

The Facing 21st Century Threats Series

**Competing in the Government Marketplace:
Properly Valuing NPS Law Enforcement**



**National Park Service and
The Institute of
Conservation Law Enforcement**

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This Hour's Central Points

1. NPS' protection function is confounded by an inability to establish reasonable funding and operational priority.
2. This results in a spiral of declining protection capacity and followed by lowered appreciation of the capacities of a well supported protective function.
3. These will be corrected only as the protection function establishes:
 - a. Performance measures anchored in the bedrocks of resource status and quality of the visitor experience.
 - b. Funding priorities based on problem resolution (not activity.)



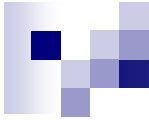
The Topography

- Support for the protection function (measured in field staffing) has remained steady or declined over 20 years.
 - Priority has been upon internal improvement (pay, training, equipment, retirement.)
- NPS protection finds itself unable to say ‘no’ to anything.
 - Therefore it cannot really say ‘yes’ to a few important things.
- Government-wide, funding competition now values measurable result over activity.
- Consequently, new fund sources are project based – requiring identification and resolution of a problem.




The Topography


- NPS' data-rich science program has 'tilted the playing field' of budget competition.
- NPS' science and maintenance functions have evolved project based funding systems with measurable results.
 - Tiered
 - Supporting national priorities
 - Reporting results to Congress and other stakeholder
- Deficits, war, and shifts in societal priorities may indicate that funding competition will become more severe.




DOI law enforcement programs consider themselves understaffed, but absent an effective staffing model and accurate data for a needs assessment, they are powerless to advance convincing arguments.



Goals and Objectives. Law enforcement objectives must define the ultimate **outcomes** that rangers strive to achieve. They **are the prerequisite to managing by objectives.** Law enforcement objectives should exist for the NPS, for each park, and for rangers. Logical and reinforcing relationships (“tiers,” in the NPS strategic plan structure) must exist among levels of objectives...



... Objectives must be defined with sufficient precision to yield valid measurement. Without valid measurements, it is difficult to assess the performance of a law enforcement agency insightfully or to conduct many aspects of the management process rationally and successfully. The NPS falls well short of meeting the foregoing requirements...



...Evidence is ample that the NPS has command of the principles and mechanics of objectives setting and measurement. The most recent Strategic Plan is outstanding in construction. It evidences careful thought and craftsmanship. Disappointingly, however, neither this document nor most others we have read presents law enforcement objectives. We find this compelling in drawing impressions about the secondary status of law enforcement.



Why Should I Care?

Reforms affect site managers in two ways:

- How agencies compete for limited resources:
 - Marketplace for funds increasingly driven by who can show results.
 - Good management and performance is a comparative advantage.
- How agencies allocate limited resources:
 - Agencies will have to manage asset portfolios more efficiently.
 - Available funds go to those who can demonstrate performance.



Why Should I Care?

- You can't do your job without money.
- You can't get money without showing priority need.
- You can't show priority need without measures.



I'm from Washington and I'm here to help

- Budgets will only get tighter.
- Demands to become more efficient will only grow.
- Competition for funds will only increase.
- Funds allocated through a mix of politics and performance, but politics will take you only so far.

*Can't promise that, if you do these things,
you will compete well for funds.*

*Can promise that, if you don't,
then you will not compete well.*



Department of Interior

With the present emphasis on tying budget to performance, DOI law enforcement must develop meaningful performance goals and measures...Failure to do so may be profound




International Association of Chiefs of Police

A vibrant and powerful law enforcement capacity is central to achieving of the core mission of the NPS.

That **capacity** does not exist today.

Rather, we find a law enforcement function that is **undervalued, under-resourced, and under-managed...**



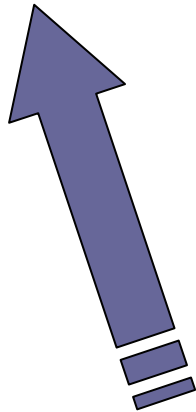
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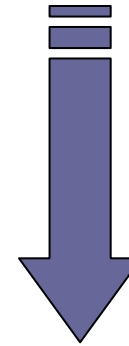
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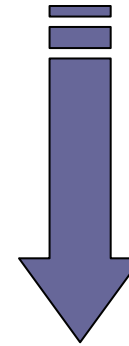
**INSUFFICIENT
CAPACITY**



