



Blue Ridge Parkway © NPS

## FACT SHEET

### *National Parks in North Carolina*

Appalachian National Scenic Trail • Blue Ridge Parkway • Cape Hatteras National Seashore • Cape Lookout National Seashore • Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site • Fort Raleigh National Historic Site • Great Smoky Mountains National Park • Guilford Courthouse National Military Park • Moores Creek National Battlefield • Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail • Trail of Tears National Historic Trail • Wright Brothers National Memorial

North Carolina's seashores and mountains are connected by the historic trails that cut across the state. Whether it's the majesty of the Great Smoky Mountains or the tragedy of the Trail of Tears, North Carolina's national parks offer a lot to inspire visitors.

**Appalachian National Scenic Trail** - The Appalachian National Scenic Trail is a 2,167-mile footpath along the ridge crests and across the major valleys of the Appalachian Mountains from Katahdin in Maine to Springer Mountain in north Georgia. In North Carolina, the trail climbs along the Stecoah-Cheoah Mountain area and provides spectacular views among the forested slopes.

**Blue Ridge Parkway** - Designed as a drive awhile - stop awhile

recreational drive, the Blue Ridge Parkway provides both stunning scenery and close-up looks at the natural and cultural history of the southern Appalachian mountains. The Parkway meanders for 469 miles and connects Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks.

**Cape Hatteras National Seashore** - Authorized in 1937. Stretched over 70 miles of barrier islands, Cape Hatteras National Seashore is a fascinating combination of natural and cultural resources, and provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities. Once dubbed the "Graveyard of the Atlantic" for its treacherous currents, shoals, and storms, Cape Hatteras has a wealth of history relating to shipwrecks, lighthouses, and the U.S. Lifesaving Service. The park's fishing and surfing are considered the best on the east coast.

**Cape Lookout National Seashore** - Authorized in 1966. The seashore is a 56 mile long section of the Outer Banks of North Carolina running from Ocracoke Inlet on the northeast to Beaufort Inlet on the southeast. The three undeveloped barrier islands which make up the seashore - North Core Banks, South Core Banks and Shackleford Banks - may seem barren and isolated but they offer many natural and historical features that can make a visit very rewarding.



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**Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site** - Authorized in 1968. Consists of the circa 1838 antebellum house, the 1900's dairy goat barn complex and a representative goat herd, sheds, rolling pastures, mountainside woods, walking/hiking trails, two small lakes, ponds, flower and vegetable gardens, and an orchard.

**Fort Raleigh National Historic Site** - Designated in 1941. The first English attempts at colonization in the New World (1585-1587) are commemorated here. These efforts, sponsored by Sir Walter Raleigh, ended with the disappearance of 116 men, women and children (including two that were born in the New World). The fate of this "lost colony" remains a mystery to this day.

**Great Smoky Mountains National Park** - Authorized in 1926. Encompasses 800 square miles of which 95 percent are forested. World renowned for the diversity of its plant and animal resources, the beauty of its ancient mountains, the quality of its remnants of Southern Appalachian mountain culture, and the depth and integrity of the wilderness sanctuary within its boundaries, it is one of the largest protected areas in the east.

**Guilford Courthouse National Military Park** - Established in 1917. The battle fought here on March 15, 1781, was the largest, most hotly-contested action of the Revolutionary War's climactic Southern Campaign. The serious loss of British manpower suffered at Guilford Courthouse foreshadowed Lord Cornwallis's final defeat at Yorktown seven months later.

**Moore's Creek National Battlefield** - Established in 1926. Commemorates the decisive February 27, 1776, victory by 1,000 Patriots over 1,600 Loyalists at the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge. The battle ended Royal Governor Josiah Martin's hopes of regaining control of the colony for the British crown. The colony of North Carolina voted to declare independence from the British on April 12, 1776, shortly after the victory at Moore's Creek.

**Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail** - Commemorates the campaign leading to the battle of Kings Mountain by following the Revolutionary War route of Patriot militiamen from Virginia, today's eastern Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina to the battle site at Kings Mountain National Military Park in South Carolina. Although the trail is still being fully developed visitors may access approximately 57 miles of the route at various points along the 330-mile long corridor.

**Trail of Tears National Historic Trail** - In 1838, the United States government forcibly removed more than 16,000 Cherokee Indian people from their homelands in Tennessee, Alabama, North Carolina, and Georgia, and sent them to Indian Territory (today known as Oklahoma). This tragic chapter in American and Cherokee history became known as the Trail of Tears, and culminated the implementation of the Indian Removal Act of 1830, which mandated the removal of all American Indian tribes east of the Mississippi River to lands in the West. The Trail of Tears National Historic Trail commemorates the removal of the Cherokee and the paths that 17 Cherokee detachments followed westward. Today the trail encompasses about 2,200 miles of land and water routes, and traverses portions of nine states.

