

# Recommended Competencies for Managing Visitors and Tourism at World Heritage Sites:

## *A Report from a Workshop at Yellowstone National Park*



Cover Photo: Grand Prismatic Spring in  
Yellowstone National Park, representative of  
the Outstanding Universal Values leading to  
the inscription of the Park on the List of World  
Heritage. *Photo courtesy of Wayne Freimund.*

Recommended Competencies for Managing Visitors and Tourism  
at World Heritage Sites:

A Report from a Workshop at Yellowstone National Park

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For

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National Park Service

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## **Preface**

This report summarizes discussions held at Yellowstone National Park, 12-16 May 2008 concerning technical proficiencies recommended for managing visitors and tourism at World Heritage Sites. This discussion was held as part of the workshop “Alternative Models of Visitor Management” which included managers from eight World Heritage Sites, the National Park Service Washington, DC office, non-governmental organizations and academics. The workshop was convened and organized by The University of Montana under contract with the National Park Service. The authors wish to thank staff at Yellowstone National Park for their assistance with the organization of the workshop and associated logistics, and recognize the multiple contributions of workshop participants to the completion of this report.

The workshop and report was supported in part by the National Park Service Office of International Affairs and The University of Montana College of Forestry and Conservation.



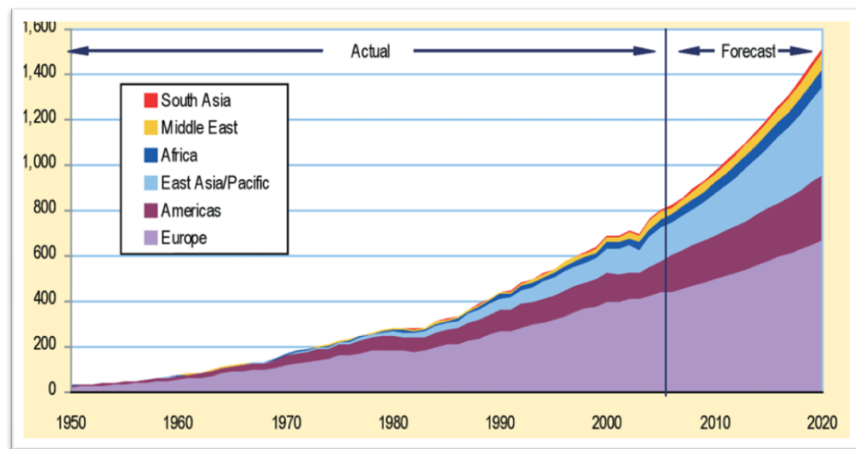
## **Introduction and Background**

Accelerating and diversifying visitor use of World Heritage Sites, coupled with rising expectations of tourism as an engine of economic growth, has strained the capabilities of site managers to protect and present the Outstanding Universal Values (OUV) for which a site was inscribed on the World Heritage List. World Heritage Sites (WHS) exist within a context of change, complexity and uncertainty, underlying the importance of not only of governance and sustainable financial foundations, but also the technical proficiencies, skills and confidence needed to make informed decisions, monitor their outcomes, and change management as needed. The current 878 sites inscribed on the list of World Heritage record enormous variation not only in the issues, challenges and opportunities confronting them, but in the capacities of the organizations and individuals responsible for their stewardship.

It is within this context that strategies for building skills and technical proficiencies must be identified and implemented. Decisions also must be made about which organizations will provide leadership in providing the training and continuing education needed, to whom and in what venues. Currently, 185 countries have ratified the World Heritage Convention, and many hold particular skills, perspectives and experiences that would be useful in advancing the state of practice of visitor and tourism

management. The role of the U.S. National Park Service (NPS), as a global conservation leader, is particularly significant, as its actions, policies and strategies are often looked to as model approaches to management and capacity building. Given that many view WHS as models of managerial excellence and learning platforms for managers of other protected areas, there is a significant opportunity for the NPS to impact the state of conservation of these globally significant resources.

The question of which technical proficiencies are needed by WHS managers is an important starting point in addressing a capacity building program. Managers of natural and mixed heritage sites (in particular) must not only respond to a wide

