

# SÄNDRA WASHINGTON

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## WORK HISTORY

### Associate Regional Director, National Park Service, Midwest Region (July 2009 – December 2014)

Managed the Cultural Resources, Planning, Communications, Legislation and Congressional Affairs programs for the 13-state Midwest Region. Responsibilities for park planning and development, environmental & historic preservation compliance, policy analysis, legislation & congressional affairs. Highlights include preparing the proclamations and support materials for the creation of two national monuments: Charles Young National Monument in Wilberforce, Ohio and Pullman National Monument in Chicago, Illinois.

### Chief, Planning and Environmental Compliance, NPS, Midwest Region (January 1999-June 2009)

Provide analysis and advice to Regional Directorate in areas of planning, environmental compliance, wild and scenic rivers, special studies and wilderness policy. Provide recommendations on a wide variety of highly controversial, politically sensitive issues involving new areas, multi-jurisdictional planning projects, wilderness proposals and legal challenges to wild & scenic rivers.

Review all planning documents and recommend corrections, additions or changes to strengthen or clarify. Provide direct assistance to parks in preparing environmental documents and prepare compliance tools, resource materials and training for park staff. Review environmental impact statements prepared by other agencies for projects that could impact NPS areas of programmatic responsibilities and prepare NPS response.

Review, adjust and consolidate a program of long range planning and environmental decision-making, coordinating work schedules and project teams among subordinates, staff in other regional programs, parks and national program centers and in the Washington, D.C. offices. Oversee budget development, position management and allocating staff resources among a myriad of projects and requests for assistance.

Review proposed legislation and make recommendations for changes. Answer questions from congressional staff, media and the public on the effects of proposed legislation, planning and resource preservation issues or policy. Consult with and makes recommendations to high level state officials, Federal officials at other agencies and WASO personnel on recreation policy and resource conservation.

Prepare news releases on various planning efforts throughout the Region. Develop planning and study newsletters, postcards, flyers and other items to inform the public about NPS planning projects or positions on major projects of other agencies that impact areas of interest to the NPS, and briefing

statements to inform the NPS Directorate of issues needing higher attention. Represent the NPS to the public and press on highly publicized and/or controversial projects, and in the start-up of new areas in the Midwest Region, making community contacts, establishing rapport with current on-site organizations, local officials, congressional staffers and community leaders (Nicodemus National Historic Site, Niobrara National Scenic River, Fallen Timbers National Battlefield and Fort Miamis National Historic Site, Central High School National Historic Site, First Ladies National Historic Site, River Raisin National Battlefield, William Jefferson Clinton Boyhood Home National Historic Site).

Over the course of my program leadership, 24 General Management Plans, 2 National Heritage Area plans, 1 stand-alone wilderness study and 12 special resource studies have been completed. I am most proud of my accomplishments at hiring an exemplary staff of highly motivated professionals, my work on the General Management Plan and Wilderness Study for Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, participation in the *NPS Management Policies 2006* work group and completing the Jefferson Expansion National Monument (the Arch in St Louis) General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement in a very tight timeframe with multiple business and governmental partners, while staying true to the mission and policies of the NPS.

Community Planner, National Park Service (August 1994 – December 1998; August 1990 – Nov. 1992)

Twice I served as a community planner for the Midwest Region, performing planning activities associated with Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program, special resources studies and park planning. I led a variety of plans, studies and technical assistance projects and served as a team member on a variety of other plans, studies and technical assistance projects. I also served as a liaison to our national program centers in Denver, CO and Harpers Ferry, WV on specific projects. I led the management planning team for Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site, and special resource study teams for Nicodemus and Wilson Lake in Kansas, RTCA projects for Back to the River (Omaha), Communities for the Future (nationwide), Four Mile Creek Greenway (Des Moines), and the Nebraska Statewide Trails Plan, and was a team member of the Chicago River Demonstration Project and numerous other state and local conservation consultations, as well as provided comments to other federal and state agencies regarding their activities with the potential to affect the free-flow and outstandingly remarkable values of Wild & Scenic Rivers and rivers on the nationwide rivers inventory.

Throughout both of these periods I gained considerable experience facilitating diverse groups of people through the planning process, and developed the ability to construct effective public involvement strategies. By managing these projects successfully, I demonstrated that I could lead interdisciplinary teams with influential power rather than positional power. I regularly brought projects in on time and within budget. I proved on a number of occasions that I have the ability to handle difficult situations in a confident and relaxed manner.

Project leadership included representing the agency at public meetings, to the press and with local, state and federal officials with respect to specific studies or plans, and to be able to articulate the agencies policies regarding the process and criteria. I had to remain clear and concise in my public speaking, confident, humble and sincere before overly expectant, somewhat agitated or hostile crowds. I often had to deliver tough messages to agency leaders, elected officials and the general public and still

get their buy-in or support. Whether speaking in front of a large crowd or with a single reporter on a live television or radio broadcast, I was composed and well-spoken.

Trainer and Training Manager (Collateral Duty), National Park Service (October 1995 – January 1999)

During my second stint as a regional planner, I also worked nearly three-quarters time in a collateral duty position as a trainer/facilitator in the Leadership Seminar Program, providing leadership and team-building seminars to staff and management teams in parks and regional offices. As a part of the program, I received additional training in organizational development and advanced facilitation methods; that along with previous training and education in interpersonal communication, conflict resolution and adult teaching methods, made me a highly effective trainer in the leadership program.

