The Nation’s Ocean Heritage in the National Park System

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National Park Service Mission

“Promote and regulate the use of ...national parks... to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

U. S. Congress, 1916
National Parks in the Ocean?

- 72 National Parks on the coast (ocean & Great Lakes)
- 35 million acres of prime coastal habitats
- 4,700 miles of shoreline
- 40 parks include 3.2 million acres of ocean
- Recreational fishing is allowed in all but one park, commercial fishing is allowed only by statute or tribal treaties
Ocean National Parks

Acadia
American Samoa
Biscayne
Channel Islands
Dry Tortugas
Everglades
Glacier Bay
Olympic
Redwood
Virgin Islands
Ocean National Monuments

Buck Island Reef
Cabrillo
Virgin Islands Coral Reef
National Seashores

Assateague Island
Canaveral
Cape Cod
Cape Hatteras
Cape Lookout
Cumberland Island
Gulf Islands
Fire Island
Padre Island
Point Reyes
Great Lakes Parks

Apostle Islands
Grand Portage
Indiana Dunes
Isle Royale
Pictured Rocks
Sleeping Bear Dunes
Coastal Parks & Preserves

Aniakchak
Bering Land Bridge
Cape Kruesenstern
Haleakala
Hawaii Volcanoes
Katmai
Kenai Fjords
Lake Clark
Timucuan
Wrangell-St. Elias
Maritime History Parks

- Castillo de San Marcos
- De Soto
- Ebey’s Landing
- Fort Point
- Kalaupapa
- Kaloko-Honokohau
- Pu’uhonua o Honaunau
- Puukohola Heiau
- Salt River Bay
Maritime Memorials

American Memorial
U. S. S. Arizona
War in the Pacific
“One System—All Areas United

“...the National Park System, which began with the establishment of Yellowstone National Park in 1872, has grown to include superlative natural, historic, and recreation areas in every region...and it is the purpose of this Act to include all such areas in the System....”

General Authorities Act, 1970
Ocean Park Visitation Increasing

Dry Tortugas National Park, Florida

Visits x 1000

Decades

1960s 1970s 1980s 1990s
National Heritage

“...these areas, though distinct in character, are united through their interrelated purposes and resources into one national park system as cumulative expressions of a single national heritage;”

General Authorities Act, 1970
“...individually and collectively, these areas derive increased national dignity and recognition of their superb environmental quality through inclusion jointly with each other in one national park system preserved and managed for the benefit and inspiration of all the people....”  

*General Authorities Act, 1970*
National Park Service
Stewardship Mission

✓ Conserve the parks
✓ Provide for their enjoyment
✓ Leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations
Parks care for whole ecosystems—including people... and maintain system integrity—biological interactions.
Dry Tortugas National Park, Florida

Lobster Reserve annually pumps millions of larval and juvenile lobsters into regional fisheries and ecosystems.
20% California Fishery Landings Come From 3% of State Waters in Channel Islands National Park
NPS Partners in Ocean Conservation

- American Fisheries Society
- American Sportfishing Association
- Audubon Society
- Environmental Defense
- National Fisherman
- NOAA
- National Parks & Conservation Association
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Packard Foundation
- The Ocean Conservancy
- United Anglers
- World Wildlife Fund