

# Memo

**To:** National Park Service Director, Department of the Interior  
**From:** Keith DeMartini, San Francisco State University Graduate Student  
**Date:** October 15, 2008  
**Re:** National Park Service Workforce Planning Analysis

---

The National Park Service (NPS), an entity in the United States Department of Interior, will face many workforce-planning challenges in the near future. From managing a large and complex network of volunteers and private contractors, empowering a diverse workforce, developing employees skills, and managing many internal and external barriers to success, the NPS must strategically implement a workforce plan to enable them to succeed in their mission.

## **Organizational Requirements Planning:**

*Goals Analysis:* NPS's Guiding Principles create an overall strategy for the organization. (NPS, 2008) Excellent Service and Productive Partnerships provide guidance for NPS employees on how to interact with the public and external forces. The workforce must be qualified and focus their scarce resources on providing the best possible services and effectively doing business with their partners, many of who are volunteers, governmental organizations, and private contractors. Outstanding Employees, Employee Development, and Effective Management principles guide the organization in strengthening the human capital of the current and future workforce. Focusing energy and resources on employee development will have countless benefits to the organizations.

*External Drivers:* Aside from the more transparent external drivers that effect the NPS, such as natural disasters, political instability, and endangered species concerns, some workforce

–related drivers will challenge the NPS’s ability of achieving their mission. Technology development continually changes the ways in which business is conducted throughout the world. Business and planning systems will continue to evolve for the NPS, which will require a direct investment in trained personnel for managing these changes. Also, the retirement of the baby boomers will produce new labor force dynamics including levels of experience, values, and expectations among the workforce. (DOI, 2007) NPS management must be trained to effectively lead an evolving workforce amidst a dynamic external environment.

*Internal Drivers:* NPS must address many internal drivers that may challenge their ability of achieving their mission. With the changing technology, NPS must invest resources in training employees to be technologically proficient. Offering computer classes and software trainings will help to develop a technologically savvy workforce. Because some services are being delivered through contracting, employees must be trained on managing contracts and coordinating projects outside of the organization. Also, the younger workforce expects more “family friendly” policies that allow greater flexibility with work and family life. (NPS, 2007) Any flexible work schedule requires trust and understanding between the employee and manager, and these work schedule agreements must be respected by all parties.

*Workforce Competencies:* In order to be successful in their mission, the NPS must strengthen their competencies in some areas. First, technology and E-government opportunities must be considered and exploited when applicable to increase process efficiency and service delivery. Next, the extensive volunteer network (equating to 5.2 million donated hours valued at \$93.8 million in 2005) must be motivated to volunteer, focused on the NPS’s mission, and productive in providing ancillary services to the organization. (NPS, 2007) Finally, employees

must be held accountable for their work through performance evaluations and linking budget allocations to department successes to foster a productive and accountable working environment.

**Workforce Planning (Attrition Projection):**

Bush's administrative drive to outsource a significant number of federal jobs, many of those coming from the National Park Service, will result in additional attrition in the following year. NPS management must invest resources in strategic workforce planning that must include "developing long-term strategies for acquiring, developing, and retaining staff to achieve programmatic goals." (Ricucci & Naff, 2008) The following attrition projection identifies three major programmatic goals of the NPS, as discussed above, and the underlying attrition assumptions that were made in determining the impact to the current workforce because of Bush's initiative.

First, the NPS must leverage technology to provide the same or better services to the public through a smaller workforce. The implementation of technology, through computer and communication systems, will make the NPS businesses processes more efficient and ease the impact of a reduced workforce. Second, the NPS must continue to manage an effective volunteer network to provide more services and continue to build the volunteer network. Relying on increased and highly trained volunteer resources will bridge a reduced workforce gap for the organization. And third, the NPS must continue to invest in training and development programs to effectively use advanced technology systems, lead a more robust volunteer network, and manage outside contracts.

