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# **Mesa Verde National Park STRATEGIC PLAN**

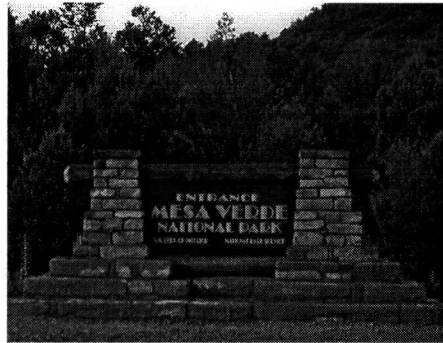
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*October 1, 2001 – September 30, 2005*

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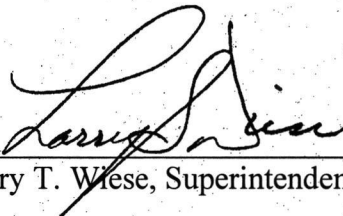
# Mesa Verde National Park STRATEGIC PLAN

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*Fiscal Years 2001-2005*

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Larry T. Wiese, Superintendent

March 28, 2000

Date

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# INTRODUCTION

This *Strategic Plan for Mesa Verde National Park* is a five-year plan covering fiscal years 2001 through 2005 to fulfill the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). Passed by Congress in 1993, GPRA is one of the most recent and comprehensive of a number of laws directing federal agencies to join in the “*performance management revolution*” embraced by private industries. The intent of *performance management* is to ensure that daily actions and expenditures are guided by long- and short-term goal setting in pursuit of accomplishing an organization’s primary mission. Once goals are set, performance is measured and evaluated as to how well an organization achieved those goals. Therefore, goals must be quantifiable and measurable results or outcomes, rather than efforts or outputs (i.e., activities, services, or products).

It should be noted that this *Strategic Plan* is much more than a response to a legislative mandate. The law was a catalyst for us—the staff at Mesa Verde National Park—to reexamine the park’s fundamental mission and the results or outcomes needed to more effectively accomplish that mission. It caused us to reexamine the present condition of the natural and cultural resources in our care, the current status of the services we provide to our visitors, and our use of the limited fiscal, human, and other resources needed to do our jobs. The effort wasn’t easy, was even painful at times. The results, however, are worthwhile: better planning, better management and better communication—with our constituencies, stakeholders, and amongst ourselves—about where we are, where we need to be, and how we plan to get there.

## THE STRATEGIC PLAN

GPRA requires federal agencies to develop and use three primary documents in conducting their business—a strategic plan, an annual performance plan and an annual performance report. Each plan must be developed by federal employees, submitted to the Congress and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and made available to the public.

The **Strategic Plan** is the most long-range of the GPRA plans, as each plan looks five years to the future. However, each plan will be reviewed and revised every three years. The first plan for Mesa Verde National Park was prepared in 1997. This is the second such plan and the third will be prepared in 2003. Each plan contains:

- the park mission statement based in law and the legislated purpose of the park
- mission goals reflecting the park’s ongoing responsibilities in preservation, a mission that runs in perpetuity, not only in five-year increments
- long-term goals that look five years to the future to achieve the mission goals and are objective, quantifiable, and measurable
- descriptions of:
  - how goals will be accomplished, including an explanation of the processes, technology and human, capital, information and other resources required to meet the goals
  - any key external factors which could affect goal accomplishment
  - the relationship of mission goals to annual goals, the Annual Performance Plan and the Annual Performance Report

## RELATIONSHIP WITH ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLANS AND REPORTS

At the start of each fiscal year the *Strategic Plan* is in effect, beginning with fiscal year 2001, the park will develop a companion *Annual Performance Plan*. The annual plan will present the annual goals and work plan--or annual increment—to achieve the longer-term five-year goals identified in the Strategic Plan. The **Annual Performance Plan** contains:

- annual goals to incrementally achieve the 5-year goals described in the Strategic Plan
- annual work plans that explain how the annual goals will be accomplished including the processes, technology and human, capital, information and other resources to be used
- a basis for measuring results so that at the end of the year, the actual results can be compared with the goals

At the end of each fiscal year there will be an *Annual Performance Report* discussing actual achievement of the prior year's annual goals and progress on long-term goals. The **Annual Performance Report** reviews each year's results—both successes and failures—and identifies areas where activities or goals need to be revised in the future. The report describes:

- the annual goals that were met or exceeded
- the annual goals that were not met, and the reasons they were not met
- any remedial actions that will be taken for goals not met.

The following diagram helps illustrate the relationship between the three plans.



## HOW THIS STRATEGIC PLAN WAS DEVELOPED: PROGRAM EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

In consultation with Congress, OMB and other interested parties, the National Park Service (NPS) developed its own unique GPRA implementation process. Using this process, the agency methodically developed its first “servicewide” *Strategic Plan* and submitted it on September 30, 1997. The second plan was revised and published electronically on January 15, 2000. A copy of the revised plan is available for review at park headquarters. It is also available on the Internet at <http://www.nps.gov>.

The NPS manages the National Park System consisting of over 375 units located in nearly every state and territory of the nation. Thus, the NPS is fundamentally a field-based, resource preservation and visitor service organization, where results or outcomes actually occur in the parks rather than in its Washington headquarters. Therefore, the agency determined that each of its component parks, programs, and offices should develop and submit their own Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Plans, and Annual Performance Reports in addition to those at the agency level. Congress agreed and subsequently, the National Park Management Omnibus Act of 1998 codified this desire into law.

Individual units—including Mesa Verde National Park—use the long-term goals in the *National Park Service Strategic Plan* as a base. Each unit addresses only those long-term goals that relate to its particular mission and park resources. Also, individual units can add goals that are not addressed by the Servicewide plan, but are needed to meet the park’s need.

### Development of the Long-Term Goals

Developing the park’s long-term goals was an interdisciplinary, park-wide effort. Groups were established for each goal and included those members of the staff who would be most involved in planning and implementing that particular goal. Using the *National Park Service Technical Guidance* manual for fiscal years 2001 to 2005, the “goal groups” developed annual goals and work plans for each of the five years. These stacks of five-year goals and projected outputs were added into the resulting long-term goal. This information—referred to as the five-year stacks—is available for public review. Please contact the park for further information.

To determine the goals and annual work plans, the staff had to estimate the park’s budget over the next five years. Generally, the park receives two types of funds: Congressionally allocated “base funds”, and then a wide assortment of “soft funds” obtained through various agency funding programs, as well as through external grants and donations. Other than increases for inflation, the staff assumed a flat base budget. In other words, the park anticipates no major increases in base funding. Where increases in potential soft funds were known or “reasonably assured”, they were taken into account. Where other funding sources (donations, fee revenues, etc.) were “reasonably assured”, they too were taken into consideration when setting performance targets.

We would be remiss in our duties as stewards of and storytellers about the parks’ priceless natural and cultural resources, if we did not duly note that we sincerely believe we are under-funded and under-staffed to fully achieve our important mission and goals. We also recognize that we are but one of many worthwhile federal enterprises which compete for scarce and precious tax dollars. This is one of the reasons we continue to pursue a wide variety of alternative management, funding, and staffing scenarios to supplement our appropriations. In the meantime, we welcome the opportunity through GPRA to better plan, manage, and communicate how well we are able to achieve our mission supported by existing, and largely flat, levels of funding.