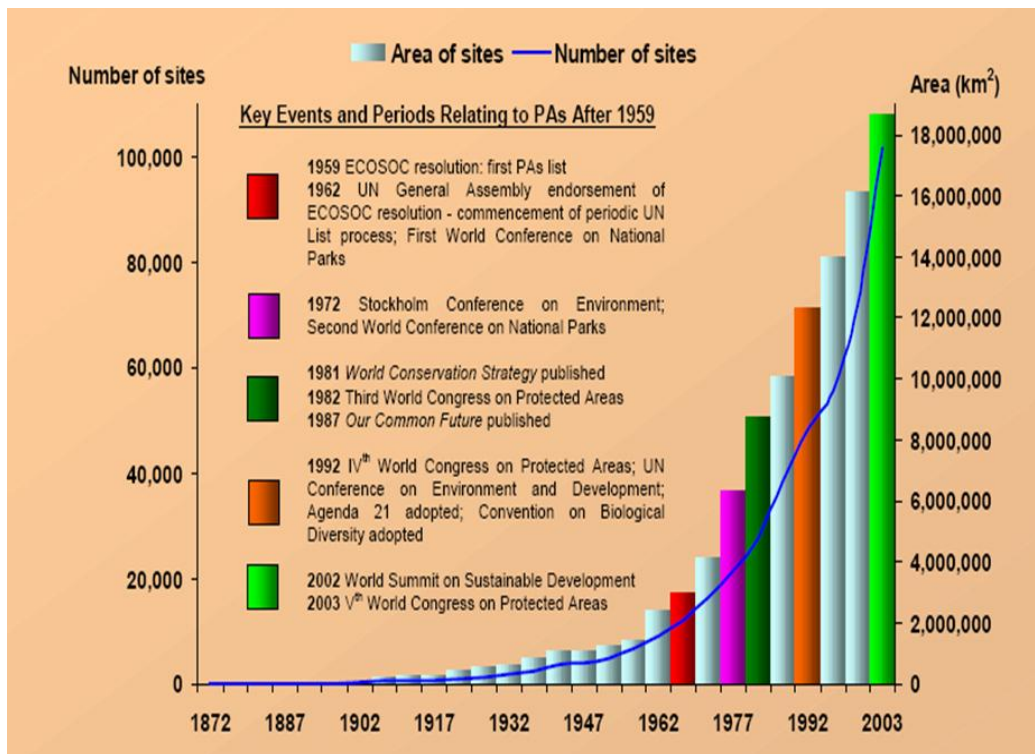


**Growing international Travel will lead to increased visitation at World Heritage Sites, accelerating the need for technically proficient managers (Source: UN World Travel Organization).**

variety of social-ecological processes, trends and forces, but must also deal with a growing variety of competing expectations and demands. Equipping managers to competently respond to external forces and broadening expectations is not an easy task, and it will require not only continuing education, but substantial training as well.



This report focuses on the technical proficiencies and skills needed to address management of visitors and tourism at WHS and other protected areas. The overall objective of the report is to present the results of a workshop and discussions about what technical proficiencies and skills workshop participants recommended to manage visitors and tourism in WHS. Such information would be helpful to the NPS in assessing its role in capacity building on the international stage.



**The growing number and area of protected areas is increasing the demand for technically proficient managers. But, what skills are needed? (Source: UN World Conservation Monitoring Center and IUCN).**

	Long Range 15-20 years	Foreseeable Future 5-Years	Current Year
Why?	Foundation Statement		
What?	General Management Plan* <i>* Required by law</i>	Strategic Plan	Annual
How?	Park Program Plan (e.g., Resource Stewardship Strategy)	Implementation Plans (e.g., Commercial Services Plan)	Performance Plan & Report

Temporal and functional scales used in U.S. NPS planning demonstrate that different technical proficiencies are needed for different types of plans.

## The Workshop

The workshop upon which this report is based was held in Yellowstone National Park 12-16 May 2008. It involved about 25 people representing five U.S. national parks and four foreign parks and protected areas, academicians specializing in protected area management, representatives of various non-governmental organizations, personnel from the World Heritage Center and staff from the NPS Office of International Affairs (see Appendix A for list of participants). Of the nine parks, eight had been previously designated as World Heritage Sites.

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**A variety of management challenges are found in World Heritage Sites for which specific technical proficiencies are needed.**

High visitation levels and associated impacts affecting WH values

Construction at sites or in areas adjoining sites not appropriate with WH values

Few sites have tourism management plans

Data is needed at many sites on tourism visitation levels and visitor impacts

Lack of personnel to monitor impacts

Few sites educate visitors and local people on WH and the site's outstanding universal values

Generating community economic benefits has been difficult

Unable to bring in the industry to help address critical WH site problems

Urban pressures

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The first four days of the workshop focused on building capacity among participants to understand the issues and opportunities in five areas of visitor and tourism management<sup>1</sup>. These five areas included:

Managing visitor experiences

- Managing visitor congestion
- Managing facilities for visitors
- Interpretation and education
- Managing relationships with stakeholders.

Participants presented case studies on each of the topics followed by discussion and debate on management strategies and problem framing (fuller descriptions of the topics are shown in Appendix B). This discussion laid the foundation for identifying the various capacities needed by site managers. On the fifth day of the workshop, participants directly engaged the question of the technical proficiencies needed to manage visitors and tourism in World Heritage

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<sup>1</sup> Proceedings of this component of the workshop have been distributed to participants on compact disk.

Sites. The workshop emphasized technical proficiencies rather than other capacity building needs, such as sustainable financing, governance, organizational structure, and leadership as it was focused on management of visitors and tourism. These other capacities are most likely important in a variety of situations as well.