**Wright Brothers National Memorial** - Authorized in 1926. The first successful sustained powered flights in a heavier-than-air machine were made here by Wilbur and Orville Wright on December 17, 1903. A 60-foot granite monument dedicated in 1932, is perched atop 90-foot tall Kill Devil Hill commemorating the achievement of these two visionaries from Dayton, Ohio.

### *Key Issues Facing National Parks in North Carolina*

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 estimated at \$750 million annually. In addition, several billion dollars are needed to protect archaeological sites 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 and Congress responded in fiscal year 2008 with a \$122 million increase in the budget for park operations. This is a strong first step in our parks and improving the experiences of visitors. The FY 2008 budget also launched the National Park Centennial Challenge, which will 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,



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from \$130 million five years ago, to only \$21 million in the fiscal year 2009 request.

- Chronic federal funding shortfalls have resulted in insufficient staff to maintain hiking trails, historic sites, and provide interpretive programs that engage visitors to Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The park needs additional full-time law enforcement positions to protect visitors and park resources, such as wildlife.
- More than 90 percent of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park's budget goes toward staff salaries and essential services, leaving very little funding for additional park expenses such as addressing storm damage and updating interpretive materials.
- Blue Ridge Parkway current has more than 50 permanent positions that cannot be filled due to budgetary constraints. About 40 percent of those positions are resource management and planning and 30 percent are maintenance.
- In 1984 Cape Hatteras National Seashore guarded 8 beaches. Over the years due to budget erosion the National Park Service has reduced guarded beaches down to three.
- For the last five years the Guilford Courthouse National Military Park has been unable to provide law enforcement patrols in the park after 5 p.m. during the summers. Additional funding will allow the park to extend their summer hours for patrol to sunset.
- Cape Lookout National Seashore has been unable to

fully maintain, operate and interpret the nationally significant Cape Lookout lighthouse. Many visitors have arrived at the lighthouse area without any contact with national park service personnel thereby not receiving important safety and resource protection education.

- The proposed operational increase will allow Moore's Creek National Battlefield to retain the absolute minimum of staff needed to remain open daily in 2008. However, it will not address inflationary increases in the costs of supplies, materials and utilities.

### *Park Visitation in North Carolina*

In 2006, the national parks in North Carolina welcomed 20.1 million visitors.

### *Budget Information*

In fiscal year 2008, the operations funding for the national parks in North Carolina is \$48 million. For fiscal year 2009, the Administration is proposing a 5 percent increase, which would bring operations funding to \$50.6 million.

### *Contact Information*

For more information on the national parks in North Carolina, please contact NPCA Senior Program Manager Greg Kidd at 828-254-5161 or NPCA Legislative Director Blake Selzer at 202-223-6722, ext. 250.

NPS Unit	FY03 Enacted	FY04 Enacted	FY05 Enacted	FY06 Enacted	FY07 Enacted	FY08 Enacted	FY 09 Requested	% Change FY07-08	% Change FY08-09
Appalachian NST	\$1,034	\$1,024	\$1,137	\$1,205	\$1,218	\$1,327	\$1,481	9	12
Blue Ridge Parkway	\$13,576	\$13,452	\$13,795	\$14,001	\$14,249	\$15,369	\$15,655	8	2
Cape Hatteras Group (Cape Hatteras NS, Wright Brothers NM, Fort Raleigh NHS)	\$7,151	\$7,111	\$7,170	\$7,154	\$7,479	\$8,538	\$8,801	14	3
Cape Lookout NS	\$1,498	\$1,491	\$1,531	\$1,712	\$1,755	\$2,155	\$2,523	23	17
Carl Sandburg Home NHS	\$934	\$929	\$956	\$980	\$1,001	\$1,037	\$1,256	4	21
Great Smoky Mountains NP	\$15,608	\$15,340	\$16,358	\$16,796	\$17,231	\$18,515	\$19,343	7	4
Guilford Courthouse NMP	\$601	\$628	\$743	\$757	\$771	\$848	\$862	10	2
Moores Creek NB	\$366	\$409	\$513	\$521	\$531	\$550	\$686	4	25
<b>All North Carolina parks</b>					<b>\$44,235</b>	<b>\$48,339</b>	<b>\$50,607</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>5%</b>

All dollar amounts in thousands

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