



NPS

Contingency Plans

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CONTINGENCY PLAN

Effective immediately upon a lapse in appropriations, the National Park Service will take all necessary steps to close and secure national park facilities and grounds in order to suspend all activities except for those that are essential to respond to emergencies involving the safety of human life or the protection of property. Day use visitors will be instructed to leave the park immediately as part of Phase 1 closures. Visitors utilizing overnight concession accommodations and campgrounds will be notified to make alternate arrangements and depart the park as part of Phase 2. Where ever possible, park roads will be closed and access will be denied. National and regional offices and support centers will be closed and secured, except where they are needed to support excepted personnel. These steps will be enacted as quickly as possible while still ensuring visitor and employee safety as well as the integrity of park resources.

The shutdown process will take place in two phases. Phase 1 includes all activities to notify the public of the closure, secure government records and property, and begin winding down operations to essential activities only. Phase 1 will take place over a day and a half. Phase 2 will be initiated by the Director and includes the complete shutdown of all concession facilities and commercial visitor services. Overnight visitors will be given two days to make alternate arrangements and depart the parks. At the end of Phase 2 operations are expected to be at the minimum levels defined below. The entire closure process – both phases – will be completed within four days.

Part 1: Designation of Essential and Continuing Programs/Activities

The Emergency Response Official designation on a Federal ID card is not necessarily a factor in determining excepted personnel. Rather, as defined by the Department of the Interior, essential activities and activities that will continue during a lapse in appropriations are:

- Providing for finance and contracting activities such as benefit payments and actions necessary to suspend or stop work on projects currently underway that require oversight or support from employees funded from lapsed appropriations. That is, contracting and finance personnel necessary to perform these duties should remain until the activities can be suspended.
- Direct management of projects obligated from funds that are not subject to lapse, such as multi-year appropriations from prior fiscal years. People not DIRECTLY involved in project management or necessary contracting actions and payments for these projects will not be considered excepted or continue to work.
- Protecting life and property, including:

- Emergency medical care;
- Law enforcement and disaster assistance;
- Border and coastal protection and surveillance;
- Protection of federal lands, buildings, waterways, equipment, and other property within the National Park System;
- Activities essential to ensure continued public health and safety, including safe use of food and drugs and safe use of hazardous materials, drinking water, sewage treatment operation;
- Activities that ensure production of power and maintenance of the power distribution system;
- Activities necessary to maintain protection of research property;
- Essential or time-sensitive support services for employees;
- Uninterrupted command, control, and policy leadership;
- Maintenance of IT systems critical to activities being carried out by excepted personnel (e.g., radio communication, e-mail, accounting systems, etc.); and
- Communication with employees and the public.

NOTE: Staffing will be held to the very minimum to perform essential functions. This will ordinarily be only law enforcement personnel, at a staffing level that allows for reactive emergency response commensurate with levels of park operations under the shutdown. However, in certain instances maintenance and IT personnel may be required for systems that normally require 24 hour monitoring or periodic maintenance, without which the system would shut down. Emergency responders, including Fire Management, EMS, and Law Enforcement personnel, not required for essential activities will be placed on furlough but may be called back to duty if an emergency situation arises.

Headquarters

In order to complete the required, essential activities defined above, the NPS Washington Support Office (NPS Headquarters) will retain key NPS leaders, as well as a bare minimum number of employees in policy coordination, communication, human resources, contracting, finance, and budget roles. Employees required for centralized processing of payments for ongoing projects funded by multi-year appropriations will remain on duty at the minimum level necessary to avoid harm to life, health, and property. NPS leaders remaining on duty will include the Director, Deputy Director for Operations, and the Comptroller. Total excepted and continuing staff is estimated to be 20 full-time employees.

Regional Offices

The National Park Service's seven regional offices play key roles in policy direction and coordination between the Washington office and individual national park sites. During the shutdown process, the regional leaders of law enforcement, administration, budget, contracting, public affairs, and concessions management will remain on duty to implement the closure guidance. Once the shutdown is complete each region will retain approximately three full-time staff members to conduct essential activities, disseminate information, both internally and externally, and ensure continued shutdown coordination and communication between Washington and the field.