The process on the fifth day was built upon the “nominal group” process. The nominal group process was designed by Delbecq and Vande Ven (1971) to efficiently and fairly extract information from a group of people. The information is initially extracted as short responses to an issue or question which is then followed by clarification and ranking processes. Initial discussions are held in a small group (about 7 people in this case) which was facilitated by one of the organizing individuals. More specifically, the process followed in the workshop involved the following components:

1. *Silent generation of responses to the question*  
(What are the most important technical proficiencies needed to manage visitors and tourism at World Heritage Sites?). In this stage, members of the three small groups spend about five minutes silently generating short (five to seven word responses) to the question.
2. *Round robin listing of responses in the small group.*  
Each person in turn lists one response at a time

which was recorded on a flip chart by the small group facilitator for all to see. During this stage, no discussion is allowed, except for occasional points of clarification.

3. *Clarifying responses.* Once all the responses are listed on the flip chart – several pages were needed for each small group – a discussion ensues concerning understanding of what the responses mean, if it is not apparent, as well as combining responses that are apparently duplicated.
4. *Ranking of responses.* In this stage, respondents were asked to identify the “best” responses to the question through a voting process. In this workshop, each participant was allocated six votes which could be applied in any form the participant desired; a participant for example could allocate all six votes to one response or vote one time for each of six responses.
5. *Integration of small group responses.* In this stage, the seven to eight most important responses (as identified in the ranking process) of each small group were integrated (there were some duplicates) leading to a list of 20 potentially important technical proficiencies.

6. *Ranking of integrated list.* Following the integrated list, respondents voted for the most important of the 20 technical proficiencies, which resulted in a list of 11.
7. *Discussion of highest priority proficiencies.* The first six stages required about three hours. The afternoon was dedicated to a discussion of each of the 11 most important technical proficiencies.

## **Key Technical Proficiencies**

Before presenting the key technical proficiencies identified, it should be noted again that parks, protected areas and other similar sites exist in a context of growing change, complexity, contentiousness and uncertainty. This context places strains on any organization's capacity to make defensible and trackable decisions. Thus, the set of skills needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is substantially broader than (if inclusive of) the technical proficiencies needed in the past. However, the context also suggests that site managers need frameworks and processes that will help them "work through" unexpected challenges and figure out ways of getting around the many barriers to achieving goals established for the areas under their jurisdictions. While it should be obvious that the technical proficiencies identified below cannot be found with equal amounts of competence in any one individual, there must still be awareness of these competencies, when they are needed, and how to secure them.

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### ***Key Technical Proficiencies Identified in Workshop***

Monitoring of social and biophysical impacts

Developing revenue generation mechanisms

Financial management and business planning capacity

Visitor use and tourism planning, oriented toward Outstanding Universal Values

Administration, human resource management/staff capacity building and leadership

Partnership/stakeholder outreach and engagement

Developing a vision for the area

Knowledge of facility and infrastructure design and construction

Marketing

Visitor education and interpretation

Regulation and enforcement

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The nominal group process resulted in identification of a large number of technical proficiencies. The original proficiencies are listed, as they were identified in each of the three small groups, in Appendix C. The most important proficiencies identified by each of the three small groups are shown in Appendix D. In both cases, the wording used by participants is used in the listing. In this section, the 11 most important technical proficiencies identified by the participants as a whole (stages 6 and 7) are presented and briefly described. They are not listed in any order of priority.

### ***Monitoring***

Participants identified knowledge of visitor use and biophysical monitoring as a key technical proficiency. Monitoring may be defined as the periodic and systematic measurement of indicator variables, tabulation of the resulting data and evaluation of the data to determine trends and if actions are needed.

Monitoring is an essential component of such contemporary notions as adaptive management, Limits of Acceptable Change and the Visitor Experience and Resource Protection planning frameworks. Participants suggested that site managers should have knowledge of the “theory” of monitoring, how to capture the information gained and how to modify a public use plan if needed.

An important point in this discussion was to understand who the audience would be for any continuing education or training. Participants also discussed the need to examine and use the professional/technical literature for ideas, approaches, concepts and methodologies for developing a monitoring plan.

Data that would be monitored could include spatial and temporal patterns of visitor use; impacts of visitors on outstanding universal values, on visitor experiences and the biophysical condition of the area; attitudes and beliefs; and demographic characteristics of visitors. In addition, participants suggested that in some places monitoring of communities may be useful, particularly if site management objectives included collaboration and poverty alleviation.

### ***Revenue generation mechanisms***

Many protected areas lack adequate and sustainable sources of funding needed for their stewardship. Given that management of these areas, including WHS, requires substantial infusion of funding to support operations needed to protect the



OUV (and other values contained within the site), site managers should have an awareness of the alternative mechanisms for raising and generating revenue. Of primary interest among workshop participants were methods of raising funds from tourists and the tourism industry.

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*Generating revenue to support management of a site has become a key objective for many World Heritage management organizations.*

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There was also recognition among workshop participants that some revenue generating tools, such as use fees, are implemented for reasons other than funding operations. These reasons may include building awareness of values, educating visitors, and measuring use.

