



Herbert Hoover National Historic Site © NPS

FACT SHEET

National Parks in Iowa

Effigy Mounds National Monument • Herbert Hoover National Historic Site • Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail • Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail

Iowa's national parks trace the history of the nation. Sites include effigies dating back 2,500 years, trails that brought settlers into the west and the birthplace of President Herbert Hoover.

Effigy Mounds National Monument - Proclaimed in 1949. Preserves more than 200 mound sites, dating to 2,500 years old, including 26 in the shape of animal effigies. This monument is an excellent example of a significant phase of the prehistoric American Indian mound-building culture.

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site - Authorized in 1965. Preserved to commemorate the life of the 31st President of the United States. Visit the small cottage where Hoover was born in 1874, a blacksmith shop similar to the one owned by his father, the first West Branch schoolhouse, and the Friends Meetinghouse where the Hoover family worshipped. Also located on the grounds are the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum, the gravesites of President and Mrs. Hoover, and a 76-acre tallgrass prairie.

Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail - In 1804, Meriwether Lewis & William Clark began a voyage of discovery. They departed from Camp Wood located in what was to become Illinois. The President Jefferson had privately requested Congress to fund the expedition shortly before the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. They traveled over a three-year period through lands that later became 11 states. Most of the 3,700 mile-long trail follows the Missouri & Columbia Rivers.

Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail - Led by Brigham Young, roughly 70,000 Mormons traveled along the Mormon Pioneer Trail from 1846 to 1869 in order to escape religious persecution. The general route is from Nauvoo, Illinois, to Salt Lake City, Utah, covering about 1,300 miles.

Key Issues Facing National Parks in Iowa

Taking care of America's national parks should be a national priority. With the 100th birthday of the National Park System approaching in 2016, it is more important than ever to address the ongoing problems that our parks are facing. The National Park Service is suffering from an operations funding shortfall now exceeding \$800 million annually. In addition, several billion dollars are needed to protect archaeological sites



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and historic buildings, and repair the extensive backlog of maintenance projects. Many park friends in Congress have spent years highlighting the fiscal crisis in America's national parks. The Administration has responded with a budget request for 2008 that would increase the National Park Service operating budget by \$258 million -- a strong step in restoring our parks and improving the experiences of visitors. This budget also launches the National Park Centennial Challenge, which if properly framed and enacted could help restore the parks for their 100th birthday and for generations to come. In addition to the operational shortfall, the National Park Service has a \$1.9 billion land acquisition backlog consisting of over 11,000 tracts of land and covering more than 1.8 million acres. In many instances, failure to acquire these lands makes operating the parks more complex and costly. Unfortunately, funding for national park federal land acquisition has declined dramatically in recent years, from \$130 million five years ago, to only \$23 million in the fiscal year 2008 request.

- Effigy Mounds National Monument has over \$6.6 million in unfunded projects, including completing a trail from the visitor center to the Marching Bear Group. Currently, the safety of visitors is threatened by having to cross an extremely dangerous road and highly used train tracks to access the site.
- Currently, Effigy Mounds lacks an archaeologist or any other staff capable of researching, interpreting and protecting ancient relics and resources.
- Over the last few years, tours of the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site have been reduced from one every fifteen minutes to one every hour. Consequently, some

school groups are unable to receive guided tours of the park on busy days.

- The Hoover site has over \$8 million in unfunded projects. The replacement and relocation of the park's maintenance facility above a floodplain is an important project for the park, as well as the most costly. Also critical is stabilizing the banks of a half-mile stretch of the Hoover Creek.
- There is currently no trail-wide inventory of the archaeological resources found along the Lewis & Clark Trail. As a result, it is impossible for trail staff to accurately assess the threats faces and to adequately protect them from destruction, desecration, looting, and vandalism.

Park Visitation in Iowa

In fiscal year 2005, the national parks of Iowa welcomed 249,778 visitors.

Budget Information

In fiscal year 2006, the operations funding for the four national parks in Iowa was \$2 million. For fiscal year 2008, the Administration is proposing a 11.8 percent increase, which would bring operations funding to \$2.2 million.

Contact Information

For more information on the national parks in Iowa, please contact NPCA Legislative Director Blake Selzer at 202-223-6722, ext. 250.



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1300 19th Street NW • Suite 300 • Washington, DC 20036
202.223.NPCA(6722) • Fax 202.659.0650 • [npca@npca.org](mailto:n pca@npca.org) • www.npca.org