## STRATEGIES FOR ACCOMPLISHING LONG-TERM GOALS

Mesa Verde's long-term goals will be accomplished in five annual increments. These increments are summarized under the explanatory paragraph for each goal, and they will be fully detailed in each year's Annual Performance Plan. As described previously, the Annual Performance Plan will contain annual goal increments for achieving the long-term goals. The annual plan will also contain a work plan for each annual goal describing the activities, products, personnel and funds to be used to achieve the annual goal.

The two principal factors affecting park staff's ability to achieve a goal is largely due to availability of human and fiscal resources. To give people an idea of what FY 2001-2005 resources might look like, Mesa Verde estimated what it might receive in FY 2001 to achieve the park's goals and carry out its mission are listed below. Human Resources and base funds are the actual numbers allocated for the park in FY 2000.

A note about Human Resources. In FY 2000, 118.5 FTE—full time equivalents—were allocated to the park. This means that this many people could work full time, year round. However, many projects in the park are of a temporary nature—some for a few years and some for only a season like in the summer when most visitors are here—so Mesa Verde hires many term and seasonal employees to do work when it is most needed. 4 seasonals that each work full-time for 3 months would equal one FTE. While human resources are allocated in FTE, they are addressed in the goals by positions. In other words, the number of people working at the park (a number that appears much higher than FTE). In addition to paid park staff, Mesa Verde also gets some projects accomplished through volunteers. The Volunteer-in-Parks program tracks the value of their efforts.

### FY 2001 Human Resources (based on FY 2000 numbers)

- Permanent staff : 78 positions
- Term staff: 46 positions
- Seasonal staff: 148 positions
- VIP assistance: estimated at about 9000 hours (actual numbers will be reported in the FY 2000 Annual Report for Mesa Verde)

### FY 2000 Fiscal Resources:

- Annual Operating Budget (FY 2000): \$ 4,686,000
- Estimated Fee Demonstration Program: \$1,668,000
- Estimated Funds from other NPS sources: \$657,000
- Estimated Special Project funds: \$757,000
- Estimated Donated funds: \$1,353,000

## HOW TO USE THIS STRATEGIC PLAN

Some basic information about Mesa Verde National Park, including its Mission and Mission Goals follow. Again, these mission goals illustrate in broad brushstrokes, the goals the park will strive to accomplish in perpetuity. The five-year—or strategic—goals follow, and target in quantified, measurable ways what we plan to accomplish during this time period toward achieving the parks' mission goals.

All of the long-term goals are numbered. The numbering protocol follows that of *the National Park Service Strategic Plan*. The numbering starts with the agencies four goal categories:

Category I goals—**Preserve Park Resources**—reflect the NPS 1916 Organic Act “to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein.” Subsequent legislation reinforced and expanded this authority. This category includes all park goals related to knowledge from and about the resources.

Category II goals—**Provide for the Public Enjoyment and Visitor Experience of Parks**—reflect the NPS Organic Act mandate “to provide for the enjoyment of the (resources) in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

Category III goals—**Strengthen and Preserve Natural and Cultural Resources and Enhance Recreational Opportunities Managed by Partners**—reflect the NPS legislated partnership programs to protect resources not directly managed by the NPS.

Category IV goals—**Ensure Organizational Effectiveness**—support the mission of the NPS to have efficient and effective processes.

Within each category, the goals are divided into mission goal categories indicated by letters of the alphabet (i.e., Ia and Ib). Each long-term goal is then numbered numerically (i.e., Ia1, Ia2, Ia3, etc.) Since not all of the Servicewide goals apply to Mesa Verde National Park, some numbers are skipped. Goals that have been added to those in the Servicewide plan because they are specific to this park, are indicated with a “0” preceding the numerical number (i.e., Ia07).

For each long-term goal, the Servicewide goal is listed and is followed by the park’s long-term goal. An explanatory paragraph is presented for each long-term goal. These paragraphs provide background and other information useful to understand the goal and begin to sketch in how the goal will be accomplished. These paragraphs also identify any key external factors over which the park staff may have influence, but not control, and which could positively or negatively affect goal achievement.

Additional copies of the Mesa Verde National Park *Strategic Plan* are available at park headquarters at Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado. Questions and comments are welcome and encouraged and can be addressed to:

*Superintendent*  
*Mesa Verde National Park*  
*P.O. Box 8*  
*Mesa Verde, CO 81330-0008*

As they are completed, copies of the current year’s *Annual Performance Plan* and *Annual Performance Report* will also be available on request, with questions and comments equally welcome.



# MISSION GOALS

## PARK BASICS

Mesa Verde National Park contains world-renowned dwellings of the Ancestral Pueblo peoples located in what today is referred to as the Four Corners region of the southwestern U.S. The park was created on June 29, 1906 to preserve from injury or spoliation the ruins and other works and relics of prehistoric humans contained within the established boundaries (*Enabling Legislation: 34 Stat. 616*). Today, over 7,000 archeological sites have been identified in the park, with a very high probability that many additional sites remain unidentified. Encompassing over 52,074 acres, the park is entirely contained within Montezuma County in Colorado. Approximately 8,000 of these acres are Congressionally designated Wilderness to be protected for its pristine character.

In 1999, Mesa Verde had approximately 680,000 visitors, of which more than 50 percent went into a cliff dwelling. Uniformed NPS employees, as required under Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Section 7.39, accompany all of these visitors. This represents a much higher ratio of personal contact between visitors and employees than is found in most other National Parks.

Most of the facilities in Mesa Verde National Park—the roads, trails, buildings, etc.—are historic in nature. Most of the buildings have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The park entrance road is currently under consideration for addition to the National Register. With an infrastructure that is significantly historic, caution and special care must be taken in day to day maintenance, protection, and resource management operations.

In recognition of the park's significance to the world community, on September 8, 1978, Mesa Verde National Park was designated a World Cultural Heritage Site as part of the World Heritage Convention. It is the purpose of the World Heritage Convention to recognize natural and cultural areas around the world that have outstanding values of importance to all humankind.

## PARK MISSION

The mission of Mesa Verde National Park is rooted in and grows from the park's legislated mandate—its purpose for being—and its significance—why it is special and deserving of protection. The park's purpose and significance are described below.

### Legislative Intent: Park Purpose

The park's original 1906 legislation established Mesa Verde to preserve and protect from injury and spoliation sites, artifacts, and other works of Ancestral Pueblo peoples. Ten years later the National Park Service was established to include Mesa Verde National Park. The Organic Act creating the NPS, also expanded the purpose of this park: to protect unimpaired, the natural and cultural resources and values of the park for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations. In an Act dated April 25, 1928, Congress expanded the purpose of Mesa Verde to protect wildlife, birds, and other natural resources. On October 20, 1976, Congress designated wilderness in Mesa Verde serving to expand the park's purpose to manage and protect designated wilderness on 8,100 acres. Another Act was established to protect the scenery of Point Lookout.

Mesa Verde National Park was originally part of the present Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation. Establishment of Mesa Verde was made possible by agreement with the Ute Tribe, without their agreement establishment of Mesa Verde National Park would not have been possible.