Participants suggested that site managers should have awareness of such items as:

- The variety of tools available
- Ability to forecast amount of revenue to be generated
- Building transparency into revenue collection and distribution of funds
- Policy blockages to revenue generating mechanisms
- Developing mechanisms to ensure revenues are allocated to conservation and visitor management purposes.

Participants also discussed the notion of combining training dealing with revenue generation with incentive programs aimed at increasing site manager use of these mechanisms.

### ***Financial management and business planning capacity***

Protected areas, as noted above, require funding to support operations and infrastructure development. Regardless of the source of funding, the expenditure of funds must be directed by accepted financial management practices. Such practices, actually good business principles, are fundamental to efficient and appropriate use of the funds available, ensuring they are spent on appropriate materiel, personnel and services. Thus, understanding financial management principles and processes is an important skill needed at the site management level.

In addition, since most World Heritage Sites are managed by public agencies or parastatal organizations, there is a need for transparency and accountability in spending of funds. This means that the site's financial management plan and spending procedures must be open to public scrutiny and regular audits. Site management should be aware of and support scrutiny and audit as it ensures that their spending is in the public's interest. This will result in developing trust in the agency.

Such requirements suggest that site management must not only support the notion of a financial management plan, but must have the skills, motivation and competencies to ensure such

plans are implemented. Transparency in financial matters is sometimes a controversial topic, but in places characterized by rapid change and distrust in government it is an essential policy, and thus management must hold the skills to ensure it can achieve such transparency. Direction for this may have to come at the highest levels of government.

### ***Visitor use and tourism planning oriented toward OUVs***

The World Heritage Convention requires states parties to protect and present the Outstanding Universal Values which form the basis for inscription of a site on the World Heritage List. For the vast majority of sites, management of tourism to meet this requirement is both an opportunity and challenge. Developing

and implementing plans for visitors and tourism is itself a challenging task, often occurring within a dynamic, contentious setting, as participants in the workshop have experienced. Managers must often make decisions between competing goals – protecting the OUV, but also allowing access for visitors to understand, appreciate and enjoy them.

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*Protecting the Outstanding Universal Values leading to a site's inscription and building opportunities for visitors to experience and appreciate them are key objectives in planning for tourism and visitation.*

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Making tradeoffs among competing goals is not an easy task, and requires not only technical information about the consequences of varying tradeoffs but a variety of value judgments about the social utility, costs and benefits of differing scenarios. Under current models of planning, many site managers

contract with consultants for the preparation of a plan. While there is nothing inherently “wrong” with this approach, it does lead to a situation where managers never develop the competencies and proficiencies needed to make decisions.

Planning requires both technical planning skills (including knowledge of visitor preferences, expectations and use patterns) and public engagement proficiencies. Knowledge of value systems, the interplay of OUVs with other site values, and the consequences of varying alternatives on communities and values are important proficiencies in the manager’s repertoire of planning skills. Planning for visitation also includes understanding the key interpretative messages to be delivered to visitors. None of these are enhanced with a consultant model of public use planning.

To some extent, planning can be viewed as not only the exercise of technical expertise, but also as a capacity building skill, a basic premise of the World Heritage Centre’s Public Use Planning manual (World Heritage Centre 2007). By using the planning process as a means of building some technical proficiencies, protected areas build abilities within the organization to respond to developing issues and opportunities.

## ***Administration, human resource management/staff capacity building, and leadership***

The site management organization varies from small, nearly single person staffs, to very large organizations that may have hundreds of employees in a variety of divisions and departments. Administering this organization, regardless of size, is ultimately the manager's responsibility. Much of this administration has to do with human resource management (hiring, advancement, evaluation, etc.) building the technical

competency of the staff itself and providing overall leadership and even inspiration to the staff to keep it operating at a high level of productivity.

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*Leadership is fundamental to the success of any organization's mission.*

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Leadership is an important quality of an effective site manager. But there are real questions about training people to be inspirational, courageous and visionary. It is more realistic to expect site managers to have abilities to structure organizational environments that encourage employees to do their best, to work with staffs in identifying strengths and weaknesses, and in implementing strategies to deal with administrative and human resource issues. Of particular significance is providing mentoring programs for younger employees so they develop technical proficiencies and leadership skills, which will aid in stabilizing the site organization. Site

managers with good leadership skills will also reward good decisions.

Finally, administration means also procurement of personnel, supplies and needed infrastructure. In this respect, this proficiency goes along with good financial management.

### ***Partnership/stakeholder outreach and engagement***

Effective action in society requires lots of different people and organizations working in a variety of roles. Partners are essential for nearly every aspect of site management. Whether it is working with partners or engaging constituencies and members of civil society, site managers need skills in interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution, and communication. Given the emphasis recently on community engagement and working with the tourism industry to secure sustainable sources of funding, the ability to generate enthusiasm, address community concerns and respond to complaints has developed into an important needed proficiency.

