



National Park Service

Plastics and Sustainability Scorecard

Prepared by
Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility
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National Park Service Plastics and Sustainability Scorecard

Golden Gate National Recreation Area
Muir Woods National Monument

A+

Acadia National Park
Grand Canyon National Park
Grand Teton National Park
Yellowstone National Park

A

Denali National Park and Preserve
Mammoth Cave National Park

A-

Bryce Canyon National Park
Carlsbad Caverns National Park
Death Valley National Park
Glacier National Park
Shenandoah National Park
Zion National Park

B+

Blue Ridge Parkway
Canyonlands National Park
Crater Lake National Park
Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve

B

Cape Cod National Seashore
Glen Canyon National Recreation Area
Mesa Verde National Park
Statue of Liberty National Monument & Ellis Island

B-

Fire Island National Seashore
Gateway National Recreation Area

C

National Mall & Memorial Parks

C-

OVERVIEW

WHAT WE DID

PEER developed a score card to evaluate the environmental sustainability and plastic reduction plans of 25 parks in the National Park System to gain a better understanding of the National Park Service's (NPS) base-line practices.

The score card is based on a review of concessionaire contracts, sustainability plans, and waste audits that PEER obtained through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

WHY WE DID IT

NPS plays an important role in preserving the country's greatest natural and cultural resources and has significant influence in environmental stewardship activities across the country.

In June 2023, NPS published its Plastics Elimination and Reduction Plan. The Plan sets a goal of achieving 100% elimination of single-use plastics by 2032.¹ Additionally, the Save Our Seas 2.0 Act (Public Law 116–224), provides a target of diverting 50% of all non-hazardous solid waste, including construction/demolition, food, and other waste by 2025 and 75% by 2030.²

The purpose of this scorecard is to help spur the agency to move faster on these goals by highlighting those parks that are making great progress in this effort and pointing out those that need to make improvements.

We also want to ensure that the industry does not interfere with NPS efforts to reduce plastic waste. For the past 15 years, PEER has exposed efforts by the bottled water industry to overturn plastic bottle bans at national parks and document how this has led to an increase in plastic bottle pollution.

Reducing plastic consumption is one of the most important environmental issues of our time. Plastics are polluting our oceans, poisoning our bodies, and harming our climate. Plastics are mostly derived from petroleum and as a result tied to fossil fuel production.

¹ <https://www.doi.gov/sites/default/files/nps-2023-spp.pdf>

² <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/concessions/index.htm>

In addition, plastics contain thousands of hazardous chemicals and degrade into microplastics, which enter the environment, wildlife, and the human body.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

- Progress is being made on the NPS Plastics Elimination and Reduction Plan on a park-by-park level.
- Several parks have exemplary plans that can serve as models for others.
- NPS should accelerate its remaining seven-year timeline. There is no reason to delay.
- Greater transparency would aid in tracking progress.

HOW WE DEVELOPED THE SCORECARD

METHODOLOGY

In September 2023, PEER submitted FOIA requests to every NPS region asking for:

- Any park sustainability plan;
- Any park waste audits and waste management plans;
- Any environmental conditions and requirements in concessions contracts; and
- Any park efforts to reduce the procurement, sale and distribution of single-use plastic products and packaging by the NPS, concessionaires, cooperating associations, and partners.

Concessionaire contracts are negotiated by the Park Service with concessionaires who provide services ranging from food and lodging to whitewater rafting adventures, motor coach tours, and others.

We selected these parks as they have the most significant amount of concession activity according to the NPS Concessions Program webpage. We also focused on concessions activity because that is where the largest amount of environmental sustainability efforts can be found and with the greatest diversity of efforts.

SCORING CRITERIA

- A - comprehensive environmental sustainability practices with performance metrics and plastics reduction in multiple areas.
- B - comprehensive environmental sustainability practices in multiple areas.
- C - few environmental sustainability practices.
- D - one environmental sustainability practice implemented.
- F - no environmental sustainability practices noted.

LIMITATIONS

The FOIA requests named specific parks of interest, as opposed to every park in every region.

The timeframe of the documents was limited to January 2015 to September 2023. Changes to park policies may have been made since September 2023.

MISSING DATA

We did not receive full production from all regions and parks. Scores are based on the information we receive.

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Data Sheets

Acadia National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Food, beverage and retail services are provided by concessionaire Dawnland LLC. The concessionaire is required to have an Environmental Management Program (EMP) focused on compliance with laws and regulations, employee training, reporting, response to spills, and monitoring potential impacts to park resources.

Further, the concessions operating plan and maintenance plan set out numerous specific environmental requirements which exceeds those for most national parks. These include:

- Healthy food and beverage options must exceed 40% of sales
- Contribute \$15,000 towards a study to encourage the selection of healthy food choices
- Use cage free eggs and fair trade certified, shade grown coffee
- Donation of surplus food to local food pantries
- During the life of the contract increase landfill diversion of food waste to 90%
- Provide shuttle bus service for employees to reduce traffic
- Contribute \$5000 to support the Island Explorer transportation system
- Develop a transportation access guide and advertise on all links for the concessions business
- Use only china, glassware, and utensils in the food service. No disposable items permitted.
- 90% of retail items cannot have additional packaging
- Required recycling of paper, newsprint, cardboard, biometals, plastics, aluminum, glass, oil, antifreeze, batteries
- Reuse/recycle 90% of boxes
- 15 retail and 15 food vendors use reusable containers for deliveries
- Suppliers must use recycled/biodegradable packing materials
- Concessionaire cannot buy any new boxes nor packing materials
- No use of disposable cups, dishware, nor towels in employee dorm kitchen
- Grab and go food must be in compostable containers
- In the Cadillac Mountain eco-store, 100% of sales must be in recycled or no packaging

- Required energy audits of operations
- Use of LED lighting
- Purchase 100% renewable energy for all operations
- Installation of a solar system at Thunder Hill
- A 30% reduction in electricity use by year 3 of the contract
- Installation of 60 occupancy sensors for lighting to reduce electricity use
- Purchase EnergyStar appliances
- Installation of dual flush toilets and low flow aerators

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- No sale of beverages in disposable plastic bottles nor aluminum cans
- Installation of water refilling stations

Recommendations for Improvement

- None. Great effort by the park and concessionaire

Relative Grade: A

Blue Ridge Parkway Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Lodging, food, beverage, retail and shuttle services are provided by DNC Parks and Resorts at Peaks of Otter Inc. In addition to implementing a required environmental management program, the following environmental practices are to be implemented.

