



National Park System Maps

Geographic Information Systems Division

The Geographic Information Systems Division (GISD) is responsible for providing leadership on GIS and spatial data issues in the Park Service. This includes defining the data requirements and collection of enterprise data layers. One significant enterprise data layer is the National Park Service Administrative Boundaries layer currently being maintained in coordination with the Land Resources Division.

An important tool for communicating the usefulness of GIS is visualization with maps. Maps are a very effective tool for park visitors and managers; they assist in communication among technical specialists, managers, park employees, and visitors and can provide basic to complex information.

The GIS Division recently produced a National Park System map (figure 1), which displays base cartographic data, including NPS boundaries for the entire Service. The creation of the Administrative Boundaries enterprise data layer for the display of park service units eliminates the need to gather boundaries unit by unit which can make the creation of a map like this one tedious and time consuming.

The National Park System Map was created by using the Environmental Systems Research Institute software ArcMap version 9. Map layers including NPS, state and country boundaries, hydrology, transportation, cities, shaded relief and elevation were defined and a map layout was created. The layout includes a map of the lower 48 states, as well as insets for Alaska, American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii and Puerto Rico. These maps can be easily produced at a wide range of sizes for analysis, display or presentation purposes.

This map is an important instrument for conveying the extent of park service units.

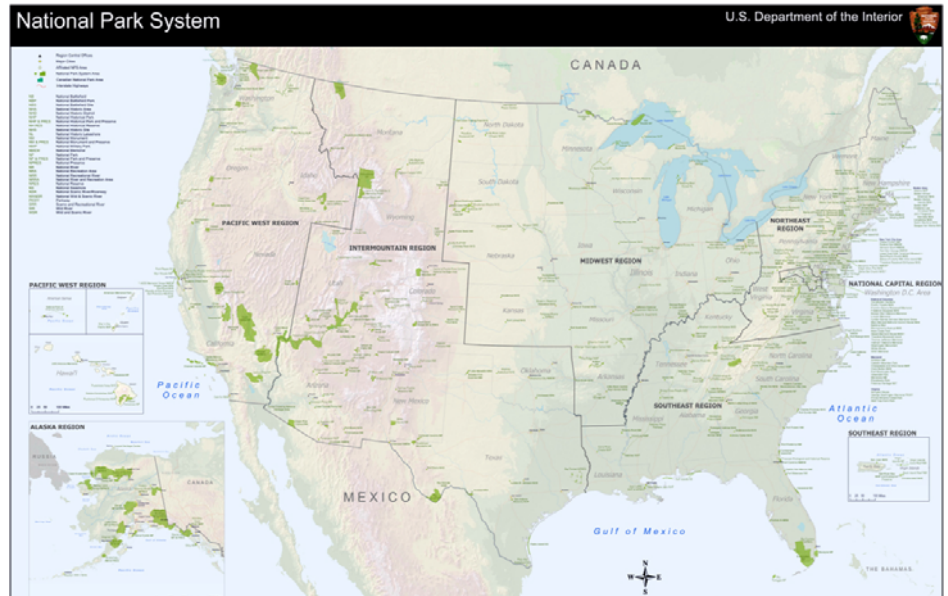


Figure 1. National Park System Map

Simple overlays for the National Park System map, like the 109th Congressional districts (figure 2) or the Vital Signs Monitoring Networks of the Inventory & Monitoring Program, provide further information for managers.



Figure 2. 109th Congressional Districts Map.

The maps are also important tools for presentations, like a meeting between the National Park Service and the Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas (CONANP) where a visualization (figure 3) of the Sister Parks between the two agencies

A map is an invaluable way for Park Service employees and managers to communicate data visually; and the National Park System and other maps produced by the GIS Division have become an important key to sharing GIS throughout both the NPS and with partners. In FY06, the GISD will produce NPS map for each NPS region.

www.nps.gov/gis



Figure 3. NPS & CONANP Sister Parks Map.

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