Cooperation with other government agencies, NGOs, and important constituencies is important in many places. In some situations, needed scientific support is conducted by universities or independent scientific organizations. Site managers need communication skills that not only will help them understand research results, but will also be useful in communicating

information needs to scientists so they conduct research valuable in addressing issues.

Communication is a difficult process. Working closely with partners, who have varying goals is challenging. Holding public meetings and workshops about protected area issues may not be comfortable. But these are tasks that cannot be avoided in the era

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*Engaging the public and communities is a fundamental prerequisite of effective protected area management. But how does one communicate the complex character of protected area systems in context of change and contentiousness?*

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of 21st century protected area management. A number of questions come to mind: How does one create partnerships? How should workshops be structured? What skills are needed to operate in a hostile public meeting? How does one resolve seemingly intractable conflicts? How can the OUVs of the site be effectively communicated to constituencies that don't currently understand them, and the resulting obligations?

These questions confront site managers on almost a daily basis. However, many site managers, particularly in natural heritage sites, come from disciplinary backgrounds and training that avoided or did not consider human relationships and communication skills. Achieving better skills in this arena would go a long way toward protecting values and providing local benefits.

### ***Developing a vision for the area***

While the protected area normally has a decree or legislation establishing it, such documents do not normally identify with specificity the values for which the area was

established. Too, the Outstanding Universal Values identified in the nomination document for the List of World Heritage have in the past only vaguely been described. Therefore, another needed skill is the ability to articulate, with this context a more specific vision and mission. The vision is the “Velcro” that holds everything together, as one of the Workshop participants stated. As such it provides the direction and motivation for all the visitor and tourism management activity that occurs within and adjacent to the site.

Building a vision that constituencies can agree to is not necessarily an easy task. It requires leadership, as well as an understanding of communication skills, ability to work with various constituencies, and a certain amount of trust among participants in planning processes. There are a lot of visions associated with World Heritage Sites, but most of them are only implicit, many are conflicting, and few have the support of more than one constituency. Even though there are significant challenges to developing a vision, much less implementing it, it flows from statements of purpose in legislation and the nomination document and remains the foundation for management.

Vision statements are usually short, and, well, visionary. They are generally written as one sentence to describe a state or condition of the site in the future. They explicate dreams and goals. They should be widely shared. But developing widely shared visions will take hard work, but once they are developed,



people can be reminded of what they agreed to and motivated to work toward them.

### ***Knowledge of facility and infrastructure design and construction***

If a vision gives us guidance of where to go, developing infrastructure and facilities for visitor use and tourism is one of the pathways to get us there. Infrastructure involves roads, highways, trails, visitor centers, administrative facilities,

maintenance sheds, toilets, sewage treatment, water systems, signs, parking lots, computer networks and intelligent transportation systems. Knowledge of this technology and the requirements for construction and development is a fundamental requirement of a competent site manager.

Not only must a manager understand how such development would proceed, but awareness of maintenance is also a part of the needed skill set. We

have all seen wonderful facilities developed, funded by generous donors or governments, but then become dysfunctional or inoperative because they were not appropriately maintained. In addition, there is a greater awareness and constituency demands for facilities to be “green” or made using sustainable processes and local materials to reduce carbon footprints.

In some ways, one could expect protected areas, and World Heritage Sites in particular, to demonstrate the state of

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*Tourism and visitation require facilities. Managers must understand how such facilities not only impact the environment, but also enhance opportunities for visitors to experience Outstanding Universal Values.*

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practice in green design and maintenance, an idea consistent with the notion that these sites can, and should, serve as learning platforms for other protected area managers. This will be difficult, because unlike other types of management areas, facilities are difficult and costly to reconstruct once they have been built, even if the technology or facility siting was not originally the best.

### ***Marketing***

Participants viewed knowledge of marketing as an important technical proficiency needed by site managers. While marketing is commonly miscast solely as promotion, it is about making connections between people and the products (experiencing the Outstanding Universal Values of World Heritage Sites) they desire. Marketing involves the four “P’s”: price, product, promotion and place. To implement a successful protected area marketing program, site managers need some understanding of how these fit together in a comprehensive and systematic manner.

This will involve understanding the tourism market (at regional, national and international levels), how can it be segmented different ways and the meaning of the different segments for the protected area, including visitation numbers, visitor expectations, spending patterns, and revenue potential. There is no such thing as an average visitor, so site managers will need to make decisions about the target market. In doing so, managers need a good understanding of travel patterns, the large

scale forces affecting them, and how they can overcome the inevitable barriers to the connections.

Because marketing strategies also affect the viability of the tourism industry, managers need to understand how the industry is structured (e.g., tour operators, wholesalers, etc.) as well as their views about the viability of different market segments. Thus, working with the tourism industry is an essential part of developing a marketing strategy. Some may argue that marketing is not an appropriate activity for protected area managers. In reality, however, marketing decisions are being made by managers whenever they implement any kind of visitor management policy. Such policies are viewed differently by different segments and thus may cause some segments to drop out, but be attractive to others.