- Recycling of paper, newsprint, cardboard, bimetals, plastics, aluminum, glass, electronics, white goods, light bulbs, fuel and batteries
- Required use of re-refined oils, re-tread tires, bio-based lubricants, low toxicity cleaners (Green Seal)
- Providing reusable containers to guests for water and fountain drinks
- Composting of food waste, <5% of all waste can be deposited in landfills
- Use of water aerators and low flow showers and toilets
- Water and energy audits
- Energy Star replacement appliances
- Purchase of carbon offsets each year for operations. Achieve carbon neutral operations
- GHG report each year. GHG reductions of 15%
- Electricity use reduction of 20%
- Fuels use reduction of 15%
- Consolidated vendor deliveries to concession facilities for energy savings and reduction of truck traffic

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- None

Recommendations for Improvement

- Evaluate all operations for opportunities to eliminate the use of single use plastics

Relative Grade: B

Bryce Canyon National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocol

Lodging, food and beverage, retail, transportation, and other services are provided by Aramark Sports and Entertainment Services. The Bryce Canyon Association sells visitor convenience items. Bryce-Zion Trail Rides provides guided interpretive horseback rides. The concessionaires have Environmental Management Programs (EMP) focused on compliance with laws and regulations, employee training, response to spills, reporting, and monitoring potential impacts to park resources.

Further, the concessions contracts operating plans set out additional environmental requirements. These include:

- No trail rides during wet conditions to prevent soil erosion
- Recycling in conjunction with the NPS of horseshoes, tires, paper, plastics, metal, electronics, light bulbs, batteries, aluminum, glass
- Energy Star appliances when replacing older ones
- Recyclable/bio-degradable tableware
- NPS installed solar energy at park headquarters and visitor center buildings
- NPS installed 15 water bottle refilling stations
- NPS led effort to phase out use of plastic food and beverage containers, straws, cups, cutlery, and bags

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None. The NPS did not provide the concessions contract materials for the lodging, food and beverage, retail, and transportation services (Aramark).

Attention to Plastics

- Initial efforts to reduce plastics use in food and beverage services
- The General Store and Gift Shop only sell water in metal bottles

Recommendations for Improvement

- Complete the plastics reduction efforts throughout all services to visitors

Relative Grade: B+

Carlsbad Caverns National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Food, beverage, retail, and kennel services are provided by the Carlsbad Caverns Trading Company LLC. They have a required Environmental Management Program like other park units.

Further, the concessions contract operating plan sets out numerous specific environmental requirements. These include:

- Vegetarian and vegan menu options
- Water bottle sales and a water bottle refilling station
- Plastic straws not used
- Energy Star appliances used as replacements
- Recycling of paper, newsprint, cardboard, bimetals, plastics, aluminum, glass, electronics, appliances, refrigerants, solvents, antifreeze, paints, batteries, light bulbs, cement, oil, and tires
- 20 percent of retail shipments are received in reusable boxes
- 85 percent of retail products have no packaging
- Paperless procedures in operations
- NPS provided 5 water bottle refilling stations
- NPS recycling of 69 percent of construction and demolition waste
- New NPS construction has sustainability reviews
- LED lighting

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- Sale of reusable water bottles

Recommendations for Improvement

- Eliminate sales of beverages in plastic bottles

Relative Grade: B+

Cape Cod National Seashore Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Golfing, food, beverage, and retail services are provided by concessionaire Johnson Golf Management Inc. The Herring Cove Snack Bar is provided by concessionaire Far Land on the Beach LLC. Johnson is required to have an Environmental Management Program (EMP) to address compliance, training, reporting, spill response, and the monitoring of operations on park resources.

Further, the concessions contracts operating plans sets out specific environmental requirements. These include:

- Promotional materials must be produced on 30% post-consumer material paper and be double sided
- Use of biodegradable cups, plates and cutlery
- Carpool services for employees
- Bike purchasing program so that employees can bike to work
- Replacing one vehicle with a hybrid one
- Recycle cooking oil to use as biodiesel
- Use of LED lights with automatic shut-offs
- Use of Energy Star appliances
- Organic waste composting
- Use of green paper goods from recycled fibers.
- Compostable paper straws
- 100% corn-based cups
- Eating utensils from renewable resources

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- None
- Sale of refillable/reusable water bottles to help reduce the sale of water in plastic bottles

Recommendations for Improvement

- Remove all use of plastics from operations
- Implement environmental performance metrics into operations

Relative Grade: B-

Canyonlands National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Fourteen small concessionaires provide guided interpretive whitewater boating tours. Five concessionaires provided guided interpretive backcountry vehicle tours. One concessionaire provides guided interpretive cycling tours. And two concessionaires provide river transportation and haul out services. The Canyonlands Natural History Association sells visitor convenience items. All entities need to have in place a basic Environmental Management Program.