Considering the programmatic goals of the NPS and the goals of the President, attrition assumptions were made to determine the workforce impact on the NPS. Because of the overarching outsourcing strategy of the White House among all federal agencies, all experience

categories of employees will experience a level of attrition, assumed to be 10%. The strategic workforce planning process conducted by the NPS may identify experience categories of employees that are better equipped to steer the organization into its strategic direction.

Because many of the NPS's less experienced workers (those with 9 or fewer years of experience) make a lower salary and can be efficiently trained to use advanced technology, they will not experience any additional attrition. Keeping the lower salaried employees who are highly capable of adapting to technological environments is cost-effective for the NPS. A study found that education differences are expected in many activities whose technical content is rapidly changing, so older employees' knowledge may become outdated as young, less experienced employees' education provides them with a greater expertise. (Chmiel, 2000)

The workforce in the 10 to 19 year experience category, many of whom are considered middle management, will experience additional attrition of 20%. Because of the NPS's focus on technology, volunteer networks, and contract management, their traditional middle management and hierarchical role in the organization will no longer be as important. Conversely, the workforce in the 20 to 29 year experience category, many of whom are higher management and executive types, will not experience any additional attrition. Because of their high level of experience in managing the current NPS workforce and strong relationships and leadership with the volunteer networks and contracts, their expertise is necessary to focus and lead the organization on its strategic mission. And finally, those who have 30 or more years of experience will see an additional 40% attrition mainly due to retirement incentives.

The total workforce prior to implementing the strategic workforce planning process was 16,277. The attrition assumptions above will result in 4,326 separations, leaving an NPS workforce of 11,951 (a reduction of 26.6%). See appendix for graphs and charts.

## **Recommendations:**

First and foremost, NPS employees and volunteers must take part, in some shape or form, in the strategic workforce planning process. Through providing feedback on the organization's vision and strategies and working with management to develop objectives, their prior and current experiences in the NPS are invaluable. Once a workforce plan has been established, it must be effectively communicated to the workforce who will be responsible for bridging the current organization to its strategic plan. Gaining their support, focusing their resources, and motivating them to succeed in the NPS will help to ensure a smooth transition.

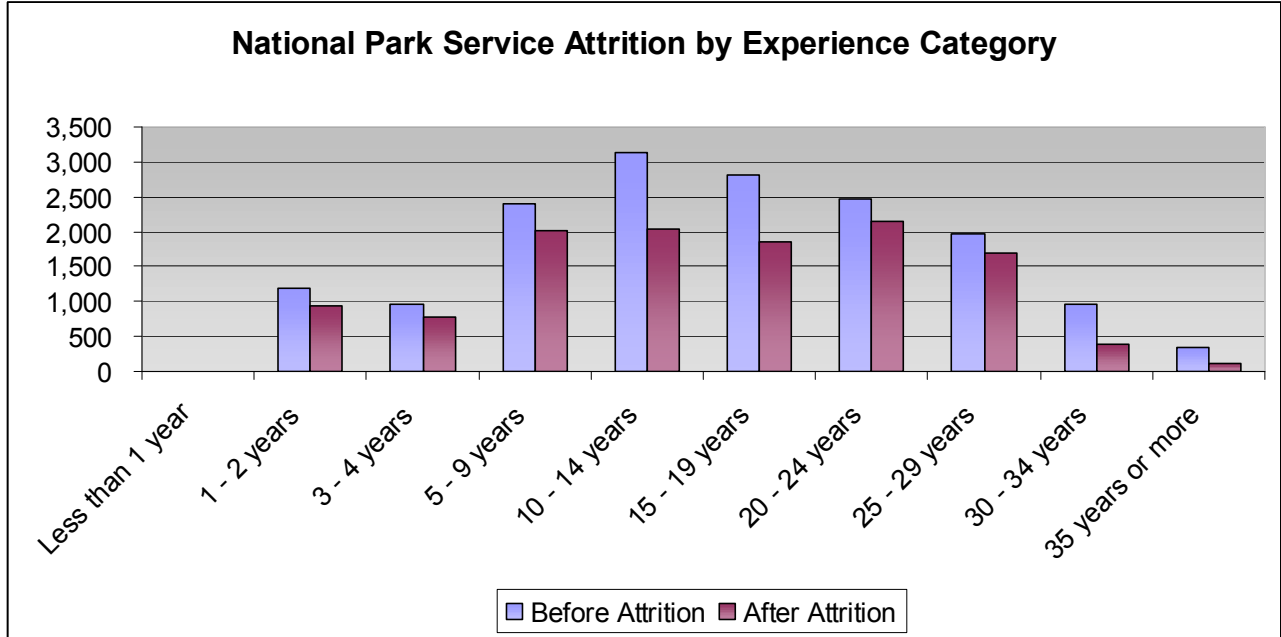
In order to align the major programmatic goals of the NPS with the workforce, they must invest their scarce resources on the targeted employees. First, they must invest in advanced technology systems that will streamline their business processes. Although the initial cost of purchasing and implementing a system will be high, it shall reduce operational expenses in the long run. This will also require an implementation strategy that will bring targeted employees up to speed in a relatively short period of time. Second, the NPS must continue to build the skills of their volunteer network by offering training seminars of focused volunteer activities. They must also implement a strategic marketing campaign at attracting new volunteers with skills in park service areas in hopes of filling the void left from NPS employees who recently left the organization. And third, the NPS must invest in continued training of their targeted employees. They must develop the technological skills of the less experienced workforce, contract and volunteer management skills of the more experience workforce, and the leadership and training skills of the highly experienced workforce. Focusing on training in the short-term will increase the likelihood of the NPS's successful implementation of its strategic vision in the long-term.

