Operation Streamline: An FPS Priority

It seems incredible but true—an entire year’s already gone by since my appointment as Florida State Parks Director. During that time, I’ve visited 119 Parks, and met personally perhaps 75% of our Florida Park Service employees. It didn’t take long for me to realize there are many things really special about the Florida Park Service and my fellow employees. These positives include the traditions, the esprit de corps, the dedication, commitment and incredible work ethic of our employees, and a real sense of “family” among our Florida State Parks colleagues.

However, as with any organization nearly seven decades old, certain practices, processes and requirements have become embedded in the organization that actually hamper our efforts to fulfill our mission of protecting Florida’s precious resources while also making these properties available to millions for enjoyment and recreation.

Thus, my early request of the DEP Inspector General’s Office to essentially interview staff from throughout the system to identify things that hinder our employees from carrying out our mission, with a view toward eliminating or changing them. Experts from the Inspector General’s Office interviewed 26 different groups of field and headquarter employees and compiled a 92-page report summarizing the issues our employees feel hamper their effectiveness in accomplishing our mission and suggesting possible solutions.

Besides personnel issues that require legislative action, such as pay and benefits—which we’re dealing with separately through our “Professionalization of Park Staff” initiative—most of the issues mentioned fall into several broad major categories: Communications, Paperwork/Bureaucracy and Technology.

Our Operation Streamline implementation task force is chaired by Homosassa Springs Park Manager Tom Linley, assisted by eight Florida Park Service staff from throughout the System. The Task Force has met several times, and already has made considerable progress. For instance, a significant number of reports and forms that served no useful purpose have been eliminated, and there will be more. Other issues will be more complex and take longer, and the Task Force will need your help and suggestions to implement workable solutions.

To keep you informed, the Task Force has begun this newsletter and I urge you to review it carefully for opportunities to help simplify and streamline our operations working with Tom and his group. Thanks as always for all you do for Florida’s state parks and our millions of visitors.

Wendy Spencer, Director
Florida State Parks

We all agree… (these items were brought up and we support the ideas)

- **Administrative Workshops:** Any kind of training is a good thing and the Division is working to provide additional workshops and forums to exchange information and increase administrative knowledge.
- **Staff Schedules:** Administrative staff needs to be available to serve both internal and external customers. In some cases, flextime and the variable workweek, while a benefit to the employee, has interfered with customer service. Service should be the primary reason for setting staff schedules.
- **Survey Comments:** OIG Management Survey comments should be formatted into executive summaries rather than raw comments to protect the confidentiality of the respondent.

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I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody.  
**Bill Cosby**

Bureaucracy defends the status quo long past the time when the quo has lost its status.  
**Laurence J. Peter**
## Paperwork Reduction

**Special Note:** Elimination of forms or reports does not mean that we eliminate good management practices. Forms are tools intended to assist staff in accurate and necessary data collection. However, over the years some data generated by the forms is just filed and what was once a necessary tool is now an administrative burden.