Further, these concessionaires' operating plans set out limited additional environmental requirements. These include:

- Use of biodegradable soap with no phosphates
- Recycling of glass, aluminum, and plastic
- Removal of human and food waste from the backcountry

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- No single use water bottle sales by any organization in the park

Recommendations for Improvement

- Operations could be evaluated to see if more environmental practices can be introduced in purchasing, office operations, and vehicle use

Relative Grade: B

Crater Lake National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Food, beverage, retail, lodging, boat tours, and marina operations are provided by Crater Lake Hospitality LLC. The concessionaire has to have an Environmental Management Program (EMP) focusing on compliance with laws and regulations, employee training, reporting, response to spills, monitoring potential impacts to park resources, and monitoring performance generally.

Further, the concessions contract operating plan sets out numerous specific environmental requirements for daily operations. These include:

- Maintaining Green Marina certification at the marina
- Providing reusable trash bags on tour boats
- Using environmentally friendly cleaning products when cleaning composting toilets
- Providing an employee shuttle service to help reduce traffic and parking issues
- Providing an EV charging station
- Disposable items (cups, plates, cutlery) in food service must be biodegradable or compostable
- Healthy and sustainable food requirements
- Straws are prohibited

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- Water bottle filling stations to be provided in select locations

Recommendations for Improvement

- Specifically ban single use plastics in all food operations and minimize in the marina operations

Relative Grade: B

Denali National Park and Preserve Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Lodging, food, beverage and tour services are provided by Aramark Destinations. Dog sled rides, glacial landings and hikes, hunt guiding, and mountaineering are provided by a multitude of concessionaires. All must have some aspect of an Environmental Management Program (EMP) focusing on compliance with laws and regulations, employee training, reporting, response to spills, monitoring potential impacts to park resources, and monitoring performance generally.

Further, the concessions contract operating plans sets out numerous specific environmental requirements which exceeds those for many national parks. These include:

- Offset of greenhouse gas emissions through the purchase of renewable energy credits
- Offset gallons of jet fuel and then increase the amount of offset by 10% each year thereafter
- Offset 100% of carbon emissions
- ISO 14001 environmental management system certification
- Use of high efficiency stoves with refillable fuel bottles. Rechargeable batteries
- Recharge electronics using solar chargers
- NPS led #Don'tFeedTheLandfills campaign
- Use of recycled boxes for supplies and materials
- Concessionaires must remove all of their waste from the park
- Human waste must be carried out from the backcountry
- Toilet paper and paper towels are made from recycled material
- Menu options include organic and vegetarian foods
- Composting used in staff gardens has resulted in a 40% diversion of food waste to the landfill
- Compostable sandwich containers used in retail and grab n' go outlets
- Compostable food packaging
- Biodegradable soap used in kitchen cleaning

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- Phase out of plastic bags and water bottles in gift shops and stores. No plastic straws
- Water bottle refilling stations
- Use of reusable bamboo utensils in lieu of plastic
- No use of plastic table clothes for events
- No plastic covers on the 110,000 lunch boxes sold in 2022
- Water provided in recyclable cans on bus tours in lieu of plastic (174,000 in 2022)

Recommendations for Improvement

- Develop and implement quantifiable metrics for all waste reduction areas
- Continue efforts to reduce and eliminate all plastics from operations by a set date

Relative Grade: A-

Death Valley National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Food, beverage, lodging, and retail services were provided at Stovepipe Wells Village by concessionaire Death Valley Lodge Company until January 2024, at which time the concession was transferred to Destination Death Valley LLC. In addition to this concession operation, there are three private resorts located in the park.

Like most concessionaires, an Environmental Management Program (EMP) is required that focuses on compliance with laws and regulations, employee training, reporting, response to spills, monitoring potential impacts to park resources, and monitoring performance generally.

Further, the concessions contract operating plan sets out numerous, very specific environmental requirements which exceeds those for most national parks. These include:

- Strong water conservation in all aspects of operations
- Achieving Gold Certification under the Green Lodging Program
- ISO 14001 certification for environmental management
- Conducting Energy Star audits
- Working with Carbonfund.org to analyze the carbon footprint of its operations; implementing renewable energy practices and seeking to achieve a carbon neutral footprint
- Paper products made from recycled materials
- New packaging, including cardboard boxes, coming into the park must be reused, recycled, returned to UPS, or biodegradable.
- Napkins, paper towels, serving trays, take out containers must be made from recycled materials
- Zero use of Styrofoam
- Glass, plastics, metal, and food serving containers must be recycled
- Produce will be locally sourced. Food waste will be composted

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- Signs to discourage the purchase of single use plastics
- "Plastics will be used as little as possible"
- Water filling stations to be provided

Recommendations for Improvement

- Ban the use of all plastic, in all forms, involved with food, water, and beverages packaging

Relative Grade: B+

Fire Island National Seashore Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Concession services are provided by Sayville Ferry Services Inc, Davis Park Ferry Co., Inc, Fire Island Concessions LLC, and Love Watch Hill and Sailors Haven Inc. Services include passenger ferry services, marina operations, retail, food, beverage, and camping. Concessionaires are required to implement an Environmental Management Program (EMP) to address compliance, training, spill response, reporting, and monitoring operations to determine if there are any impacts to park resources.

Further, the concessions operating plans set out a few environmental requirements. These include:

- Use of ultra low sulfur fuel
- Recycling to include paper, newsprint, cardboard, biometals, plastics, aluminum, glass, waste oil antifreeze, and batteries
- LED lighting

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- None

Recommendations for Improvement

- Eliminate the use of plastics in all aspects of operations
- Use of environmental performance metrics to improve sustainability practices

Relative Grade: C

Gateway National Recreation Area Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Concessions services are provided by Marinas of the Future Inc, JBay Ince, and Jen Marine Development LLC. Services include marina operations, food, and beverage. The concessionaires are required to have an Environmental Management Program (EMP) addressing compliance, training, spill response, reporting, and monitoring operations to identify any impacts on park resources.