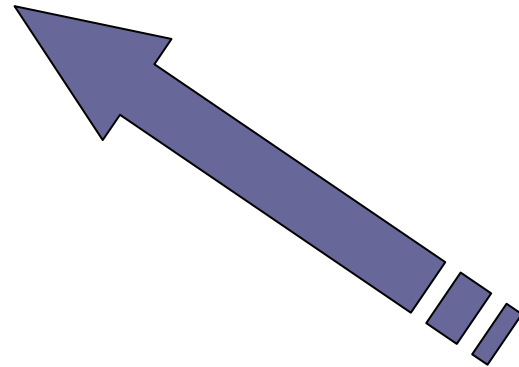
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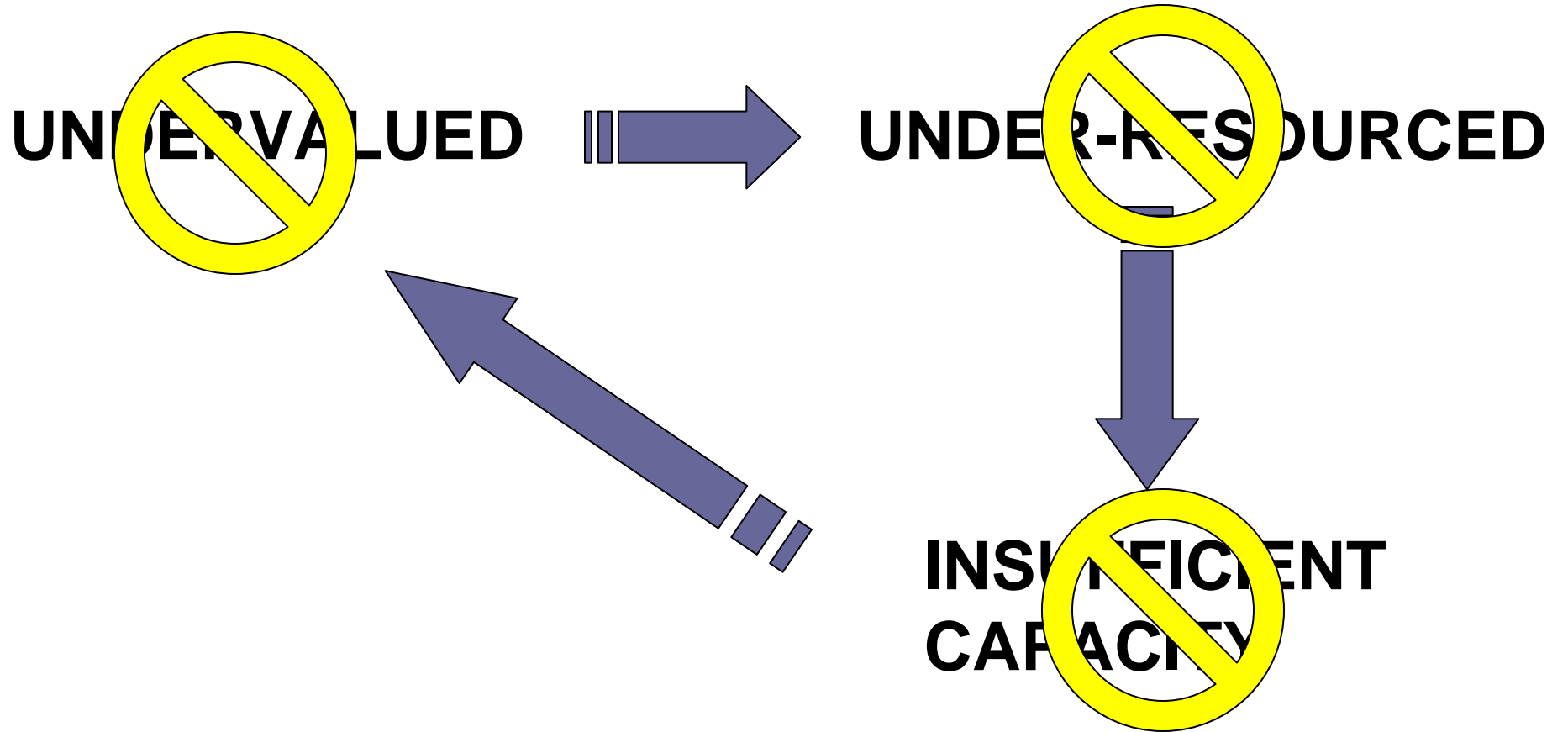