## References

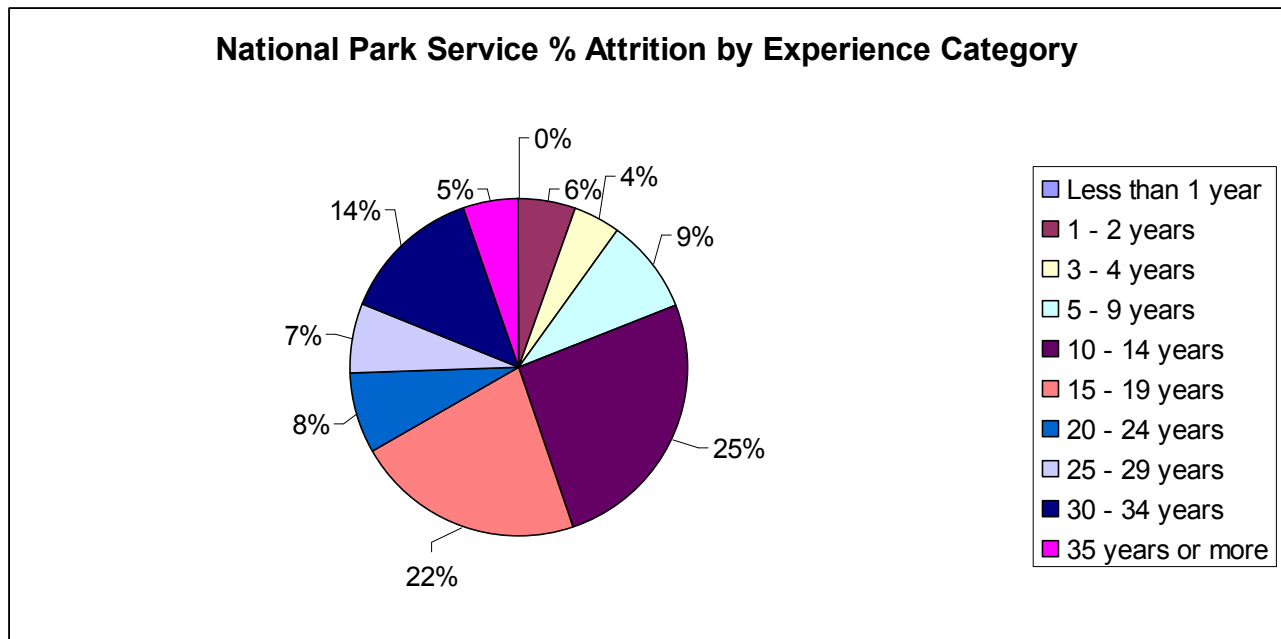
- Chmiel, N. (2000). Introduction to Work and Organizational Psychology: A European Perspective, Blackwell Publishing
- Department of the Interior (DOI), (2007). External & Internal Drivers Impacting The Department of the Interior's Workforce Over the Next Five Years, Appendix A.
- Department of the Interior (DOI), (2007). GPRA Strategic Plan, United States Department of the Interior, Fiscal Years 2007-2012
- National Park Service (NPS), (December 2006). National Park Service Employee Stock Spreadsheet, as of December 2006.
- National Park Service (NPS), (2008). [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov) homepage.
- Riccucci, N. & Naff, K. (2008). Personnel Management in Government: Politics and Process, 6th Edition. Boca Raton: CRC Press