Further, the concessions operating contracts set out additional environmental requirements. These include:

- Use of ultra low sulfur fuel
- Use of biodegradable cups, plates, and cutlery
- All food sourced within 120 miles
- Recycling to include paper, newsprint, cardboard, biometals, plastics, aluminum, and glass
- Incentives to use alternative transportation

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- None

Recommendations for Improvement

- Eliminate plastics from all aspects of operations
- Use of environmental performance metrics to drive strong sustainability practices

Relative Grade: C

Glacier National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Lodging, food, beverage, linen service, retail, interpretive services, and transportation are provided by Xanterra parks and Resorts Inc and Belton Chalets Ince. Glacier Park Boat Company Inc provided interpretive boat tours, and small craft rental service. Swan Mountain Outfitters provides guided interpretive horseback trail rides and pack animal services. Glacier Guides provides guided interpretive hikes/backpacking, transportation, and equipment rental. Sun Tours provides cultural interpretive motor vehicle tours. All entities must have an environmental management program.

Further, the concessionaires must meet various environmental requirements including the following:

- Recycling of paper, newsprint, cardboard, bimetals, plastics, aluminum, glass, oil, antifreeze, mercury, electronics, batteries, white goods
- Green Seal/Certified Biobased cleaning products used including on cleaning of boat exteriors
- Achieve TRUE Zero Waste Certification
- Bulk purchasing of cleaning supplies to reduce packaging
- Use of biodegradable antifreeze in vehicles
- Use of 100% recycled Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified paper bags when requested by customers
- Employee rewards for best environmental suggestions
- No use of polystyrene packaging
- Certifications: ISO14001 Environmental Management Systems, WWF Climate savers, LEED, Marine Stewardship Council, EPA Green Power Partner, Green Restaurant Association Carbon Disclosure Project
- Baseline energy audit
- Install building insulation improvements
- Install solar tube lighting
- New energy efficient refrigerator and conveyor oven. Energy Star appliance purchased
- Purchase Renewable Energy Certificates and carbon offset certificates, achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions operations
- No company and supplier vehicle idling
- Use of biodegradable soap for dish cleaning
- Establish Green Team to address energy and water conservation and solid waste reduction

- Salmon is wild caught
- 50% of food is from sustainable sources
- Vegan/vegetarian menu items
- Organic produce is from within 400 miles
- Dairy is organic and locally produced
- Coffee/tea are Fair Trade shade grown
- Use of bulk containers for condiments
- No use of single-use tableware in employee dining areas

Negative Policies and Protocols

- At the Granite Peak Chalet, the sale of bottled water is required due to a limited water supply in the area

Attention to Plastics

- One concessionaire is required to sell non-BPA water bottles and provide water bottle refilling stations
- Multiple water bottle refilling stations found throughout the park including in lodges and some administrative buildings

Recommendations for Improvement

- Remove single-use plastics from all operations

Relative Grade: B+

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Charter, tour, and cruise vessels provide water-based activities for visitors and food, beverage, lodging, and retail services. There have been 17 concessionaire companies providing these services. Concessionaires must have an Environmental Management Program (EMP) that focuses on compliance with laws and regulations, employee training, reporting, response to spills, monitoring potential impacts to park resources, and monitoring performance generally.

Further, the concessions operating plans sets out numerous additional environmental requirements. They vary by concession. These include:

- ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems with 3rd party conformance audit
- Energy audit by a competent entity, annual broad-based environmental audits, installation of 20 motion sensors to reduce energy use in lodge rooms
- Increased energy efficiency through use of trim optimization software, and utilizing exhaust gas for steam production
- ISO 14065 greenhouse gas emissions inventory
- Re-use of linens by lodge guests and biodegradable soaps and shampoos
- Highlighting environmentally friendly products in retail operations
- Green purchasing program utilizing the EPA purchasing guide
- LED lighting
- Recycling of fishing line, aluminum, glass, steel, paper, cardboard, lamps, bulbs, batteries, printer cartridges, and electronics. NPS Resource Recovery Depot diverts 63% of waste.
- No use of plastic straws, Styrofoam
- Reusable lunch containers
- No use of organotin compounds in anti-fouling coating for ship hulls
- Environmental deck patrols to help ensure that ship visitors do not allow waste to go overboard
- Use of 1.5% sulfur fuel in ships

Negative Policies and Protocols

- Environmental performance factors vary substantially from one concession to another

Attention to Plastics

- Almost to no attention to plastics minimization as a requirement in concessions operating plans

Recommendations for Improvement

- Develop and implement environmental performance metrics in a broad range of waste areas as most existing plans lack quantifiable measures
- Implement a comprehensive effort to reduce plastics use particularly on the cruise ships

Relative Grade: B

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Antelope Point Holdings manages the Antelope Point Resort and Marina providing a marina, land-based accommodations, facilities and services in support of boating. Glen Canyon Rafting Hospitality provides guided interpretive river trips. Aramark Sports and Entertainment Services manages the Bullfrog and Halls Crossing Campgrounds. Concessionaires must have an Environmental Management Program.