At the end this program, I began a collateral duty position as a training manager for the Washington Training Center where I worked with a small cadre of senior planners and trainers to develop the competencies for the planning and construction career series. As a training manager, I developed training modules in leadership, communications, planning and environmental decision making for the Fundamentals Program provided to all permanent employees upon entering the agency, as well as taught leadership skills at the agency's national training centers and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. I also conducted organization development assessments at parks in the Northeast and National Capitol Regions and provided consultative advice for resolving staff-management conflicts and organizational deficiencies.

Superintendent, Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site (November 1992 – July 1994)

While serving as the first Superintendent of the new national historic site, I was instrumental in guiding the management of the site in its first years and laying the groundwork for future planning. While at the site, I led the general management planning process and prepared a Collections Management Plan for the National Historic Site, incorporating state and local organizations and agencies in park planning efforts. I was responsible for bringing the team, the park, the local constituents and staff of the Congressional sponsor to the table to discuss the planning and management issues at the park. I began the interpretive plan, arranged for oral histories from local plaintiffs, began a Historic Resource Study of the site and worked with the Brown Foundation to sponsor and arrange round table sessions with NPS planners, historians, case plaintiffs and attorneys from all of the *Brown* Supreme Court cases, including Little Rock, AR (second *Brown* decision)..

Resource Stewardship and Facility Management. One of my first responsibilities was to facilitate acquisition of the primary physical resource – the Monroe Elementary School building – and develop a facility plan to stabilize the structure and implement a program to maintain the structure in a condition to make future rehabilitation possible. I requested and received funds for a HABS/HAER survey and history of the building as well as other funding to provide for maintenance of the structure (repair/rehabilitation and cyclic maintenance).

Administration. I established administrative operations for the park unit, organized internal control systems for tracking budget, correspondence and procurements. Analyzed staffing needs and

developed a strategy for meeting the most critical personnel needs; supervised permanent, seasonal, term and detailed employees as well as project-based employees associated with a HABS project, contracts and cooperative agreements. Managed employee performance, through the establishment of clear goals, standards, awards, corrective action and employee development, so critical work could be accomplished.

Public Affairs. While a lot of work with the Kansas U.S. Congressional delegation had begun with the special resource study of the site, I spent a fair amount of time keeping the delegation apprised of the site's progress. More of my attention was focused on building awareness of the site and the NPS within the Topeka community, and strengthening public relations with local and state agencies and organizations and the university community. I worked closely with the two neighborhood associations adjacent to the park to partner on neighborhood clean-up campaigns, provide information on the site and sponsor informal programs to introduce the park and to build relationships with neighbors. As an outgrowth of my work at the park, NPS Director Kennedy appointed me to the interagency committee on the Preservation of African American Heritage in the United States. As the sole NPS representative, I was responsible for conveying the agency's position within the committee and before the press. The interagency committee included other Federal agencies, long-term national partners and organizations.

#### Field Ecologist / Planner, Ohio Department of Natural Resources (April 1985 – June 1990)

Worked in Division of Natural Areas and Preserves. Conducted inventorying and monitoring work on plant and animal species, including Karner Blue butterfly (endangered), Blandings Turtle (threatened), Lakeside Daisy (threatened). Habitat restoration activities for eastern tallgrass prairie, northern bog and fen. Ecological management planning for natural areas and state preserves that supported habitat restoration and provided for appropriate levels of public use.

#### CIVIC INVOLVEMENT

Lincoln City Council, Member-at-Large (June 2019 – present)

Internal Liquor Control Board

Joint Budget Committee – Juvenile Services

Information Services Policy Committee

Telecommunications/Cable Television Advisory Board

Affordable Housing Steering Committee

Lincoln-Lancaster Planning Commissioner (November 2016 – June 2019).

Prairie Corridor on the Haines Branch Cabinet Member (November 2017 – present)

Lincoln Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Member (2001 – 2006)

Nebraska Trails Foundation, Board Member (2016 to present)

Spirit of Nebraska Girl Scout Council Board (2016 – 2019)

National Park Conservation Association, National Trustee and Secretary, April 2017 to present

National Park Conservation Association, Midwest Regional Council Member, 2015 to present

American Association for State and Local History, Council member (1995-2005), Secretary (2000-2002)

Homestead Girl Scout Council Board, Member-at-Large (1991-1996), Vice-President (1997-1999)

## EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Natural Resources Management – with emphasis in Environmental Education and Planning, 1982; Ohio State University

Master of Science, Natural Resources Management – with emphasis in Policy Analysis & Regional Planning, 1985; Thesis: Recreational Use of Urban Forest Resources by Urban Minorities: A Case Study of Columbus, Ohio, 1985; Ohio State University.

## HONORS AND AWARDS

- Platte Award for Significant Contributions to Trails by a Public Official (1999), Nebraska Trails Council
- Girl Scout Gold Award, highest award for girl members for leadership and service (1974)
- Girl Scout Silver Mentor and Gold Mentor Leadership Awards for adult leadership to girl members.
- Numerous awards from National Park Service for Superior Achievement and Leadership
- White House Closing the Circle Sustainability Award (2006)