### ***Education and interpretation***

The World Heritage Convention obligates states parties to both “protect and present” the OUV for which they were

inscribed. Presentation of OUV requires that visitors, and other constituencies, be provided with information about them. This is commonly done through provision of educational and interpretative programs that usually involve naturalists/guides, signing, visitor centers, trails, brochures and electronic media. Such programs provide visitors with the opportunities not only to

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*Interpretation and education not only helps managers communicate Outstanding Universal Values to visitors, but also may help address impact issues.*

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learn about the values contained within the site, but also to appreciate them. Further, interpretation often has an inspirational component, where visitors are encouraged by the program to seek additional information or even take action for protection of the particular site, or others.

While many sites do have active educational programs, changing contexts have raised new questions, issues and opportunities about how interpretative material can be presented. For example, can a site set up a not-for-profit and administratively separate educational institute? This type of institute may provide educational programming, such as courses, not normally within the purview of agency interpretation.

Children are a particularly significant segment for interpretation. Building historical, cultural and ecological literacy is a foundation for civil society. Educational systems may not provide the programming for specific areas, and a site visit by a local school is often a very useful complementary program to formal education.

Another question concerns linking interpretative programming with local arts and crafts. Often, local residents have important sustenance or spiritual linkages to a protected area, and have developed crafts that express such linkages. How can managers use these linkages not only to strengthen interpretative programming but also in enhancing revenues to local, dependent communities? Finally, sites are faced with a set

of questions regarding the delivery of interpretative messages. Who delivers such messages? How are guides, both agency employed and independents, trained, and by whom? Should interpreters and guides be licensed, and if so, what are the licensing criteria?

### ***Regulation and enforcement***

Protected areas are by definition different than the areas in which they are situated. Visitors entering them are subject to a number of sanctions and norms that are different from their homes. Rules, regulations, codes of ethics are all designed to preserve the OUVs contained in the area. Managers need to hold proficiencies with regard to development of rules or alternative actions that are appropriate to protect the OUVs.

Administrative procedures are important technicalities in development of rules and penalties when rules are broken. Managers must communicate to agency counsel the need for certain rules and the behavior that should be prohibited.

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*Enforcement of rules is not only needed to protect values, but also to maintain respect of site management.*

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However, out of ignorance or because of deliberate action, some people break these rules. Enforcement is therefore an important technical proficiency. When rules are not enforced, or enforced unequally, the agency loses the attention and deference of visitors or the local community.

Enforcement of rules is an art and skill itself. Should violators be treated in a “heavy-handed” manner? Should rangers

and wardens seek to understand reasons for violations? Should there be an “educational” component to an enforcement action? Therefore, managers need proficiencies in developing an enforcement approach that is effective, but respectful and “gentle” at appropriate times.

A final aspect of site regulations are those dealing with guiding and tour operators. What licensing is required? Who can provide guiding services? What quality assurances are there for visitors when selecting guides? What conditions are required for an operator to enter? What about use fees? This set of regulations requires substantial technical proficiencies, as raised earlier, in dealing not only with the tourism industry, but understanding visitor experiences and developing an appropriate and effective regulatory environment.

## **Conclusion**

While the workshop identified a set of 11 technical proficiencies that were most important, other proficiencies (see Appendices) were also identified. However, many of those are also entailed within the descriptions of the 11 discussed above. Obviously, a site manager cannot be technically competent in all these areas at the same time. And, many areas will not need all technical proficiencies in the site management.

The technical proficiencies identified above do, however, provide a framework for the NPS to determine what roles it could provide given the availability of funding resources. The NPS holds

strengths in several of the above areas, and perhaps that is where it should start with programs to build technical proficiencies among World Heritage Site managers. It would seem important, however, to use the above discussion as a starting point for developing a strategy—which would include potential topics, timeframes and costs—for an international capacity building program.

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## **Appendix A. List of Workshop Participants**

*Jim Bacon, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Yellowstone National Park, National Park Service*

*Jim Burchfield, Associate Dean, College of Forestry and Conservation, The University of Montana*

*Kerri Cahill, Visitor Use Specialist, Denver Service Center, National Park Service*

*Dennis Castleman, Vice President, Travel Industry Association of America*

*Linda Dahl, Chief of Planning, Yosemite National Park, National Park Service*

*Kate Dodson, Deputy Director, Sustainable Development, United Nations Foundation*

*Andy Drumm, Senior Ecotourism Specialist, The Nature Conservancy*

*Paul Eagles, Professor, Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, the University of Waterloo and Chair, WCPA Task Force on Tourism and Protected Areas*

*Wayne Freimund, Arkwright Professor, Department of Society and Conservation, The University of Montana*

*Jim Gale, Chief of Interpretation, Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, National Park Service*

*Francisco Ursúa Guerrero, Director, Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, Cancún, Mexico*

*Chau Sun Kerya, Director, Angkor Tourism Department, APSARA National Authority, Cambodia*

*Steve McCool, Professor Emeritus, Department of Society and Conservation, The University of Montana*