## Appendix

### National Park Service Attrition by Experience Category



### National Park Service Percent Attrition by Experience Category



## National Park Service Workforce Prior to Attrition

Age/LOS	Less than 1 year	1 - 2 years	3 - 4 years	5 - 9 years	10 - 14 years	15 - 19 years	20 - 24 years	25 - 29 years	30 - 34 years	35 years or more	Length of Service - All
Less than 20	0.0	3.5									3.5
20-24	0.0	129.2	56.1	19.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	206.1
25-29	0.0	242.2	201.2	223.7	40.8	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	710.6
30-34	0.0	239.9	211.2	524.7	330.2	74.6	4.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,385.0
35-39	0.0	158.4	136.7	467.6	670.3	362.8	68.9	3.5	0.0	0.0	1,868.2
40-44	0.0	145.5	105.5	344.5	648.4	722.1	395.0	79.3	4.2	0.0	2,444.4
45-49	0.0	129.4	106.0	330.0	546.2	685.2	832.3	521.2	107.6	5.1	3,263.0
50-54	0.0	87.0	81.0	251.6	458.7	487.7	675.5	793.4	432.9	85.3	3,353.0
55-59	0.0	45.1	48.1	156.8	267.9	301.0	337.5	409.6	303.2	114.9	1,984.0
60-64	0.0	9.4	16.3	65.8	123.1	125.0	119.1	113.3	87.8	92.8	752.6
65 or more	0.0	4.5	8.5	24.8	49.2	44.6	48.6	49.6	29.6	47.5	306.8
<b>Age - All</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1,194.1</b>	<b>970.6</b>	<b>2,408.5</b>	<b>3,136.4</b>	<b>2,805.8</b>	<b>2,481.2</b>	<b>1,969.8</b>	<b>965.2</b>	<b>345.6</b>	<b>16,277.2</b>

## National Park Service Calculated Attrition Forecast at Time 2 (Normal Attrition)

Age/LOS	Less than 1 year	1 - 2 years	3 - 4 years	5 - 9 years	10 - 14 years	15 - 19 years	20 - 24 years	25 - 29 years	30 - 34 years	35 years or more	Length of Service - All
Less than 20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20-24	0	18	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	27
25-29	0	37	19	21	5	0	0	0	0	0	82
30-34	0	19	29	48	25	0	0	0	0	0	121
35-39	0	16	10	20	35	11	0	0	0	0	93
40-44	0	15	10	12	24	22	7	3	0	0	94
45-49	0	8	5	13	21	30	14	14	3	0	108
50-54	0	8	8	15	13	14	13	20	14	0	105
55-59	0	6	3	8	18	10	14	20	65	27	172
60-64	0	0	1	7	12	18	31	25	14	20	128
65 or more	0	0	0	4	12	7	9	6	7	11	57
<b>Age - All</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>986</b>