Further, the concessions contract operating plans sets out specific environmental requirements. These include:

- Recycling of paper, newsprint, cardboard, bimetals, plastics, aluminum, glass, waste oil, antifreeze, and batteries
- Water saving fixtures including aerators on sink faucets, showerheads, and toilets
- Green versions of cleaners, lubricants, and coolants
- No idling of buses

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- Move away from plastic water bottle sales in progress and water bottle refilling stations have been provided at locations throughout the park

Recommendations for Improvement

- Eliminate the use of single use plastics throughout operations

Relative Grade: B-

Golden Gate National Recreation Area Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Food, beverage, and boat tour services are provided by Alcatraz Cruises LLC. The concessionaire has an Environmental Management Program (EMP) focusing on compliance with laws and regulations, employee training, reporting, response to spills, monitoring potential impacts to park resources, and monitoring performance generally.

Further, the concessions contract operating plan sets out very specific environmental requirements which exceeds those for most national parks. These include:

- ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems certification
- Certified Green Procurement Program
- Green Power Partnership Certification
- Green Business Council Institute True Zero Waste Certification
- Green Restaurant Certification
- Three additional certifications by the 4th year of the contract
- Diversion of 98% of solid waste
- Use of sustainable local food sources
- BPI certified compostable utensils, plastics, straws, cups, lids, wrappers, containers, napkins, and water bottles

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- Water bottle refilling stations to be provided on vessels and the San Francisco embarkation site
- Water bottles must be certified compostable

Recommendations for Improvement

- Elimination of water bottles that cannot be recycled/reused

Relative Grade: A+

Grand Canyon National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Lodging, food and beverage, retail, transportation, and other services are provided by Xanterra South Rim LLC on the South Rim of the park. North Rim Hospitality LLC (Aramark) and DNC Parks and Resorts at Grand Canyon Inc. provide lodging, food and beverage, retail, bus tours, public showers and laundry services, vending, and other services. Sixteen small concessionaires provide guided interpretive trail rides and whitewater boating tours. All entities have to have an Environmental Management Program addressing legal and regulatory compliance, spill response, training, and recordkeeping as a minimum.

Further, the concessions contracts for the large operations set out numerous, specific environmental requirements which serve as an excellent standard for national parks. These include:

- Recycling of vendor packaging materials, pallets, magazines. Printer cartridges, mattresses, textiles, uniforms, furniture, visitor room amenities, paints and solvents, fuel, lighting, paper, chipboard, newsprint, cardboard, metals, plastics, glass, dishware, antifreeze, mercury, computers, batteries, appliances
- 100% waste diversion of construction and demolition waste by NPS
- Achieve TRUE Zero Waste Certification. Achieve 90% waste diversion
- Retail sale of recycled/reclaimed merchandise with minimal packaging
- Achieve certified ISO14001 environmental management systems
- Nine new bins for the public for collecting recyclables and organic waste
- Environmental preferable products: 100% post-consumer recycled content for retail bags, office paper, marketing materials, napkins, facial tissues, toilet paper, food packaging. Use of refined oil, re-tread tires, bio-based lubricants, low toxic cleaners, anti-freeze
- Use of certified compostable dishware, bowls, plates, cups, hot cup sleeves, straws, clamshells, containers
- Condiments, shampoos/conditioners, soap, toiletries provided in bulk dispensers only, no individual packages
- Organic waste composting system. Organic waste containers provided at all food/beverage locations
- Cradle to Cradle certified carpeting
- Sustainable flooring using reclaimed wood at Maswick gift shop

- Redesign and reconstruction of the Maswick lodge to meet LEED gold standard
- Use of organic dairy products from within 400 miles. Locally sourced meat and poultry
- Salmon is wild caught from a sustainable fishery
- Use of shade grown coffee and tea
- Vegetarian and vegan food options available to visitors, dairy free options
- Achieve Green Restaurant Association certification
- Purchase 90% of food ingredients within 190 miles of the park
- Use of hormone, antibiotic free meat products
- 100% of food traceable for all vendors
- Use of automatic, low flow water aerator faucets
- High efficiency dual flush toilets, low flow showerheads, and low flow pre-rinse dishwasher sprayer in kitchen in one lodge
- Linen re-use program to reduce washing
- Vehicle spot cleaning using a bucket and sponge
- Use of reclaimed water for non-potable purposes
- Mandatory employee training on water conservation
- Video at guest check-in area on water and energy conservation
- Goal of reducing water and energy use 40% by 2025
- Installation of a rainwater collection system
- Required energy audit of facilities
- Use of vending machine energy misers
- Installation of tankless water heaters, LED lighting, Energy Star appliances, occupancy sensors, caulking of windows and improved building insulation, programmable thermostats
- Provide a solar-based personal device recharging station
- Installation of heat pump systems
- Use of an all-electric mobile food service cart
- Installation of five EV charging stations
- Saving fuel by reducing the fleet size by 10%
- Employee shuttle and bicycles are provided
- No idling of buses
- Use of closed toilet systems in backcountry areas

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- No sale of bottled water less than 1 gallon.
- No sale of single use plastic beverage containers and food wrappers
- No single use plastics in prepared food items and carryout food containers
- Only sell reusable water bottles made of aluminum or steel
- 35 water bottle refilling stations provided by concessionaires and NPS

Recommendations for Improvement

- Introduce more consistent environmental requirements focusing on the best practices among the concessionaires.

Relative Grade: A

Grand Teton National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Lodging, food, beverage, retail, groceries, vending, transportation, auto service, showers/laundry, campground, marina. boat rentals, and guided trips is provided by the Grand Teton Lodge Company and Signal Mountain Lodge LLC. Triangle X Partnership provides lodging, food/beverage, retail, snowshoeing, snowmobiles, river float and fishing trips, and trail and wagon rides. Eighteen additional companies provide a variety of guided trips involving boating, fishing, mountaineering, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and backpacking.