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<th>Report/Form</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Solution</th>
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<tr>
<td>Housing Inspection Report</td>
<td>OPM Chapter 8, Paragraph 11.12 requires annual inspections and reporting using this report. OPM Chapter 9, Paragraph 11.9 indicates that inspections are completed only when needed.</td>
<td>Eliminate the report and incorporate its function into the Annual Park Management Summary. Update OPM to reflect this change.</td>
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<td>Roadkill Report</td>
<td>Roadkill data is collected and reported. In most cases, this data is filed and unused. If there is a site-specific need to collect the data, then it will be collected on a case-by-case basis.</td>
<td>Eliminate the report and reference in the OPM Chapter 15, Part C, Appendix A, Page 2.</td>
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<td>Park Manager Notebook</td>
<td>OPM Chapter 8, Paragraph 11.21 (29) indicates the need for a Park Manager Notebook. This was instituted about 15 years ago to record various contacts, obligations and other notables about the park. The notebook is repetitive of normal administrative functions and contracts and no longer serves a useful purpose.</td>
<td>Eliminate the Park Manager Notebook and the reference in the OPM.</td>
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<td>Recycling Report</td>
<td>Reporting of recycling activities at the unit is required semi-annually. This report is an estimate of recycled materials and therefore is not consistent and has no practical value to parks and district staff.</td>
<td>Eliminate the report and reference in the OPM Chapter 15, Part C, Appendix A, Page 2. The elimination of the report should not diminish our commitment to recycling.</td>
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<td>Volunteer Application &amp; Agreement Forms</td>
<td>The application and agreement headers contain the same information. These two forms can be modified to better reflect current volunteer program needs and fit on one form.</td>
<td>Modify and combine information into one form.</td>
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<td>Annual signature by Employee of Chapter 215</td>
<td>Employees were required to sign a form each year indicating they have read FSS 215. This requirement was discontinued a couple of years ago, though notification was not received by all units.</td>
<td>Communicate the elimination of the signing of the form. It is no longer required.</td>
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<td>Deviation Report (Park Level)</td>
<td>The Marketing Section generates a monthly deviation report of variations (+/- 15%) in park attendance. An additional form is then generated and sent to districts/parks requesting explanations for the reasons of the deviations. In most cases the reason is not specifically known resulting in guesses and invalid data on the report. Compiled data is sent back, filed and rarely used.</td>
<td>The Marketing Section will continue to generate attendance related reports. Eliminate the additional form sent to districts/parks. If specific data is needed for a particular park, then that data will be provided by the district/park on a case-by-case basis.</td>
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### Digging Deeper…

- **Staffing** allocation review of all areas to ensure appropriate staffing levels and responsibilities
- **Chapter 62-D** revision and updating including decriminalization of some violations
- **Delegation of Authority** updating to delegate decisions to the lowest level of management appropriate
- **Purchasing Card** and Finance and Accounting policy and procedures review at the Administrative/Budget Workshop
- **Operation Procedure Manual** revision and updating
- **Unit Management Plans** and Carrying Capacity policies review
Process Simplification

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<td>Property Policy</td>
<td>The current OPM requires two systems for accounting for property, the DEP property register (FLAIR) and a sensitive (attractive) property inventory. This duplicate system is not efficient to maintain. The current DEP Property Directive requires the inclusion of all attractive property ($500-$1000 value).</td>
<td>Eliminate the OPM requirement and use DEP Directive 320 as policy for property inventory accountability. Property custodians will need to add attractive property items ($500-$1000) to the FLAIR Property Subsystem.</td>
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| Annual Pass Renewal Notification | District offices currently mail letters to annual pass holders encouraging renewals. The renewal rate is low and the administrative costs are high.                                      | Marketing Section will assume this task and will develop a more cost effective method of Annual Pass renewal notification. Consolidation and outsourcing may be considered. |

FYI... (These items were brought up and there appears to be misunderstanding of the policy or the status)

Reserve America Update: The practical development and implementation of Reserve America (RA) is in the hands of the RA Work Group. The work group is made up of representatives from five pilot parks: St. Andrews, Paynes Prairie, Wekiwa Springs, Jonathan Dickinson and Oscar Scherer, and a representative from each district office and the Bureau of Operational Services. The work group meets weekly on a conference call to work together to identify and resolve issues as the Reserve America program is implemented. Most parks are now online and the rest of parks will be going online by the end of September. We will continue to smooth out the wrinkles in the coming months. Since starting our partnership with Reserve America, our camping occupancy has increased in many parks, expanding our opportunity to expose more visitors to the special camping experience only found in Florida’s state parks.

Modules: The Land Management Uniform Cost Accounting law in Florida Statute 259.037 requires the use of modules. They are used for a required Annual Report to the Legislature every year. Currently they are used to justify our existence in the Zero Base Budgeting process also required by Florida law. The modules communicate what we do with the funds that are appropriated to us. A practical example of the value can been seen in the funding for resource management. This year we received an increase in our resource management budget from $300,000 to $1,000,000 and a new Legislative Budget Request (LBR) of $2,300,000 in Fixed Capital Outlay-Resource Restoration has been submitted for next year. The module data used in reports (through SAMAS) helps us justify and get increases to our funding. Steve Dana, Division Budget Director, stresses the importance of accurate module reporting since this is tied directly to the funding process.