National Park Sites

Due to the dramatic differences in operations, size, visitation, location, and infrastructure represented in national park sites, the number of employees required to carry out the essential activities defined above will vary greatly from site to site. As a rule, staffing will be held to the very minimum for the protection of life, property, and public health and safety. Only personnel absolutely required to support these activities will remain on duty. Wildland fire personnel required for active fires or for monitoring areas currently under a fire watch (currently 100 employees nationwide) will remain on duty. All other personnel, including law enforcement, EMS, and Fire Management not deemed excepted will be furloughed, but will be subject to being called back in the case of an emergency. See below for employee counts by region. The personnel count for the National Capitol Region includes U.S. Park Police staff required for essential activities.

Other Offices

The NPS maintains two project management support centers for large-scale projects – one in Harper's Ferry, WV and one in Denver, CO. Many of the projects managed through these centers are funded through multi-year appropriations. Employees at these locations necessary for direct project management of ongoing projects funded by multi-year appropriations will remain on duty only where their salaries are also funded by multi-year appropriations.

Part 2: Designation of Excepted Personnel

The following estimate of personnel required to carry out the essential activities defined above is based upon the agency's experience from 1995 as well as current planning efforts.

<u>Office/Region</u>	<u>Excepted Employees</u>
<u>Headquarters</u>	
Leadership Staff	7
Contracting, Finance, and Budget	13
<u>Alaska Region</u>	
Regional Office	3
Total Park Staff	64
<u>Intermountain Region</u>	
Regional Office	3
Total Park Staff	630
<u>Midwest Region</u>	
Regional Office	3
Total Park Staff	229
<u>National Capitol Region</u>	
Regional Office	3
Total Park/US Park Police Staff	852
<u>Northeast Region</u>	
Regional Office	3
Total Park Staff	485
<u>Pacific West Region</u>	
Regional Office	3
Total Park Staff	664
<u>Southeast Region</u>	
Regional Office	3
Total Park Staff	345
<u>Other Offices</u>	51
TOTAL	3,361

Breakout Information

Law Enforcement / EMS / Fire / USPP	2,330
Funded Through Non-Appropriated Sources	~160 (depending on active wildland fire personnel)
All Other Excepted Employees	871
<u>NPS Employees, as of 9/21/2011</u>	<u>20,076</u>
Total Employees to be Furloughed	16,715

Effective immediately upon a lapse in appropriations, the National Park Service will take all necessary steps to close and secure national park facilities and grounds. Day use visitors will be instructed to leave the park immediately. Visitors utilizing overnight concession accommodations and campgrounds will be notified to make alternate arrangements and depart the park as part of Phase 2. Where ever possible, park roads will be closed and access will be denied. National and regional offices and support centers will be closed and secured, except where they are needed to support excepted personnel. These steps will be enacted as quickly as possible while still ensuring visitor and employee safety as well as the integrity of park resources.

Phase 1 Shutdown Procedures:

Immediately upon receiving instructions from WASO to begin closedown, take the following steps to shut down all activities not deemed essential that are funded by lapsing appropriation:

1. Identify personnel that are performing excepted or excepted activities. The Emergency Response Official designation on a Federal ID card is not necessarily a factor in determining excepted personnel. Rather, essential activities are defined as activities that are needed to:
 - a. Provide for actions necessary to suspend or stop work on projects currently underway, consistent with instructions i-iii below. That is, contracting and finance personnel necessary to perform these duties should remain until the activities can be suspended.
 - i. Stop-work orders should be issued for contracts for goods or services that require oversight or support by personnel funded from lapsed appropriations and are not required to address emergencies involving human life, safety or protection of property.
 - ii. New contracts should not be initiated during a lapse period unless they are required to address emergencies involving human life, safety, or protection of property.
 - iii. Cooperative agreements should be considered for suspension if substantial involvement of the Government is required during the lapse period.
 - b. Continue direct management of projects obligated from multi-year appropriations from prior fiscal years that are not subject to lapse on September 30, 2011. Employees at these locations necessary for direct project management of ongoing projects funded by multi-year appropriations will remain on duty only where their salaries are also funded by multi-year appropriations. Conduct essential activities to the extent that they protect life and property, including:
 - i. Emergency medical care;

- ii. Activities essential to ensure continued public health and safety, including safe use of food and drugs and safe use of hazardous materials, garbage collection, drinking water, sewage treatment operation;
- iii. Border and coastal protection and surveillance;
- iv. Protection of federal lands, buildings, waterways, equipment, and other property owned within the National Park System;
- v. Law enforcement and disaster assistance;
- vi. Activities that ensure production of power and maintenance of the power distribution system;
- vii. Activities necessary to maintain protection of research property;
- viii. Essential or time-sensitive support services for employees;
- ix. Uninterrupted command, control, and policy leadership;
- x. Maintenance of IT systems (including contracted support) critical to activities being carried out by excepted personnel (e.g., radio communication, e-mail, accounting systems, etc.); and
- xi. Communication with employees and the public.