All entities must have an environmental management program. Additional environmental requirements include the following:

- Required to meet the ISO14001 environmental management system requirements
- Certification in the NPS National Environmental Performance Track Program
- Participation in the ISO14064 Carbon Management Plan to monitor greenhouse gas emissions
- Participation in the Green restaurant Association and Green Seal Lodging programs.
- Green Purchasing Team to follow the EPA purchasing guide
- Participation in the Clean Marina program
- Recycling of paper, newsprint, cardboard, bimetals, light bulbs, plastics, aluminum, glass, kitchen grease, oil, fuel, antifreeze, batteries, electronics, and propane cylinders
- Use of recycled materials in office supplies, lumber of construction use, towels, blankets, carpeting, soaps, and reusable water bottles
- Environmentally preferred products in all aspects of operations
- Use of compostable to-go food containers. Biodegradable take out utensils. Post consumer materials for napkins.
- Separate composting efforts by NPS employees living in the park
- Use of a Bio-X organic waste decomposition system
- At select ranch cookouts 95% of the food service ware is reusable
- Diverted solid waste amounts to a reduction of 164 metric tons of CO2
- Brochures printed on reusable paper
- Use of 100% compostable plates for lunch on fishing trips
- One concessionaire required to reduce paper waste by 75%

- Required bulk purchasing to minimize packaging waste and packaging is to be recycled
- One concessionaire required to divert 90% of waste
- Required to remove human waste from the backcountry
- Fair Trade, certified bird-friendly coffee/tea
- Vegetarian and organic menu items
- Use of wild salmon from a sustainable fishery
- One entity must reduce water use 20% during their 15-year contract period
- New construction must have faucet shower aerators and low flow toilets
- Hydrocarbon filtration systems are required on storm drains to separate out hydrocarbons, solids, and heavy metals
- Use of lead fishing gear is prohibited
- Appliances replaced with Energy Star equipment
- New vehicles must use alternate energy sources
- No vehicle idling
- Acquisition of a solar powered golf cart and other zero emission vehicles
- Elimination of excess vehicles
- Participation in the Green Power Partnership program. Purchase certified emissions reduction certificates for gasoline use.
- New construction is LEED certified
- Use of solar powered lighting on docks
- New outdoor lighting is solar powered
- Replace lamps with 1,300 new LED bulbs
- Installation of 25 occupancy sensors for lighting control
- Installation of 44 programmable thermostats
- Installation of 85 lighting system timers
- Installation of 42 photo sensors in outdoor lighting
- Installation of energy efficient windows in the Peak Dining Room
- Achieve LEED Silver Level certification in maintenance projects

Negative Policies and Protocols

- The use of single use plastic utensils is specifically permitted at the Jackson Lake Lodge snack bar

Attention to Plastics

- One concessionaire stopped the sale of single use bottles at its stores and does not use plastic bags

- One entity stopped the sale of single use water bottles in 2010 and has sold over 9,000 reusable water bottles since then
- The NPS provides 10 water bottle refilling stations and actively markets their availability
- Several concessionaires provide aluminum water bottles to guests to keep
- A fishing guide service is specifically required to use biodegradable packing for lunches and the use of plastic containers is prohibited
- On concessions contract requires the posting of a poster in a store discouraging the use of single use water bottles
- One contract requires the elimination of all plastics in its operations
- Prohibition on use of plastic bags, straws and cups
- No use of disposable paper plates, plastic cups, and other single use items
- Required use of reusable eating ware and water bottles
- Use of metal water bottles and straws and reusable bags on float trips

Recommendations for Improvement

- Utilize the best environment practices across all concessions operations

Relative Grade: A

Hawaii Volcanoes National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Visitor convenience items are sold to the public by Hawai'i Pacific Parks Association. This small concessions contract provides minimal environmental requirements.

- Providing EV charging stations
- Providing the sale of bottled water (no other beverages may be sold) in reusable bottles

Negative Policies and Protocols

- It is not clear if the bottles are of the single-use variety that are often discarded by the public
- No mention of water bottle refilling stations

Attention to Plastics

- None

Recommendations for Improvement

- Provide water refilling stations
- No sale of bottled water in single-use type bottles

Relative Grade: No grade due to a very limited concessions contract

Mammoth Cave National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Lodging, food, beverage, retail, convenience/grocery items, public showers, and kennel services are provided by Ortega National Parks LLC. In addition to implementing a required environmental management program, the concessionaire is required to meet the following environmental requirements:

- Recycling of paper, newsprint, cardboard, bimetal, plastics, aluminum, glass, electronics, white goods, oil, batteries
- Recycling containers in lodging guest rooms
- Operation of the park's plastics and cardboard bails for recycling
- Replacement carpeting has recycled content
- ISO14001 certification for environmental management systems
- Green Seal Gold Level certification
- Participation on the park's Green Team
- Prominent electronic sign showing the public solid waste diversion rates
- Use of 100% recycled office paper
- Pens made from recycled plastic bottles
- Gift shop sells shirts and wind chimes made from recycled materials
- Retail merchandise plan addresses environmental products, locally sourced products, and waste reduction
- Green Restaurant 3-star certification
- Take out food provided in biodegradable, disposable serve ware. Napkins and packaging made recycled materials.
- Use of bulk containers for condiments
- No use of disposable, single use ware in employee dining
- No use of Styrofoam food containers
- Organic food waste diverted at least 80%
- Tracking system for compost pre-consumer food scraps
- Providing compost to local farms and gardens
- Providing partially eaten food waste to hog and animal farms
- Vegetarian/vegan menu items
- Locally sourced meat, poultry, dairy, produce, and paper products
- Salmon is wild caught from a sustainable fishery
- Food served has no hormone enhancement nor artificial flavorings
- EV charging station provided at the visitor center
- 100% alternative energy GSA vehicle fleet
- Alternative fuels tour buses in operation