Other laws and Presidential Executive Orders have further clarified the park's purpose. These laws include the continuation of established tribal rights and benefit.

### **Park Significance**

The following statements of significance describe the unique resources and values of Mesa Verde that must be protected.

- Mesa Verde's significance and worldwide value is recognized by its selection as one of the seven original World Heritage Cultural Sites.
- Mesa Verde is a significant natural resource preserve within a larger ecosystem—the Colorado Plateau, Four Corners Area. Mesa Verde's clean air, plants, animals, water, springs, geologic features, night skies and natural quiet contribute to the integrity of the large ecosystem.
- Mesa Verde is an example of human interaction with their environment over thousands of years. Mesa Verde represents a significant aspect in the history and heritage of at least 24 specific tribes and clans. In more recent times, visitors and employees have also developed and maintained multi-generational ties to the park.
- Mesa Verde contains nationally significant historic resources depicting early park structures and design, the CCC, Homesteaders and American Indian experiences. The Fewkes Cabin was the first museum in the National Park System. Jesse Nusbaum's Modified Pueblo architectural style served as a model for architecture throughout the Southwest.
- Mesa Verde represents a significant and living link between Puebloan Peoples' past and present way of life that provides the world community an opportunity to understand and respect the diversity of human history. The visitor to Mesa Verde is enriched by physical access to educational and interpretive opportunities to experience the Ancestral Pueblo people as a living culture, historic development of the National Park Service, as well as clear air, distant vistas, and unspoiled landscapes of the mountain and desert interface.
- Pioneering archeological research of the concentrated complex of spectacular, and well preserved ancestral Pueblo and historic sites reflecting a great variety of human activities, helped advance the field of archeology into a recognized and respected science. The size and quality of Mesa Verde's unique artifact and archival collection—over 2,000,000 objects—present a significant opportunity for research at the site of its origin.
- Grassroots concern about site destruction and artifact removal from Mesa Verde served as a catalyst for passage in 1906 of National Antiquities Legislation and establishment of Mesa Verde National Park. Support for Mesa Verde by the State of Colorado is exemplified by partnerships that began with the acquisition of the Wetherill collections in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century and continues today through tourism and preservation efforts.

## Park Mission

The mission of Mesa Verde National Park is to:

- preserve and protect from injury and spoliation sites, artifacts and other works of Ancestral Puebloan peoples;
- protect wildlife, birds, and other natural resources from willful destruction, disturbance and removal;
- manage and protect the pristine character of designated wilderness on 8,100 acres;
- provide for research to increase knowledge and aid in the advancement of archeological science;
- maintain American Indian rights annuities and benefits that are entitled by law, treaty and executive orders;
- protect the scenery of Point Lookout.

## PARK MISSION GOALS

Mesa Verde National Park's mission is accomplished through pursuit of the following broad, "in perpetuity" mission goals.

### ***Goal Category I: Preserve Mesa Verde National Park Resources***

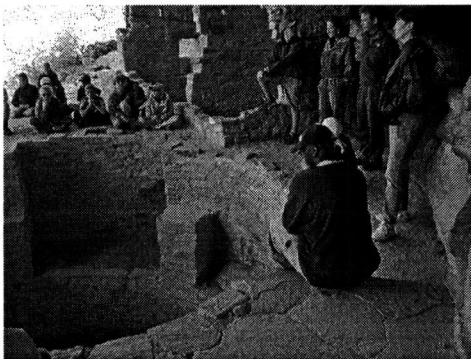


Ia Natural and Cultural Resources and associated values at Mesa Verde National Park are protected, restored and maintained in good condition within their broader ecosystem and cultural context.

Ib The National Park Service at Mesa Verde National Park contributes to knowledge about natural and cultural resources and associated values; management decisions about resources and visitors are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information.

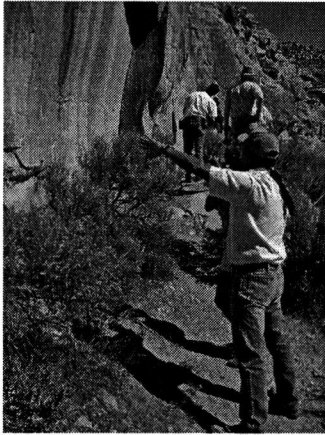


### ***Goal Category II: Provide for the Public Use and Enjoyment and Visitor Experience of Mesa Verde***



IIa Visitors to Mesa Verde National Park safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities.

IIb Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of Mesa Verde National Park and its resources for this and future generations.



**Goal Category III: *Strengthen and Preserve Natural and Cultural Resources and Enhance Recreational Opportunities Managed by Partners***

**Goal Category IV: *Ensure Organizational Effectiveness of Mesa Verde National Park***

- IVa The National Park Service at Mesa Verde National Park uses current management practices, systems, and technologies to accomplish its mission.
- IVb The National Park Service at Mesa Verde National Park increases its managerial capabilities through initiatives and support from other agencies, organizations, and individuals.



# PARK LONG-TERM GOALS

During the next five years—fiscal years 2001 through 2005—the park will work to achieve the following long-term goals in pursuit of the mission and mission goals of Mesa Verde National Park. These long-term goals are objective, quantified, and measurable. Due dates, performance indicators, performance target numbers, desired condition, and baselines, as appropriate, are imbedded in each goal statement in order to avoid separate long lists of performance measures. Each long-term goal is listed in the context of the mission goal it is targeting to achieve.

## LONG-TERM GOALS FOR MISSION GOAL Ia

Mission Goal Ia: Natural and cultural resources and associated values at Mesa Verde National Park are protected, restored and maintained in good condition and managed within their broader ecosystem and cultural context.

**Ia1A *Disturbed Lands*: By September 30, 2005, 90 (3%) of 3,000 acres of Mesa Verde National Park's targeted lands disturbed by prior development or agricultural uses as of FY1999, are restored.**

Explanatory paragraph

This long-term goal represents Mesa Verde's intent to restore lands disturbed by past and ongoing human activities including: historic grazing on former in-holdings, trespass grazing by livestock from neighboring lands, development activities such as roads and facilities, and sites damaged by excessive social activities such as trail cutting. Approximately 3,000 acres of the park are estimated to be disturbed in this way. The park's ability to rehabilitate damaged lands has been enhanced substantially as a result of the current Fee Demo program as well as other programs contributing as much as \$50,000 annually. If this funding continues, the goal should be reached by 2003 with efforts going to restore approximately 30 acres each of the three years.

**Ia1B *Exotic Plant Species*: By September 30, 2005, exotic vegetation on 360 (6%) of 6,000 targeted acres of Mesa Verde National Park lands, as of FY1999, is contained.**

Explanatory paragraph

This long-term goal represents Mesa Verde's intent to, where feasible, control non-native plants that have invaded the park over the years. The 6,000 acres is based on an estimate established in 1997. The park's ability to perform weed control activities is entirely dependent on outside funding, most of which is currently coming from the Fee Demo program (about \$50,000 annually). Congress will hopefully extend the Fee Demo program currently in place but not scheduled to last beyond FY01. Since funding is more certain for FY 2001 than in the other years, park staff hopes to have contained 120 acres in FY 2001, 60 acres each in FY 2002 and 2003, 40 acres in 2004, and 60 acres in 2005 to reach the total goal of 360 acres.