NOTE: Staffing will be held to the very minimum for the performance of essential functions. This will ordinarily be only law enforcement personnel, at a staffing level that allows for reactive emergency response commensurate with levels of park operations under the shutdown. Wildland fire personnel required for active fires or for monitoring areas currently under a fire watch will remain on duty. However, in certain instances maintenance and IT personnel may be required for systems that normally require 24 hour monitoring or periodic maintenance, without which the system would shut down. Emergency responders, including Fire Management, EMS, and Law Enforcement personnel, not required for essential activities will be placed on furlough but may be called back to duty if an emergency situation arises.

- 2. Through appropriate media, notify public of closing of all national parks.
- 3. All U.S. Government property and facilities that can be locked or secured must be, including parking lots, comfort stations, tour roads, visitor contact facilities, fee collection facilities. Any one visiting must be directed to leave the park.
- 4. Parks having “thru” road systems should not attempt to close these roadways. Signs should be posted that no visitor services will be available in the park.
- 5. “Special Events” involving park service personnel either as participants or in crowd control must be cancelled.

6. Only staff involved in excepted or phasedown activities may be on duty. Other employees may not volunteer their time. This rule applies regardless of the type of appointment or funding source of the employee. Cease all volunteer programs.
7. Every organization should create and maintain a list of excepted employees, along with justification for each employee's designation as excepted. Each organization, through its regional or program coordinator, must then inform Washington of the number and organization of employees designated as excepted.

Phase 2 Shutdown Procedures:

Should a prolonged lapse in appropriations occur, it will be necessary to take the following additional steps. Do not initiate any of the following actions until instructed to do so by the Washington Office.

1. Prepare and issue personnel furlough papers for an indefinite period for all nonexcepted employees not needed for closedown operations. Non-permanent employees are to be placed in non-pay status for an indefinite period. Take all necessary actions to assure that employees are accorded all due personnel rights. Consult Human Resources and labor relations contacts for appropriate steps.
2. Process payroll for abbreviated pay period.
3. Begin securing files and documents for transfer to Federal Records Center.
4. Establish special accounts in accounting system to accumulate all obligations incurred in both "closing down" and "life and property protection" activities. The Washington office will provide specific instruction on how to accomplish this task.
5. Place signs in park areas to advise visitors about park closing and hazards of the area. Place barriers to prevent visitors from entering park.

All parks should be in the mode of conducting no mission-related work, performing only the excepted activities listed above. Use caution and good judgment in taking any of the above listed actions.

Concession and Campsite Closedown Procedures (Phase 2):

All parks should take the following steps to secure park facilities and shut down concession and campsite operations while ensuring the safety of park visitors:

1. Visitors in all overnight accommodations and campgrounds are to be given 48 hours, starting from 6 PM EST on the date of notification, to make other arrangements and leave the park. This applies to visitors in both NPS and concession-operated facilities. Exceptions may be granted by park superintendents, but only in situations where complying could result in danger to park staff, concession employees, or visitors (e.g. guided mountaineering trip).

2. All concession-operated visitor services and facilities, including marinas, are to be closed unless they are deemed excepted for health or safety purposes or are needed to support ongoing, essential park operations. Services offered via commercial use authorizations, whether originating within or outside of park boundaries, are also to cease operations within the park. Routine security must be maintained. Access to privately owned boats is permitted, but use for recreational purposes within the park boundary is not allowed.
3. Access to personal and commercial inholdings and leased facilities is permitted. However, no recreational uses outside of the inholding/leased facility on park lands are to be permitted.

Park superintendents should notify concessioners of these procedures and the potential implementation timeline immediately.

Exclusions from Shutdown

NPS has approximately 160 FTE who fit into the category “employees who compensation is financed by carry over or other than annual appropriations”. Accounts that would fund nonessential, excepted activities under the NPS Contingency Plan:

Account: Construction, NPS

Authority: P.L. 111-88

Account: Land Acquisition and State Assistance

Authority: 16 USC 4601

Account: Recreation Enhancement Demonstration Fee Program

Authority: 16 USC 460I-6a

Account: Wildland Fire Management

Authority: 42 USC 1856