Park**, 115 Dubois St., Vincennes, IN 47591.

Occasional demonstration of the Kentucky long rifle.

**Gettysburg National Military Park**, P.O. Box 70, Gettysburg, PA 17325.

Life of the Civil War soldier with demonstrations of firing and cleaning weapons. Scheduled programs in summer. Civil War uniforms.

**Horseshoe Bend National Military Park**, Route 1, Box 63, Daviston, AL 36256.

Minuteman flintlock rifle demonstration by a "Tennessee Volunteer." Scheduled programs in summer. War of 1812 uniform.

**Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park**, P.O. Box 1167, Marietta, GA 30060.

Muzzle-loading rifle demonstrations. Emphasis on the evolution of weapons from single-shot to repeating arms. Minié balls offered for sale. Scheduled programs in summer.

**Minute Man National Historical Park**, P.O. Box 160, Concord, MA 01742.

Musket firing, manual of arms, fife and drum music, retreat ceremony. Scheduled programs in summer and autumn, in cooperation with colonial military companies in period dress.

**Morristown National Historical Park**, P.O. Box 759, Morristown, NJ 07960.

Firing of Revolutionary muskets. Demonstration of military equipment and camp life on special occasions throughout the year. Costumes.

**Petersburg National Battlefield**, P.O. Box 549, Petersburg, VA 23803.

Civil War soldier's life—sanitation, dress, food, weapons, military tactics. Camp cooking. Scheduled programs in summer. Union and Confederate uniforms.

**Saratoga National Historical Park**, R.D. 1, Box 113-C, Stillwater, NY 12170.

Revolutionary period military crafts: loading and firing of small arms and artillery, cartridge making, cooking, sewing, equipment making using period tools. Continuous operations in summer. Costumes.

**Vicksburg National Military Park**, P.O. Box 349, Vicksburg, MS 39180.

Soldier's life—food, clothing, weapons—portrayed by men dressed as Union and Confederate soldiers. Artillery demonstrations. Scheduled programs in summer. Civil War uniforms.



As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources."

The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**