**Ia2A *Threatened and Endangered Species:* By September 30, 2005, 1 (100%) of Mesa Verde National Park's identified populations of federally listed threatened and endangered species with critical habitat on park lands and/or requiring NPS recover actions as of 1999, have an improved status.**

Explanatory paragraph

There are only two federally listed threatened and endangered species with critical habitats within the park: the American bald eagle and the American peregrine falcon. The American bald eagle is currently in stable condition and therefore, is addressed in goal Ia2B. This goal addresses park efforts to have the peregrine falcon in stable condition in the park by 2003. The status of this species will be tracked, and they will be protected from anthropogenic disturbances within the park. The small natural resource staff can perform only very limited monitoring for this goal, but does receive assistance for the time being from the Colorado Division of Wildlife and will get help through the Save America's Treasures program at least for FY 2001.

**Ia2B *Threatened and Endangered Species:* By September 30, 2005, 2 of 2 (100%) of the FY1999 federally listed threatened and endangered species with critical habitat in Mesa Verde National Park, or requiring National Park Service recovery actions, have stable status.**

Explanatory paragraph

This long-term goal represents Mesa Verde's intent to maintain stable populations of the only two federally listed threatened and endangered species with critical habitats within the park: the American bald eagle and the American peregrine falcon. The eagle is currently in stable condition which staff will work to maintain. The peregrine falcon—addressed in goal Ia2A—is not currently in stable condition but is expected to be by 2003. At that point, the condition will be maintained through 2005. The status of each of these species will be tracked and they will be protected from anthropogenic disturbances within the park. The small natural resource staff can perform only very limited monitoring for this goal, but does receive assistance for the time being from the Colorado Division of Wildlife and will get help through the Save America's Treasures program at least for FY01.

**IaO *Native Species of Special Concern:* By September 30, 2005, 155 (77%) of the 200 populations in FY 1999 of Mesa Verde National Park plant and animal species of special concern, have stable populations.**

Explanatory paragraph

This long-term goal represents Mesa Verde's intent to track and protect approximately 200 species of concern including locally rare and endemic plants, declining species, candidates to the federal T&E list, etc. Current estimates show about 150 populations in stable condition. Five additional species will be addressed--one per each of the fiscal years. This includes work on the Mexican spotted owl (formerly a federally listed threatened and endangered species with critical habitat in the park), and our desire to reintroduce some native species that currently are extirpated from the park such as the leopard frog. The staff's ability to perform this work is extremely limited. During FY 2001, this capacity will be enhanced by temporary funding received through the Save America's Treasures program.

- Ia3** ***Air Quality:** By September 30, 2005, air quality in Mesa Verde National Park has remained stable or improved relative to FY 1998 conditions.*

Explanatory paragraph

This long-term goal represents Mesa Verde's intent to continue monitoring ozone pollution, acid deposition, and impacts to visibility within this Class I airshed. This information will assist the National Park Service in assessing regional air quality trends and helping to identify threats to the park's air resources. The park's capability to perform this monitoring is totally dependent on external funding from the NPS Air Resources Division, therefore, this division will be responsible for setting each of the incremental goals for this Strategic Plan.

- Ia4** ***Water Quality:** By September 30, 2005, Mesa Verde National Park has unimpaired water quality.*

Explanatory paragraph

This long-term goal represents Mesa Verde's intent that its natural water bodies: springs, seeps, pools, and the Mancos River, are not contaminated by park activities or from external pollution sources. The park has a minimal capability of monitoring water quality conditions and only at a few of its 282 recorded natural surface water sites. As of the writing of this plan, this monitoring information shows that all of the park's water bodies are unimpaired. Over the five years of this Strategic Plan, park staff will work to maintain this condition.

- Ia5** ***Historic Structures:** By September 30, 2005, 23% (158) of the 686 Mesa Verde National Park historic structures listed on the FY 1999 National Park Service List of Classified Structures (LCS) are in good condition.*

Explanatory Paragraph

Mesa Verde National Park contains and is committed to improving the condition of both Ancestral Puebloan and Euroamerican buildings within the park. To date, 686 of these structures have been entered into the LCS, of which 49 are in good condition. During this five-year strategic planning period, park staff will work to assess, document and treat 109 more of these structures to get them into good condition. Much money—from the park base, other sources, but especially donations received through Save America's Treasures Funding—and therefore staff time will be spent on this effort. Since the donations are expected to end in FY 2001, the goal is to work on 69 structures this first year, and then 10 each a year for the remaining 4 fiscal years.

- 1a6** ***Museum Collection:** By September 30, 2005, 52% (118 of 225) preservation and protection standards for Mesa Verde National Park's museum collection are met.*

Explanatory paragraph

Mesa Verde's museum collection contains nearly 2 million items including pottery, jewelry, organic materials, stone implements, and other artifacts related to the Ancestral Puebloan culture, as well as 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century artifacts of the Mesa Verde area. This goal improves the condition of the storage and conservation of the artifacts to meet at least 68% of the environmental, security, and fire protection conditions necessary to protect museum objects as identified on the National Park Service Checklist for Preservation and Protection of Museum Collections. The park currently meets 79 of the 225 applicable standards. By the end of FY 2001, 84 standards will be met, and 118 in FY 2002 through 2005. This goal also includes

planning for a new facility to adequately protect the entire collection in the future. This facility will meet all 225 standards. At this time, we hope the facility will be constructed by 2006, although we are currently in the planning phase and have a long way to go.

- 1a07 *Cultural Landscapes: By September 30, 2005, 0 of Mesa Verde National Park's 11 cultural landscapes not listed on the National Park Service's FY 1999 Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) are in good condition.***

Explanatory paragraph

Cultural landscapes provide the physical environment associated with historical events and reveal aspects of Mesa Verde's origins and development through their form, features and use. Mesa Verde encompasses a number of areas that have been inhabited for hundreds, if not thousands of years. There are 11 such landscapes identified in Mesa Verde—both prehistoric and historic. However, none of these landscapes are identified on the CLI, nor are they in good condition. The park's strategic goal for 2005 is to have an assessment and treatment plan for one of these landscapes—which includes the 22-mile long road and almost all of the developed areas along it—and then to get at least part of this landscape in good condition. As future funding and staff allow, the park will continue to work on this one cultural landscape until it is completely in good condition and listed in the CLI as such.

- Ia8 *Archeological Sites: By September 30, 2005, 101 of Mesa Verde National Park archeological sites listed on the FY1999 National Park Service Archeological Sites Management Information System (ASMIS), with accurate condition assessments, are in good condition.***

Explanatory paragraph

Protecting the archeological resources at Mesa Verde is the principal reason the park was established in 1906. Although Washington Office records of the National Park Service show 1490 archeological sites are in ASMIS with a condition assessment, and that 903 of these are listed in good condition, Mesa Verde records show a different picture. Park staff believes that all ASMIS records that predate 1996 contain inaccurate information—the park estimates that only 422 of the 903 sites are truly in good condition as the records indicate. This goal addresses the park's intent to assess, treat and update ASMIS records for sites that are currently in the database but with inaccurate data, as well as sites listed in the database but not currently in good condition. For the latter, park staff expects to address about 10 sites for each of the 5 years of this Strategic Plan.