*Stephen Morris, Chief, Office of International Affairs, National Park Service*

*Sixto Naranjo, Acting Director, Galapagos National Park, Ecuador*

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*Jonathan Putnam, World Heritage Program Officer, Office of International Affairs, National Park Service*

*Danny Rueda Cordova, Chief Ranger, Galapagos National Park, Ecuador*

*John Sacklin, Management Assistant to the Superintendent, Yellowstone National Park, National Park Service*

*Andrew Scanlon, Special Assistant, Jiuzhaigou World Heritage Site, People's Republic of China*

*Barbara West, Superintendent, Chaco Culture National Historical Park, National Park Service*

*Jock Whitworth, Superintendent, Zion National Park, National Park Service*

*XU Rongling, Vice Director, Jiuzhaigou World Heritage Site, People's Republic of China*

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## ***Appendix B. Descriptions of Workshop Topics***

### **Visitor Experience**

At the foundation of managing tourism and visitors is a high quality experience. Experiences are the “products” of a visit, the set of social-psychological rewards that accrue to visitors during and following their visit. They may include such dimensions as solitude, learning about natural and cultural heritage, escape, and adventure. Opportunities for these experiences are what attract people to national parks and World Heritage Sites. This topic would address such questions as: What experiences are appropriate in national parks and World Heritage Sites? How do

managers work with site characteristics to facilitate opportunities for these experiences? Are there park values that conflict with these experiences, and how are those conflicts addressed? What role does research play in identifying these experiences and appropriate management actions?

Yellowstone National Park has been confronted with a number of visitor experience challenges over the decades, most recently with winter use and wildlife viewing (particularly wolves). How are such challenges addressed? Are there particular principles or concepts that have been useful? How would one know if approaches to these experience challenges have been successful? At Reserva de la Biosfera de Sian Ka'an, wildlife viewing, involving both mammals and birdlife is also a major opportunity. Here, one might focus on how visitors are managed to minimize impacts to wildlife? How are guides employed and how do visitors respond to management are two questions that might also be addressed.

### **Visitor Congestion**

The growing popularity of national parks and other protected areas has led to increased visitation, and at a number of sites congested roads, trails, visitor centers and other sites. Congestion leads to a number of consequences, such as reduced visitor satisfaction and pollution, which adversely affect visitor experiences. This topic would address such questions as is congestion defined? How much congestion is acceptable? How does congestion affect park values? What techniques are useful in addressing congestion? What is the role of alternative transportation (e.g., shuttle buses, cable cars, trains) and managing visitor flows in reducing congestion?

For Yosemite National Park, the use of the Visitor Experience and Resource Protection framework to address floating the Kern River might be a good place to start. Such frameworks have distinctive advantages in helping define the issue as well as find successful resolutions to it. In Jiuzhaigou Valley Scenic and Historic Interest Area, large numbers of visitors requires mass transportation. How does this system work? Are visitors happy with it? Is the cost worth the benefits?

## **Interpretation and Education**

One mechanism for enhancing visitor experiences is interpretation. Another is education. In protected areas, interpretation and education not only have the effect of increasing the quality of visitor experiences, but also help the managing agency in achieving other goals, such as reducing visitor impacts. In a larger sense, a more appreciative public that would be more supportive of park management and funding.

Chaco Culture National Historical Park represents an outstanding example of past civilizations occupying now arid regions. What interpretive programs are effective? What roles do visitor or learning centers play in 21<sup>st</sup> century park management? What kinds of new interpretive mechanisms are available? What kinds of partnerships are useful in developing interpretive and educational programs? To what extent do such programs build support for park management?

## **Visitor Facilities**

Various facilities are needed for visitors to enjoy and interact with park resources and values. Facilities include visitor and learning centers, intermodal transportation nodes and facilities, trails, overlooks, interpretive signs and so on. Facilities may also include lodging, food services and craft/book shops. Developing facilities means that some park values may be adversely impacted in order for visitors to engage the park. This topic would address such questions as: What facilities are appropriate in a park, given park values? What criteria are used to determine appropriateness? Where should facilities be located? How can facilities be designed and located to minimize their impact while enhancing visitor experiences?

In Zion National Park, visitor facilities are principally constrained to a narrow, deeply entrenched canyon, while in Angkor Archaeological Park, facilities occur in some of the more sensitive locations. In Zion, managers must deal with providing supporting facilities in this canyon, while at Angkor there may be challenges of locating facilities to minimize conflicts with the outstanding

universal values contained there. How are decisions addressing such challenges made?

### **Working with the tourism industry and other stakeholders**

The tourism industry is a major component in protected area management. It not only provides facilities and services needed by visitors, it also has important influence in generating demand for park resources and values. The industry – although in many cases, highly fragmented – has a significant dependence on parks and how they are managed. It is one of the major stakeholders or constituencies involved with parks. The industry can also be, under certain circumstances, a source of sustainable finance options.