- 30 bicycles with water bottle holders provided for rent
- Purchase of 100% EPA approved sustainable electricity to achieve zero carbon footprint
- Energy efficient replacement refrigerators and TVs
- Lighting timers in place in guest bathrooms and public areas
- Hot water pipes and refrigerant lines are insulated
- Dyson energy efficient hand dryers in place
- 15% food service discount for guests arriving in alternative fuel vehicles
- Submeters in place to pinpoint monitor energy use at restaurant, stores, lodging, cottages
- Energy Star replacement appliances
- Replacement LED lighting
- Capture of rainwater for use in toilets in the visitor center
- Use of waterless urinals
- All toilets replaced with dual flush toilets
- Aerators in place on all public area faucets
- Efficient high velocity rinse sprayers in kitchen
- Foot pedals for kitchen handwashing sinks
- Water provided to guests at dining only upon request
- No use of water to thaw frozen food, washing food off plates, nor washing walkways
- Shower nozzles flow at maximum 1.5 GPM
- Hourglass timers provided in lodging for guest showers to encourage shorter showers
- Four signs in each guest room encouraging guests to re-use towels
- Bus washing only by using a water recirculating system
- Use of native plants in landscaped areas to minimize water use

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- No sale of water in single use plastic bottles less than 1 gallon
- Must sell reusable water bottles

Recommendations for Improvement

- Continue to look for opportunities to remove single use plastics from all operations

Relative Grade: A-

Mesa Verde National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Lodging, food, beverage retail, campground, tours, kennel, fuel, and other services are provided by Aramark Sports and Entertainment Services LLC. The concessionaire is required to maintain an environmental management program.

Further, they are required to meet additional environmental requirements. These include the following.

- Recycling of paper, newsprint, cardboard, bimetals, plastics, aluminum, glass, computers, white goods
- Table settings must be compostable
- Re-use of linens to save water
- Fish served must be from a sustainable fishery
- Coffee/tea must be Fair Trade shade grown
- Menus must include vegetarian and organic options

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- Some reduction in single use plastics by the concessionaire
- A few water bottle refilling stations are provided to visitors

Recommendations for Improvement

- Expand environmentally sustainable practices into more aspects of operations and seek to eliminate single use plastics

Relative Grade: B-

Muir Woods National Monument Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Food, beverage and retail services are provided by concessionaire Cloudless Skies Park Co. LLC. The concessionaire must have an Environmental Management Program (EMP) like almost all concessionaires to the NPS. EMPs focus on compliance with laws and regulations, employee training, reporting, response to spills, monitoring potential impacts to park resources, and monitoring performance generally.

Further, the concessions contract operating plan sets out numerous, very specific environmental requirements which far exceeds those for most national parks. These include:

- Maintaining an ISO14001 Green Business certification
- Packing materials made from 100% recycled materials
- 90% of retail products will be in recyclable or reusable packaging. No plastic film nor wrap.
- 15% of incoming supplies/goods are to come in reusable large plastic boxes that will be sent back to the vendor for use again
- Massive waste diversion efforts
- 95% of office products are post-consumer materials
- 75% of “grab and go” food items are in compostable packaging
- Cleaning supplies are Green Seal certified
- Menu items are sourced locally, often organic. Long list of banned ingredients in menu items.
- New indoor seating to be made from reclaimed wood
- New café flooring to be sustainable sourced material
- New cabinets to be made from reclaimed wood
- New countertops to be made from recycled glass
- Chemical finishes to surfaces to meet Green Seal Standard
- Clothing items for sale to be made from recycled or organic cotton
- 100% of items made of wood will meet Forest Stewardship Council standards

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- Water may only be sold in reusable or recyclable aluminum bottles. Plastic bottles are prohibited. Specialty beverages may only be sold in aluminum cans or compostable cardboard containers. No plastic nor glass containers. The concessionaire provides a water bottle filling station

Recommendations for Improvement

- None. Exceptional efforts by the park and the concessionaire.

Relative Grade: A+

National Mall and Memorial Parks Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

The park faces a massive challenge addressing municipal solid waste generated both internally and externally. The 30 million visitors generate large amounts of waste consisting of waste from food and other purchases and waste that they have brought into the park. Bus tour groups often empty their waste at park provided waste receptacles, often without separating recyclables. The waste from surrounding food and beverage operations in this urban setting often ends up in the park after the food has been consumed in the park. Despite this challenge the park recycled 62 percent of the 1.590 tons of waste collected in 2019. Of the recycled materials, 62 percent was plastics.

Concessions and lease operations are provided by Guest Services Inc (food, beverage and retail), Eastern National (retail, water, snacks), Big Bus DC (bus tours), RGI, (food trucks), and National Links Trust (golfing, food, beverage, and retail). Most of the documents provided concerning this park did not provide insight on any required environmental sustainability and plastics reduction efforts beyond what is required by law or regulation.

Most information obtained for this analysis came from the Waste Diversion Analysis and Plan 2020 developed by the Trust for the National Mall and a contractor. The study was funded by the National Park Foundation. The Coca-Cola Company provided the funds for the grant.

Positive practices noted:

- Kitchen food waste is composted (but not post-consumer)
- Cardboard recycling
- Waste in public receptacles is recycled
- Surplus food is donated to local organizations
- Cooking oil is recycled
- Use of evergreen products without an expiration date

Negative Policies and Protocols

- No restrictions on the widespread sale and use of disposable plastic water/beverage bottles, cups and lids, straws, plastic ware, food containers

Attention to Plastics

- No single use plastic bags are provided by Eastern National at its retail operations

Recommendations for Improvement

- Implement a widespread program to replace plastics in all operations with compostable materials

Relative Grade: C-

Shenandoah National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Food, beverage, lodging, retail, laundry, showers, horseback riding, and automotive services are provided by DNC Parks and Resorts at Shenandoah Inc. The concessionaire is required to have an Environmental Management Program (EMP) which addresses compliance with laws and regulations, employee training, reporting, response to spills, and monitoring potential impacts to park resources.