- Ia08 *Archeological Sites not addressed in Ia8: By September 30, 2005, 125 (3%) of Mesa Verde National Park's 4062 archeological sites NOT listed on the FY 1999 National Park Service Archeological Sites Management Information System (ASMIS), or those listed but without condition assessments, are in good condition.***

Explanatory Paragraph

Of the 2978 sites addressed by this goal, 383 are sites with no records in ASMIS, while 2595 sites are listed in ASMIS with condition information entries of "unknown". As stated in the previous goal, protecting the archeological resources at Mesa Verde is the principal reason the park was established in 1906. To achieve this goal, the park intends to assess, treat and update ASMIS records for about 50 sites per year so that 250 of the sites addressed by this goal are in good condition by 2005.



**Ia09A *Paleontological Resources:* By September 30, 2005, 100% of paleontological resources not officially known or measured in 10 localities in Mesa Verde National Park as of FY 1999 are in good condition.**

Explanatory paragraph

This long-term goal serves to acknowledge that Mesa Verde has significant fossil resources and intends to manage the park in such a way as to leave this resource unimpaired. Our understanding of this goal is incomplete, but our intent will be to: identify and map each of our paleontological localities, classify the condition of these places, correct any problems that threaten any sites, and ensure that future plans and visitor activities do not pose a risk to fossils. While staff and time for performing this work is extremely limited, the park intends to work on about 2 localities per year for a total of 10 by 2005.

**LONG-TERM GOALS FOR MISSION GOAL Ib**

Mission Goal Ib: Mesa Verde National Park contributes to knowledge about natural and cultural resources and their associated values; management decisions about resources and visitor are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information.

**Ib0 *Multi-tribal Consultations:* By September 30, 2005, 19 successful multi-tribal consultations have been held leading to increased knowledge about Mesa Verde National Park resource values to aid resource protection, visitor enjoyment and management decisions.**

Explanatory paragraph

This goal reflects Mesa Verde National Park's commitment to working with our 24-affiliated tribes on issues that affect all parties. By the end of FY 2000, 9 successful consultation meetings were held. Successful consultations result in the gaining and sharing of knowledge to allow better management decisions about resources and visitors. To determine a consultation's success, the park tracks comments made by the 24 tribes in attendance and determines if efforts have moved forward on the major items of concern including reburial and repatriation of human remains and associated funerary objects under NAGPRA, and future planning activities. Ten more meetings—two per year—will be held over the five years addressed by this Strategic Plan, and the park expects that each will be successful.

**Ib01 *Resource Inventories:* By September 30, 2005, 6 (33%) of 18 primary Mesa Verde National Park natural resource inventories identified in the FY 1997 Resource Management Plan and 1979 General Management Plan are completed.**

Explanatory paragraph

This goal represents Mesa Verde National Park's intent to complete a third of the 18 primary natural resource inventories identified in the park's Resource Management Plan and General Management Plan. These inventories include the acquisition or development of data related to water resources, geology, flora and fauna, monitoring sites, historical climate, wildlife observations, fire ecology, and vegetation. The six inventories targeted for completion in this

GPRA cycle are: historical wildlife observations, annotated flora and fauna lists, rare, endangered, and endemic species distributions, monitoring sites, geology, and amphibian distributions. Three are intended to be accomplished in 2001, and one each in 2002, 2003 and 2004.

**Ib2A *Archeological Baseline:* By September 30, 2005, the number of Mesa Verde National Park archeological sites inventoried, evaluated and listed on the National Park Service Archeological Sites Management Information System (ASMIS) is increased from 4085 in FY 1999, to 4100.**

Explanatory Paragraph

Knowledge about archeological sites and their conditions is crucial to managing them well. Therefore, this goal is about inventorying and evaluating archeological sites not previously recorded, and is measured by the number of sites added to ASMIS after 1999. The projected increases in this goal would result from surveys conducted prior to any ground-disturbing activities that sometimes are necessary as park facilities are improved or repaired. No major additions to the number of sites are anticipated. Fifteen sites in all will be addressed—approximately 5 the first year, 4 the second, 3 the third, 2 the fourth and one in the fifth year of the Strategic Plan.

**Ib2B *Cultural Landscapes Inventory:* By September 30, 2005, the number of Mesa Verde National Park 11 cultural landscapes to be inventoried, evaluated, and entered on the National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) at Level II, is increased from 0 in FY99 to 1.**

Explanatory paragraph

Currently, Mesa Verde does not have any cultural landscapes listed on the CLI, even though the park has identified 11 cultural landscapes worthy of being included on the inventory. This goal represents the park's plan to commit resources and develop baseline data on cultural landscapes so they are eligible for inclusion on the National Park Service CLI. Park staff expects funding for this effort to occur in 2001 and hopes to achieve this goal by 2002.

**Ib2C *Historic Structures Baseline:* By September 30, 2005, 249 (36%) of the 687 Mesa Verde National Park historic structures on the FY1999 List of Classified Structures (LCS) have updated information in their LCS records.**

Explanatory paragraph

There are 687 LCS entries for Mesa Verde as of the baseline year. Condition was listed for about 80 of them, but only 49 of these had updated and accurate condition information. That leaves 31 entries requiring updated records. In addition, 169 more entries will have updated information for a total of 249. Save America's Treasures and Vanishing Treasures funds will be used to update these LCS records.

**Ib2D *Cataloging Museum Objects:* By September 30, 2005, the number of Mesa Verde National Park museum objects catalogued into the NPS Automated National Catalog System (ANCS) and submitted to the National Catalog is increased from 210,108 in FY 1999, to 550,108 (62% increase).**

Explanatory paragraph

Mesa Verde National Park's museum collection includes 2,584,666 items, of which only 210,108 items have been catalogued into the automated system. This goal represents Mesa Verde's efforts to increase the number of items that are fully inventoried and catalogued.

- Ib2F *Historical Research Baseline: By September 30, 2005, Mesa Verde National Park's Historic Resource Study (HRS) and Administrative History are completed to professional standards and current (approved since 1980.)***

Explanatory paragraph

This goal reflects the park's commitment to knowledge of the historic research study and Administrative History of Mesa Verde National Park through oral history. Achieving this goal is dependent on funding. However, park staff hopes to accomplish this goal by 2005 through the Fee Demo program.

- Ib3 *Vital Signs: By September 30, 2005, Mesa Verde National Park has identified its vital signs for natural resource monitoring.***

Explanatory paragraph

Mesa Verde's vital signs will be identified through an as yet un-funded team known as the Southern Colorado Plateau Network. Monitoring of vital signs in the park's natural environment may provide an early warning of ecosystem stress before significant damage has occurred and point to the need for intensive studies to diagnose the cause of the stress and determine appropriate corrective action. At this time, the purpose of this long-term goal is to work towards getting Mesa Verde's vital signs identified. Park staff will work towards this goal by facilitating efforts in the park by field inventory and data archive crews hired through the Southern Colorado Plateau Network.