## National Park Service Contracting Out Transitional Probabilities

Age/LOS	Less than 1 year	1 - 2 years	3 - 4 years	5 - 9 years	10 - 14 years	15 - 19 years	20 - 24 years	25 - 29 years	30 - 34 years	35 years or more
Less than 20	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.300	0.300	0.100	0.100	0.500	0.500
20-24	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.300	0.300	0.100	0.100	0.500	0.500
25-29	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.300	0.300	0.100	0.100	0.500	0.500
30-34	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.300	0.300	0.100	0.100	0.500	0.500
35-39	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.300	0.300	0.100	0.100	0.500	0.500
40-44	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.300	0.300	0.100	0.100	0.500	0.500
45-49	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.300	0.300	0.100	0.100	0.500	0.500
50-54	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.300	0.300	0.100	0.100	0.500	0.500
55-59	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.300	0.300	0.100	0.100	0.500	0.500
60-64	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.300	0.300	0.100	0.100	0.500	0.500
65 or more	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.300	0.300	0.100	0.100	0.500	0.500

## National Park Service Estimate Attrition Forecast from Contracting Out Scenario

Age/LOS	Less than 1 year	1 - 2 years	3 - 4 years	5 - 9 years	10 - 14 years	15 - 19 years	20 - 24 years	25 - 29 years	30 - 34 years	35 years or more	Length of Service - All
Less than 20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20-24	0	13	6	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	21
25-29	0	24	20	22	12	1	0	0	0	0	80
30-34	0	24	21	52	99	22	0	0	0	0	219
35-39	0	16	14	47	201	109	7	0	0	0	393
40-44	0	15	11	34	195	217	40	8	2	0	520
45-49	0	13	11	33	164	206	83	52	54	3	618
50-54	0	9	8	25	138	146	68	79	216	43	732
55-59	0	5	5	16	80	90	34	41	152	57	479
60-64	0	1	2	7	37	38	12	11	44	46	197
65 or more	0	0	1	2	15	13	5	5	15	24	80
<b>Age - All</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>3,340</b>

## National Park Service Workforce After Attrition

Age/LOS	Less than 1 year	1 - 2 years	3 - 4 years	5 - 9 years	10 - 14 years	15 - 19 years	20 - 24 years	25 - 29 years	30 - 34 years	35 years or more	Length of Service - All
Less than 20	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
20-24	0	98	43	15	1	0	0	0	0	0	158
25-29	0	181	162	180	24	2	0	0	0	0	549
30-34	0	197	161	424	206	52	4	0	0	0	1,044
35-39	0	126	113	401	434	243	62	3	0	0	1,382
40-44	0	116	84	298	429	484	348	68	2	0	1,831
45-49	0	109	90	284	361	450	736	455	51	3	2,538
50-54	0	71	65	211	308	328	595	695	202	43	2,517
55-59	0	35	40	133	170	201	289	349	86	30	1,333
60-64	0	8	14	52	74	70	76	77	30	27	427
65 or more	0	4	8	18	22	24	34	39	8	13	170
<b>Age - All</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>948</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>2,017</b>	<b>2,030</b>	<b>1,854</b>	<b>2,144</b>	<b>1,685</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>11,951</b>

## National Park Service Total Number of Attritions

Age/LOS	Less than 1 year	1 - 2 years	3 - 4 years	5 - 9 years	10 - 14 years	15 - 19 years	20 - 24 years	25 - 29 years	30 - 34 years	35 years or more	Length of Service - All
Less than 20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20-24	0	31	13	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	48
25-29	0	61	39	43	17	1	0	0	0	0	161
30-34	0	43	50	101	124	22	0	0	0	0	341
35-39	0	32	24	67	236	120	7	0	0	0	486
40-44	0	29	21	47	219	238	47	11	2	0	614
45-49	0	21	16	46	185	235	97	66	57	3	725
50-54	0	16	16	40	150	160	81	99	231	43	836
55-59	0	10	8	24	98	100	48	61	217	85	651
60-64	0	1	3	14	49	55	43	36	58	66	325
65 or more	0	0	1	6	27	21	14	11	22	35	137
<b>Age - All</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>1,106</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>4,326</b>