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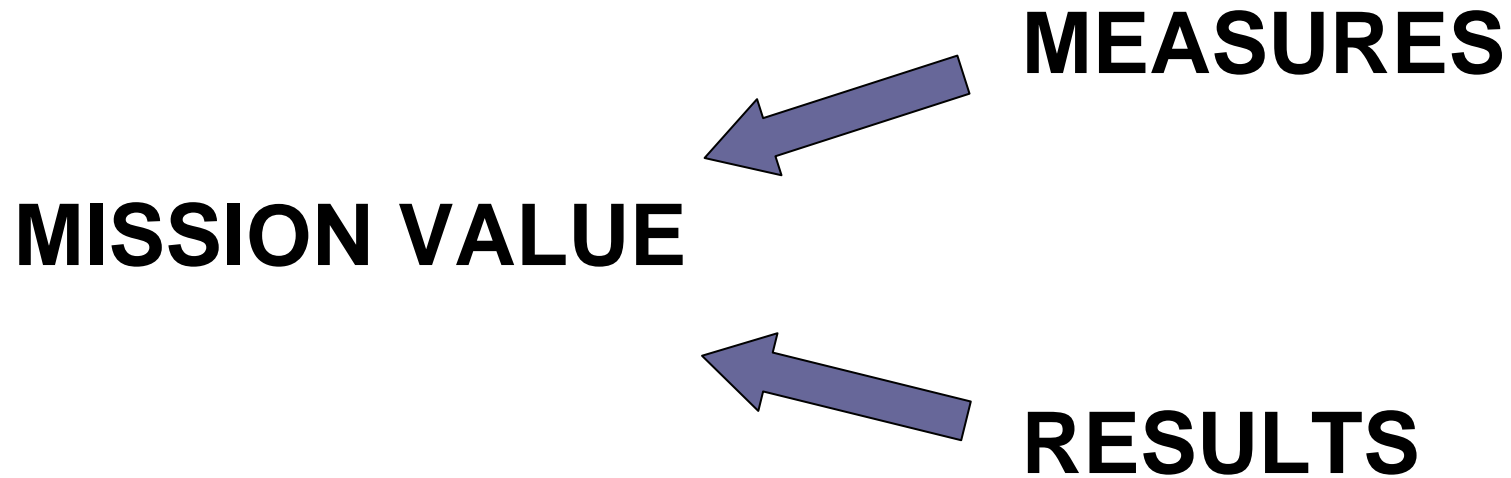
UNDEVALUED



‘Value’ in this sense should mean ‘appreciate the mission potential of a full capacity law enforcement function.’

Synonym: Mission effectiveness

Why is the Mission Effect of Law Enforcement Undervalued?





Establishing Mission Values of Protection: Our Challenge

VRAP???

Identified as a good 'first step', it lacks rigorous data validation.

It identifies mission requirements in terms of activity (miles of trail patrolled.) It apparently does not sufficiently support the conclusion that these activities will result in better visitor experiences, or resource condition.



Establishing Mission Values of Protection: Our Challenge

How do we *measure* the value of what we do or quantify the impacts from what we are unable to do.

How do we show what the return on the investment would be from getting more staffing?

Is this important???



Establishing Mission Values of Protection: Our Challenge

Future Funding Linked to:

- Information on current conditions
- Goals for the future conditions
- Plans to improve conditions
- Measures to track conditions

Link Protection To:

Threats to the visitor experience:

- Specific parts of parks or visitor behaviors diminishing a NP experience in measurable ways.



Establishing Mission Values of Protection: Our Challenge

Future Funding Linked to:

- Information on current conditions
- Goals for the future conditions
- Plans to improve conditions
- Measures to track conditions

Link Protection To:

Threats to the visitor experience:

- Use existing surveys and complaint processes to gather information.



Establishing Mission Values of Protection: Our Challenge

Future Funding Linked to:

- Information on current conditions
- Goals for the future conditions
- Plans to improve conditions
- Measures to track conditions

Link Protection To:

Threats to resource stability:

- Use scientific or archeological data to target resources more at risk.