## **LONG-TERM GOALS FOR MISSION GOAL IIa**

Mission Goal IIa: Mesa Verde National Park visitors safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities.

- IIa1 *Visitor Satisfaction: By September 30, 2005, 96% of visitors to Mesa Verde National Park continue to be satisfied with appropriate park facilities, services, and recreational opportunities.***

Explanatory paragraph

While many factors affect visitor use and enjoyment, this goal focuses on the facilities, services and recreational opportunities that Mesa Verde provides for visitor use, comfort and enjoyment. Therefore, this goal involves: maintaining visitor service and other related facilities; protecting visitors and providing emergency services; providing information and orientation services; operating the entrance station, visitor center, museum and other information service areas; planning for future changes or additions; and providing other park support services tied directly to visitor services. To determine the level of satisfaction, a visitor

evaluation is conducted annually. In 1998, the park received a 96% satisfaction rating that this goal calls for maintaining throughout the life of this Strategic Plan. Information gained from these surveys also helps to continually improve visitor services in the park. In addition to the base funds used to achieve this goal, the fee demo program, cost recovery effort and other funding sources will be used.

- IIa2 *Visitor Safety:* By September 30, 2005 the visitor accident/incident rate at Mesa Verde National Park is maintained at its low FY92-FY96 five-year average baseline rate of 12 or less visitor accidents per year.**

Explanatory paragraph

The intent of this goal is to prevent visitor accidents by maintaining park facilities such as trails, buildings, and roads as well as to provide safety-related visitor services such as information and medical assistance. Some of the ways this goal is accomplished will be to provide ranger patrols, safety related visitor assistance, safety related maintenance operations, medical assistance for visitors, and safety orientation for visitors. Therefore, a large chunk of the park's base budget will be used to achieve this goal. In addition, the park hopes to receive additional funding to help institute a comprehensive safety program in the park.

**LONG-TERM GOALS FOR MISSION GOAL IIb**

Mission Goal IIb: Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of Mesa Verde National Park and its resources for this and future generations.

- IIb1 *Visitor Understanding:* By September 30, 2005, 86% of Mesa Verde National Park visitors understands and appreciate the significance of the park.**

Explanatory paragraph

Mesa Verde offers a variety of programs and services to help facilitate the process of visitors making a personal connection with the resources of the park in order to appreciate the value and significance of Mesa Verde. The staff offers tours of the major cliff dwellings (Cliff Palace, Balcony House, Spruce Tree House, and Long House) and other ranger-led interpretive programs throughout the year. Other interpretive services include roving interpretation, evening campground talks, kids' programs, and non-personal services such as brochures, wayside exhibits, and films. A visitor survey is conducted annually to determine the percentage of visitors understanding and appreciating the significance of the park. The park's initial survey rating was at 76%. The park intends to increase this rating to 86% by FY 2001 and to maintain that level throughout this Strategic Plan.

- IIb1X *Educational Programs:* By September 30, 2005, 85% of 3,000 students participating in Mesa Verde National Park formal education programs understand America's cultural and natural heritage as preserved by the National Park Service and its programs.**

Explanatory paragraph

Numerous school age groups visit Mesa Verde National Park each year. The park estimates that with current programs available, only about 50% of participating students understand the heritage preserved by this park. To increase this number to 85 %, current educational programs would be continued, including the pre- and post-season school tours of Balcony House that are tied directly to regional school curricula. In addition, park staff intends to develop a formal education program, working with a local teacher's advisory group to create specific Mesa Verde curriculum materials, on-line educational materials, and an Educators Guide to the park.

#### LONG-TERM GOALS FOR MISSION GOAL IIIa

Mission Goal IIIa: Natural and cultural resources are conserved through formal partnership programs.

**IIIaX *Park Partnerships:* By September 30, 2005, the number of projects satisfactorily completed by Mesa Verde National Park under formal agreements that assist partners in protecting their resources or serving their visitors is increased from 3 in FY1999 to 5 (an 67 % increase).**

Explanatory paragraph

This goal is designed to measure Mesa Verde's activity in assisting others to protect the resources that are not owned or managed by Mesa Verde. This includes consultations with American Indians tribes and resolution of NAGPRA repatriation issues, as well as working with other agencies such as the BLM, the USFS, and other parks such as Hovenweep National Monument, to protect the resources under their care. While in FY 1999 there were only three such agreements, the park believes it will be able to expand this to 5 during this Strategic Plan.

#### LONG-TERM GOALS FOR MISSION GOAL IVa

Mission Goal IVa: Mesa Verde National Park uses current management practices, systems, and technologies to accomplish its mission.

**Iva01 *Data Systems:* By September 30, 2005, 90% (86) of Mesa Verde National Park's 96 computer stations, as of FY 1999, are connected to the parkwide network**

Explanatory paragraph:

As of 1999, only 26 of the park's 96 computer stations are connected to the parkwide network. The number of computers and need for connectivity increases yearly to accomplish almost all of the programs in the park as they involve information sharing, accessing the internet, and accessing resource and other data. The current system hurts productivity, as employees must

travel around the park to accomplish work that could easily be done in their office. To reach this goal, the park hopes to have 37 computers networked in 2001, 48 in 2002, 60 in 2003, 72 in 2004 and the total 86 connected by 2005.

**IVa3A *Workforce Development and Performance- Employee Performance Standards:* By September 30, 2005, 100% of Mesa Verde National Park permanent and term employee performance standards are linked to appropriate strategic and annual performance goals and position competencies.**

Explanatory paragraph

Every position at MEVE is, and will continue to be linked directly to GPRA performance goals, even if the number of positions changes during the course of this Strategic Plan. Park records currently show 78 permanent and 46 term positions in the park, for a total of 124.

**IVa4A *Workforce Diversity-Permanent Women and Minorities:* By September 30, 2005, the number of Mesa Verde National Park permanent positions in targeted occupational series filled by employees from underrepresented groups is maintained at the FY 99 level of 45% (18 of 40).**

Explanatory paragraph

This goal reflects the National Park Services' commitment to increase diversity in its workforce by recruiting and hiring qualified minorities, women and individuals with disabilities in all occupational series, but particularly in those targeted occupations and grade levels where they are underrepresented to achieve consistency with percentages of representation in the civilian labor force. While the park will continue to work to maintain this level, it is difficult to predict the number of vacant positions in the targeted positions that will become available over the next five years.

**IVa4B *Workforce Diversity- Temporary/Seasonal Women and Minorities:* By September 30, 2005, the number of Mesa Verde National Park temporary/seasonal positions annually filled by women and minorities is maintained at the FY1999 level of 44% (66 of a total of 148 seasonal positions.)**

Explanatory paragraph

This goal reflects the National Park Services' commitment to increase diversity in its workforce by recruiting and hiring qualified minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities in all occupational series, but particularly in those targeted occupations and grade levels where they are underrepresented to achieve consistency with percentages of representation in the civilian labor force. While this goal is similar to IVa4a, all series instead of only a few are targeted for seasonal positions. While the park will continue to work to maintain this level, it is difficult to predict the number of seasonal positions that will be available each of the next five years.