Further, the concessions operating plan sets out additional specific environmental requirements. These include:

- Green Key certification required for all lodge buildings
- Installation of LED lighting
- Energy Star appliances required
- Use of programmable and motion sensing lighting
- Use of programmable thermostats
- Installation of lodging energy management system
- Installation of low flow urinals and faucets
- Showers are on timers
- Use of energy misers in vending machines
- Use of alternative fuel vehicles for housekeeping operations
- Required organic and vegetarian food options in dining
- Food sourced within 200 miles
- Reduce the use of cooking oil 50%
- Use of recyclable or compostable table settings
- No use of hormones nor antibiotics in meat and poultry
- Divert 100% of organic waste from landfills
- Boxes made from 100% post-consumer content material
- Recycling of paper, newsprint, cardboard, propane cannisters, biometals, electronic, light tubes, plastics, aluminum, glass, waste oil/fuel, antifreeze, batteries

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- None

Recommendations for Improvement

- Eliminate the use of plastics in all aspects of operations particularly those which are often single use in nature
- Introduce the use of environmental performance metrics to evaluate efforts in reaching goals

Relative Grade: B+

Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Statue Cruises LLC provides passenger ferry service, food, beverage, and retail services. Evelyn Hill Inc provides retail, food and beverage services. Both concessionaires are required to have an Environmental Management Program (EMP) focused on compliance, training, reporting, spill response, and monitoring of operational impacts on park resources.

Further, concessions contract operation plans set out additional environmental requirements. These include:

- Us of ultra-low sulfur fuel on boats
- Solar panels and wind power generators on all vessels
- EPA Tier 4 propulsion engines on vessels
- Recycling to include paper, newsprint, cardboard, biometals, plastics, aluminum, glass, used oil, refrigerant, solvents, antifreeze, paint, batteries, and lamps
- Locally grown produce

Negative Policies and Protocols

- None

Attention to Plastics

- None

Recommendations for Improvement

- Eliminate the use of plastics in all operations
- Use of environmental performance metrics

Relative Grade: B-

Yellowstone National Park Data Sheet

Positive Policies and Protocols

Lodging, food, beverage, retail, campground, RV park, transportation, interpretive tours, marina and boat rentals, guided trips, laundry/showers, and vending are provided by Xanterra Parks and Resorts Inc and DNC Parks and Resorts at Yellowstone LLC.

Automotive and retail sales are provided by Yellowstone Park Service Stations Inc. Bear Aware LLC/Teton Backcountry provides equipment rentals, interpretive services, and retail sales. Thirty-nine small entities provide backcountry tours on horseback and snow vehicles. All entities must have an environmental management program. Additional required environmental practices include the following.

- Recycling of paper, newsprint, cardboard, bimetals, plastics, aluminum, glass, electronics, white goods, fishing line, filters, pallets, tires, batteries, alkaline, lithium, NiCad, mercury, clothing, shoes, boots, horseshoes
- Required to reuse boxes, packing materials, printer cartridges, and packaging for supply deliveries
- Waste diversion of at least 50%
- Reusable or compostable utensils/service ware in employee dining areas
- Use of compostable containers, utensils, plates, cups, and paper products
- Food condiments provided in bulk dispensers
- Installation of two composting systems
- Installation of recycled content flooring
- Maintenance activities achieve LEED Silver level
- Retail preference to locally produced, recycled content items
- Required to hire a Green Parks Plan manager
- Use of waste vegetable oil to power boilers and transport
- Find alternates to candy wrappers, snack bags, and plastic bags
- Divert 75% of construction/renovation waste and use recycled materials in new construction
- NPS commits to the diversion of 44% of waste
- 100% renewable power purchased by one concessionaire
- Acquisition of Energy Star appliance
- Upgrade to energy efficient cooler motors
- No use of incandescent lighting. Use LED lighting
- Use of motion detectors for lighting areas
- Use E-10 gasohol fuel
- No idling of vehicles
- Hire a contractor to evaluate energy efficiency in facilities

- Install a solar system at the Gardiner Service Center
- Offset 100% of fuel-based electricity with wind purchases through certified provider
- Convert laundry operations from heating oil to propane
- Obtain LEED Operations & Maintenance Certifications for three hotels and Green Seal Bronze level for one hotel
- Install monitoring of energy and water use at NPS employee housing
- Vegetarian menu items
- Preference for purchasing locally sourced organic foods and beverages
- Installation of aerators on faucets, shower heads. Low flush toilets.
- Re-use of grey water and rainwater in operations

Negative Policies and Protocols

- One concessions contract specifically permits the sale of bottled water without restriction

Attention to Plastics

- Must sell reusable water bottles and provide water bottle refilling stations at stores
- All single-use plastic beverage containers must be removed from operations by the seventh year of the contract in line with the Secretarial Order on plastics
- No sales of water in disposable bottles (one concessionaire)
- One concessionaire required to construct nine water bottle refilling stations
- No plastic bags may be used in retail sales. Only compostable paper bags
- NPS will eliminate single use plastics in operations by 2032
- Xanterra has eliminated the sale of single use plastic water bottles
- 40 water bottle refilling stations have been installed by concessionaires and the NPS

Recommendations for Improvement

- Expand all the best practices to all the concessionaires and to NPS operations

Relative Grade: A

Appendix B: FOIA Results