Records Retention and Destruction: DEP Directive 335 on Records Management outlines the procedures for the retention and destruction of all State records. Most records or reports consist of a Record or Master Copy (the original) and a duplicate record. Most files that parks keep are duplicates and the originals are sent elsewhere. Duplicate records have a retention schedule of “until obsolete, superceded or administrative value is lost” are not to be requested for destruction. They should be disposed of at will. This should easily eliminate a major portion of paperwork currently stored by parks. Of course items with any other retention period will need to be requested for destruction. The easiest way to determine what records need to be requested for destruction is to start at the beginning. First set up all records for destruction when files are purged at the end of each year. Then label each storage box showing what records are contained in the box and the retention period for those records. A retention schedule has been set for each type of record or series of records. This retention schedule can be found on line at:
http://www.dos.state.fl.us/dlis/barm/genschedules/GS1.htm

Many parks have historical records on park specific information, which should be retained at the park. Care should be taken not to intersperse them with records that will eventually be destroyed.
Authorization to Incur Travel Form: Florida Statute 112.061 requires a written travel authorization. Advance authorization is a prudent practice and does provide oversight of employees travel. This form has been streamlined by the Bureau of Finance and Accounting with an easy to use Excel worksheet. Information is entered into one area and the worksheet is a relational spreadsheet, automatically filling in other parts of the form. The form is available electronically and is easy to use.

Software/Hardware Standardization: In the modern age of technology, computers can be our best friend and our worst enemy. What version are you using and is it compatible with mine? The Bureau of Operational Services is developing a standardized list of software and hardware, in coordination with Department standards, for the Division. The Department’s Integrated Management System (IMS) is being developed to provide better tools to aid you in doing your job more effectively and efficiently, with less process. IMS depends on the standardization of software and hardware.

Employee Exchange Program: Do you work at a non-camping park and want to better understand Reserve America and registering a camper? Do you want to temporarily work at another location and experience the uniqueness of its operation and increase your knowledge? If you answered yes, then this program is for you. If you’re interested, just write a memo to your supervisor identifying the specific skill you wish to master or area to increase knowledge of. He/she will then work with their Bureau Chief to determine appropriate placement and scheduling. This is a great way to expose yourself to some new skills and experience. Take advantage of this opportunity and expand your horizons.

Inquiring minds want to know…Where do I get a printout of a Suncom phone bill? What happens to the module data and can I get a report for my unit? How do I get a copy of my park’s unit plan? How does DOT bill us for the electronic transactions for fuel and tolls and can I get a copy of the bill? What are the KSAs for that job opening? There are many reports and documents that many have asked about. Unfortunately, there is no one master list of where to get ________. The vast majority of what we deal with is public record and is available just by asking. The problem is who to ask? The district offices are a great source, particularly the seasoned administrative staff. The key is to ask, ask, and ask until you find the right person who can provide the information. Be persistent and you will satisfy your inquiring mind.

Wide Area Network (WAN) Update: Work continues on the pilot test at Wakulla Springs State Park. Some significant issues were discovered and are being addressed before the rest of the pilot parks are connected. The cost of connecting all parks to the WAN is very high and will be accomplished on a phased-in basis once the pilot test is completed. Once connected, the WAN will provide a seamless connection between parks and the central office and help automate and streamline administrative functions.

Chairman’s Message
I am privileged to serve on the Operation Streamline Task Force with so many dedicated, knowledgeable and passionate colleagues. We have many spirited discussions that lead to recommendations for making our work easier, more effective or more efficient. Please feel free to contact any of the members to offer more suggestions, comments or perspective. We have a daunting task before us and we need your help. Operation Streamline is more than a short-term project; it is a long-term mind-set. We should naturally desire to operate efficiently and in the most effective manner to accomplish our mission.

Operation Streamline Task Force
Chairman: Tom Linley, Park Manager, Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park
Scribe: Marla Ivory, Park Services Specialist, Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park
John Fillyaw, Park Manager, Wekiwa Springs State Park
Donald Forgione, Assistant Bureau Chief, District 3 Administration
Tammy Levin, Administrative Assistant, District 4 Administration
Carl Keen, Park Manager, St. Andrews State Park
Clif Maxwell, Park Manager, Fort Clinch State Park
Don Page, Assistant Bureau Chief, Bureau of Operational Services
Steve Watson, Assistant Bureau Chief, Bureau of Design and Recreation Services