**IVa4C *Workforce Diversity- Permanent Employees with Disabilities:* By September 30, 2005, the number of Mesa Verde National Park permanent positions filled by employees identifying a disability is increased from 1 in FY1999 to 3.**

Explanatory paragraph

This goal reflects the National Park Services' commitment to increase diversity in its workforce by recruiting and hiring qualified minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities in all occupational series, but particularly in those targeted occupations and grade levels where they are underrepresented to achieve consistency with percentages of representation in the civilian labor force. While the park will work to increase current levels, it is difficult to predict the number of vacant permanent positions that will become available over the next five years. Also, employees must choose to identify their disability when hired for them to count towards this goal. The park finds that some employees who meet the conditions of this goal, do not identify their disability, and choose instead to be hired on the basis of their abilities and are therefore, not counted by this goal.

**IVa4D *Workforce Diversity- Temporary/Seasonal Employees with Disabilities:* By September 30, 2005, the number of Mesa Verde National Park temporary/seasonal positions filled by employees identifying a disability is increased from 0 in FY 1999 to 2.**

Explanatory paragraph

This goal reflects the National Park Services' commitment to increase diversity in its workforce by recruiting and hiring qualified minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities in all occupational series, but particularly in those targeted occupations and grade levels where they are underrepresented to achieve consistency with percentages of representation in the civilian labor force. While the park will work to increase this goal, employees must be willing to identify a disability to be counted under this goal. The park finds that some employees who meet the conditions of this goal, do not identify their disability, and choose instead to be hired on the basis of their abilities and are therefore, not counted by this goal.

**IVa5 *Employee Housing:* By September 30, 2005, the number of Mesa Verde National Park's housing units rated in fair/poor condition is reduced from 22 in FY 97 to 11 (a 50% reduction).**

Explanatory paragraph

Housing is provided to some employees so that the park's resources and visitors can be better protected. This goal works toward improving the condition of employee housing within Mesa Verde, especially those units rated in fair to poor condition. To achieve this goal, 3 houses will be improved one year and 2 houses each of the rest of the 4 years.

**IVa6A *Employee Safety—Lost-time Injury Rate:* By September 30, 2005, the Mesa Verde National Park employee lost-time injury rate will be at or below the FY1992-1996 five-year annual average of 4.21 incidents per year.**

Explanatory paragraph

Mesa Verde National Park recognizes the need to improve employee lost time injury rates. This goal is intended to maintain accountability for employee on-the-job lost time injuries and illnesses. The park also intends to continue safety efforts and institute a comprehensive safety program. In doing so, the park hopes to reduce but at least maintain these rates.

**IVa6B *Employee Safety- Continuation of Pay:* By September 30, 2005, the Mesa Verde National Park total number of Continuation of Pay (COP) hours is maintained at or below the**

**FY1992-1996 five-year annual average of 538.6 hours per year.**

Explanatory paragraph

Results of this goal will help reduce the COP costs incurred by the park for injuries suffered on-the-job. Mesa Verde National Park recognizes the need to reduce employee injury rates to help reduce these costs. This goal is intended to maintain accountability, continue safety efforts and institute a comprehensive safety program. In doing so the park hopes to reduce COP costs.

**LONG-TERM GOALS FOR MISSION GOAL IVb**

Mission Goal IVb: Mesa Verde National Park increases its managerial capabilities through initiatives and support from other agencies, organizations, and individuals.

**IVb1 *Volunteer Hours:* By September 30, 2005, the number of Mesa Verde National Park volunteer hours is increased from 6742 hours in FY1997 to 8000 hours (an 15.7% increase).**

Explanatory paragraph

Park volunteers provide diverse kinds of assistance from maintenance and interpretation, to administration and collection management. The National Park Service Volunteers in Parks (VIP) program, authorized in 1970, permits Mesa Verde to accept and use voluntary help in ways mutually beneficial to the parks and the volunteers. Since 1998 when volunteer efforts were at an all time high, hours have actually been dwindling, primarily due to the fact that the park cannot provide park housing since it is so limited. The park still intends to work to increase the number of hours over 1997 although this increase is quite modest at about 251 hours each year.

**IVb2A *Cash Donations and Grants:* By September 30, 2005, cash donations to Mesa Verde National Park are maintained at FY 1998 levels of \$79,500 per year.**

Explanatory paragraph

This goal tracks the dollar amount of support received by Mesa Verde National Park from all sources including the Mesa Verde Museum Association, Mesa Verde Foundation, National Park Foundation, and other public and private sources. The cash-value of donated services and products are tracked in separate goals. A substantial increase in cash donations (over \$1,000,000) is expected in FY 2001 as a result of the Save America's Treasures Program. However, this funding is expected to end so that during the remaining four years of this Strategic Plan, the park will work to maintain its donation levels of 1998.

**IVb2B *Cash Value of In-kind Donations from Friends Groups and other organizations:* By September 30, 2005, the cash value of in-kind donations, grants and services to Mesa Verde National Park by Mesa Verde Foundation, National Park Foundation, and ARAMARK Mesa Verde is increased from \$14,000 in FY 1997 to \$21,500.**



Explanatory paragraph

This goal tracks the dollar amount of support Mesa Verde National Park receives from organizations such as the Mesa Verde Foundation, the National Park Foundation and ARAMARK Mesa Verde. Our partners indicate that it is likely to increase as stated by the goal.

- IVb2C *Cash Value of In-kind Donations from Mesa Verde Museum Association: By September 30, 2005, the cash value of in-kind donations, grants and services to Mesa Verde National Park from Mesa Verde Museum Association is maintained at the FY 1997 level of \$135,339.***

Explanatory paragraph

The Mesa Verde Museum Association supports projects in interpretation, research, and education through donations of equipment, supplies and a wide variety of services. This goal tracks the dollar amount of support the park receives through these donations. The amount of services—especially grants—the Association donates to the park can fluctuate widely from year to year. On average, the Association thinks that the 1997 level will generally be obtainable.

- IVb4 *Fee Receipts: By September 30, 2005, Mesa Verde National Park receipts from park entrance, recreation and other fees are increased from \$1,151,620 in FY1997 to \$1,471,000 in FY2005 (a 21% increase).***

Explanatory paragraph

The 1996 Recreation Fee Demonstration program allows the park to keep a portion of the proceeds from the entrance fee collection operation and to use these funds to accomplish some of the backlog of work needed to fix inadequate facilities and services in the park. This goal reflects the increased revenue expected principally due to forecasted increases in visitation to the park.

- IVbX *Park Partnerships: By September 30, 2005, the number of projects successfully completed by partners under formal agreement that protect the resources and serve the visitors of Mesa Verde National Park in FY 1999, will be maintained.***

Explanatory paragraph

This goal tracks Mesa Verde National Park's activity with partners in preserving park resources inside the boundaries of the park. However, it only addresses existing partnerships under a formal agreement. The park will continue to work and improve on the 3 existing partnerships under formal agreement. More of these partnerships may be developed in the future.