Both Galápagos National Park & Marine Reserve and Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park occur on island, volcanic ecosystems, systems which are receiving large amounts of recreational use, and which also contain resident communities. Both parks could explore such questions as: What techniques are used to work with the tourism providers? What role do parks play in influencing tourism marketing, particularly promotion? Are advisory councils composed of tourism players and other constituencies appropriate for park management? What works and what doesn't work when interacting with constituencies? What are the objectives of interacting with stakeholders?

## ***Appendix C: List of proficiencies identified by nominal groups***

### **Group 1**

Understand the ecosystem and site characteristics  
Ensure proper biodiversity, cultural and economic monitoring and evaluation to modify use plans  
Basic monitoring skills of indicators and standards  
Define and understand the objectives and values of the site (OUVs) as part of WH status  
Outstanding Universal Values oriented visitor use plan  
Understanding who comes to the site and why  
Sustainable building infrastructure, siting, design and construction related to or for visitor use  
Ability to understand and work within local and global politics  
Financial management  
Understand the social, political, economic, and physical environment and the area of influence for the site  
Scientific support (technical backstopping)  
A vision of where the site manager wants to go; why the site was inscribed  
Consultation, interpersonal or facilitation skills and strategy with multi-stakeholder groups  
Administrative and leadership skills, financial management  
Revenue generation mechanisms  
Interpretation skills with an eye toward the visitor's role and impact  
Hold grace  
Planning and implementing a plan and evaluating success

### **Group 2**

Well thought out and tested planning process  
How to reach visitors with our environmental or major messages  
Concessionaire or business planning capacity inside management team

Public use inventory and monitoring  
 How to give information to about regulations to  
 visitors/stakeholders/managers  
 Facilitation skills  
 Specific planning capacity for local community conservation  
 Social science and statistical capacity  
 Deep understanding of purpose of site and ability to articulate  
 Public use planning  
 To give education and training to communities and tourist  
 operators  
 Expertise at selecting feasible, effective and appropriate  
 monitoring protocols including indicators and standards  
 Ability to deal with extra-ordinary incidents, emergencies  
 Human resource, leadership skills  
 Safety, security and natural disaster  
 Provide information about meaning of World Heritage Site  
 Information on current and potential economic costs/benefits of  
 visitor use  
 How to network internationally with other managers/tourism  
 providers  
 Development of core competencies/career path for park jobs  
 Information, education and interpretation  
 Good communication skills  
 Understanding of interntional visitation use/trends  
 Streamline staff exchange process  
 Leads hip, public speaking, be a champion  
 Public outreach and engagement  
 Appropriate infrastructure  
 Menus of tested visitor management strategies and tools  
 Direct translation skills/interpretation of global knowledge  
 Grant writing and fund raising  
 Understanding of stakeholders ' interests, public community of  
 World Heritage Site  
 Understanding of local and oral traditions, legends, myths and  
 biases  
 Knowledge of hardware  
 Public use quantification and estimation  
 Concession management/contracting  
 GIS/mapping

Understanding of and access to local and national policies  
Scientific program management  
Sustainability skills and knowledge

### **Group 3**

Develop capacity for natural and cultural resource education  
Ability to develop a plan for park tourism and visitor management  
Community engagement/relations  
Analysis of visitor use  
Knowledge of environmental education techniques to interpret resources of site  
Training for tour operators and guides  
Develop meaningful commitment for frameworks for action  
Park and tourism financial planning and management  
Socio-economic analysis of visitation  
Transportation planning  
Enforcement of policies in management of tourists at the site  
Awareness/appreciation of outstanding universal values  
Management of service quality  
Design/construction/maintenance of visitor facilities  
Concessions management  
Methodologies for measuring impacts of visitors  
Monitor visitor satisfaction  
SWAT teams to define thresholds of sustainability  
Risk and safety management  
Visitor use allocation systems  
Working with the travel industry  
Establish diagnostic baseline for the site/inventory  
Ability to adapt to change and modify the plan  
Develop and embrace a constituency of partners with a common value-based mission  
Conflict management  
Market development  
Establish tourism chambers of commerce  
Develop desired visitor experiences



## ***Appendix D: High ranking proficiencies identified by nominal group***

### **Group 1**

Deep understanding of purpose and meaning of site and ability to articulate to visitors  
Human resource, internal leadership skills  
Concessionaire or business planning and contracting capacity inside management team  
Public use and resource inventory and monitoring  
Knowledge of park infrastructure and its maintenance and suitability  
Leadership, public speaking, be a champion, facilitation skills  
Well thought out and tested planning process

### **Group 2**

Planning capabilities  
Monitoring and analysis of visitor use  
Facility construction and management  
Community, partner and stakeholder engagement and relationship building and management  
Regulation and enforcement  
Financing  
Concessions, licensees and permits management  
Education and interpretation for guides and staff  
Marketing

### **Group 3**

Administration and skills  
Tools for generating revenue  
Monitoring of indicators and standards to evaluate and modify use plans  
Partnership development and maintenance  
Understand the context (social, political, physical and economic)