# EXTERNAL FACTORS & FUTURE EVALUATIONS

## KEY EXTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

While Mesa Verde management and staff can plan, manage and largely control much of what occurs in the park, there are certain things they can only influence, especially things external to park boundaries. Then there are those things that the park staff can not control at all. In developing Mesa Verde National Park's Strategic Plan and its long-term goals, it was important to take into consideration key external factors that could negatively or positively affect goal outcomes. Some examples of these factors that could affect the successful achievement of Mesa Verde's Strategic Plan include economic factors in the local communities, a rise or fall in visitation patterns, environmental issues or cataclysmic natural events, such as the fires experienced this summer. From previous fires—especially the Chapin V Fire of 1996—the park has learned that this summer's fires will have both positive and negative impacts on the Strategic Plan which are further described below. Another key factor, also described below, involves donations received for programs like the Save America's Treasures effort in the park. And finally, the effect of the recently established Mesa Verde Foundation is also discussed as a factor.

### **Impact of the Bircher and Pony Fires**

Mesa Verde's Strategic Plan for 2001-2005 was in need of only some minor corrections when the fire season hit. The Bircher Fire started on Thursday, July 20, and was not contained until Saturday, July 29, after consuming over 19,700 acres of the park. Natural and cultural resources were damaged and infrastructure such as guard-rails was destroyed. The fire necessitated evacuation of all visitors and Mesa Verde personnel. The park reopened on Friday, August 4, only to close later the very same day due to a new lightning strike caused fire, the Pony Fire. This fire burned 1,322 acres in the park, burning over Wetherill Mesa where modern structures such as restrooms and a Ranger Station were completely destroyed. Intense fire fighting efforts protected all historic buildings on Chapin Mesa. Again, the evacuation of visitors and Mesa Verde employees was necessary to protect health and safety of individuals. The park remained closed until Monday, August 14. The Burned Area Rehabilitation Team (BAER) promptly began work to evaluate and mitigate adverse effects of both the Bircher Fire and the Pony Fire on soil, water and critically threatened natural and cultural resources.

These fires will undoubtedly affect achievement of the strategic goals expressed by this plan. To meet critical GPRA deadlines, there was insufficient time to rethink this plan. Instead, the park will work through its Annual Plans and Annual Reports to help track which goals we are still able to accomplish and what goal achievements are delayed due to the impact of the fire on park operations. We know from the Chapin V fire that we will have to re-prioritize existing funds and human resources to go towards more pressing rebuilding and resource protection efforts due to the fire. We also know that we may be able to get additional dollars to achieve goals that we did not think possible when this plan was developed.

### **Save America's Treasures Funding and other Donations**

First Lady, Hillary Rodham Clinton visited Mesa Verde National Park on May 21-22 to celebrate Mesa Verde's inclusion in the Save America's Treasures program. Mrs. Clinton was the keynote speaker for the presentation of over 3 1/2 million dollars in donations and federal grants to stabilize and protect the

park's backcountry cliff dwellings. This is an important step in a 10 million dollar campaign that is needed to protect hundreds of sites threatened by erosion and hundreds more that need their conditions assessed and stabilized. The Save America's Treasures program was designed to last until the end of 2001, at which time, funding stops. This Strategic Plan makes the assumption that no additional dollars will be forthcoming. However, the park will continue to seek donations as well as base funds, grants and other funding possibilities to keep this program moving forward. However, the pace of the program will be totally dependent on funding.

### **Mesa Verde Foundation**

Mesa Verde Foundation (MVF) is a non-profit corporation that was founded on March 26, 1997 to promote the awareness of cultures and an understanding of natural and cultural resources as well as to protect and preserve our common heritage by focusing on Mesa Verde National Park. The MVF also exists as a fund raising organization to work toward the continuing efforts to fund a center at the entrance to the park. Over the years their success in raising funds could increase the donations to the park by a significant percentage. However, it is difficult to determine an amount of these funds, or if these funds would be donated to the park during this Strategic Plan.

### **SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE EVALUATIONS**

Annual Plans will be prepared for each of the five fiscal years addressed by this Strategic Plan. The fiscal year 2001 Annual Plan will be released sometime in the fall of 2000, soon after this Strategic Plan. The Annual Plan will detail the first incremental goals and work plan that will help achieve this Strategic Plan. The Annual Plan for 2001, and each subsequent year, can not be finalized until after Congress finalizes and approves the FY 2001 budget as Mesa Verde may receive more, or less, than what is estimated by the Strategic Plan.

Annual Reports will also be prepared for each fiscal year addressed by this Strategic Plan. The first such report will be released in the fall of 2001. That means that the next Annual Report which park stakeholders see will be for FY 2000, a year addressed by the prior Strategic Plan.

These yearly reports are important as they give park staff the chance to:

- track whether the annual and strategic goals were achieved for the year: were targets met, exceeded, or not achieved at all?
- explain the reasons for the achievements and failures
- if needed, rethink goals and work plans for the following fiscal year and adjust the next Annual Plan accordingly
- share this information with park stakeholders.

Even though each Strategic Plan is developed to set goals for five years, the next Strategic Plan will be prepared in only three years for fiscal years 2003-2008. By revising Strategic Plans this often, Mesa Verde is better able to take what is learned through each Annual Report and revise the long-term plan on a more-timely basis.



# CONSULTATION & STRATEGIC PLAN PREPARERS

## CONSULTATION

GPRA requires consultation with Congress and others potentially affected by or interested in the Strategic Plan. Consultation with Congress principally occurs on the National level as the NPS' Strategic Plan sets the course for all individual park units. Congress was initially consulted on the first agency and park Strategic Plans. For this Strategic Plan, Congress was consulted on any new and revised service-wide goals.

While to date, there has not been a high level of public interest in these plans, the general public, visitors, other federal agencies, local communities and the 24 tribes affiliated with the park have tremendous input into the Mesa Verde Strategic Plan through various means. Some of these include:

- discussions of GPRA and related documents in the park newspaper
- posting of all documents on the park's website
- press releases announcing the availability of each plan and report
- discussion of future plans—both long and short-term—and other issues with:
  - the 24 affiliated tribes during twice annual meetings and in additional meetings and phone calls with various tribes on an individual basis
  - various meetings with federal, State and local agencies, groups, organizations and clubs

## STRATEGIC PLAN PREPARERS

The following park staff members were involved in preparing this Strategic Plan:

Nancie Ames, Chief, Administrative Services  
Liz Bauer, Curator  
Erika Campos, Landscape Architect  
Marilyn Colyer, Natural Resource Specialist  
Frank Cope, Chief, Maintenance  
Rovilla Ellis, Mesa Verde Museum Association  
Kathy Fiero, Archeologist  
Gary Gasaway, Roads and Trails Foreman  
Mona Hutchinson, Library Technician  
Sue Johnson-Erner, Concessions Management Specialist  
Linda Lanier, Budget Analyst  
Allan Loy, Geographic Information Specialist  
Gian Mercurio, Museum Technician  
Will Morris, Chief, Interpretation and Visitor Services  
Larry Nordby, Research Archeologist  
Charlie Peterson, Chief, Visitor Protection and Fire Management  
Marta Peterson, Superintendent's Secretary  
George San Miquel, Natural Resource Specialist  
Patricia Trap, Park Planner  
Anita Vialpando, Administrative Assistant  
Kirby Weaver, Electrician  
Larry Wiese, Superintendent  
Cynthia Williams, Archeologist