Establishing Mission Values of Protection: Our Challenge

Future Funding Linked to:

- Information on current conditions
- Goals for the future conditions
- Plans to improve conditions
- Measures to track conditions

Reduce Link To:

Hours, miles patrolled, “coverage,” etc

These have no mission value. It is the results from our activities that count (not the “hows”).



Establishing Mission Values of Protection: Our Challenge

Future Funding Linked to:

- Information on current conditions
- Goals for the future conditions
- Plans to improve conditions
- Measures to track conditions

Reduce Link To:

Random Patrol

Develop some form of 'community based' expectations with management teams.

Actively reduce expectations to participate in non-priority functions.



Establishing Mission Values of Protection: Our Challenge

Future Funding Linked to:

- Information on current conditions
- Goals for the future conditions
- Plans to improve conditions
- Measures to track conditions

Reduce Link To:

Protecting common resources

One organization should not simultaneously have goals of reducing deer and preserving deer.



Establishing Protection Values: Examples

In the four years since we lost two positions, we had to eliminate virtually all proactive patrols in the campgrounds. In the same period we have seen:

- A doubling in the number of incidents where damage has occurred to natural vegetation there.
- A significant increase in the number of aggressive bear incidents that resource managers attribute to non-compliance with food storage regulations.
- Formal complaints of noise, use of drugs, disorderly behavior have increased by 20% and hosts report informal complaints are now received nearly daily.



Establishing Protection Values: Examples

This year we diverted from random patrols of front country roads to targeted patrols and maintenance of remote detection equipment in the Oak Hill Redoubt area, a high value, undisturbed site. This followed the discovery (thanks to an active monitoring program) of recent illegal dig activity. No additional degradation of the resource has occurred. However, market demand for the resource remains high.

As a consequence night foot patrols of 'party sites' along the access road have been almost eliminated. This multi-generational problem had been under control for many years. Maintenance reports it is very difficult to restore cleanliness before visitors arrive in the morning. Vandalism cost have been \$1,500. This situation may be costly to eradicate if re-established.



Establishing Protection Values: Examples

Additional staffing of .8 FTE would enable us to implement an action plan to mitigate identified threats to a Moderate-High-Priority resource at risk, the Dune Ecosystem along North Beach. Staffing would:

- Carry out a Park Watch program in the North Beach area to provide information concerning illegal oversand vehicle access.
- Add focused patrols in the remote North Beach area during time periods information sources indicate peak illegal ORV use (identified as a significant threat).

Anticipated Result: 50% reduction in tracks in North Beach area as measured by resource management staff.



Establishing Protection Values: Last Thoughts

- If you want to give this a try:
 - Start small, be persistent.
 - Change the language: Discuss your outcomes in terms of resource status and visitor experience conditions.
 - Put math on your side:
 - Identify threats that Protection could play a role (given the right support) in mitigating. Identify Protection strategies & resources which can effectively mitigate the threats.
 - Describe the consequences of (not) staffing this threat in mission terms.




Establishing Protection Values

- Engage your management team in setting your priorities.
- Employ some tool to ‘spend’ your resources down to zero.
- Remember to subtract out all that time you don’t control (fitness, medicals, range, etc.)
- Work towards agreement that any protection need below the zero line is unfunded.
- Use this as a tool to establish positive interactions, not frustration, for you, your staff, and users of your services.



In Closing

- If the experts at OMB, IACP, DOI, and the NPS are correct, the only path to funding (continued or increased) is via clear priorities with performance measures.
- Measures must be in mission terms, not activity. Benefits and consequences must be in terms of actual accomplishments and subject to rigorous verification.
- We have every reason to believe the experts are right.

- 
- We can, and should, look to our protection leadership to do much of the hard work.
 - We can help them, and ourselves, by initiating positive change where it always starts: in the field.

Next: Examining some examples of success...and some new protection tools coming to you soon.



Establishing Mission Values of Protections

Further Thoughts on Changing the Expectations of Superintendents

Trends in visitor/vehicle accidents & their rescue.

- Patterns in crimes against visitors & their property.
- Recurring damage & theft to government property.
- Offenses that generate numerous complaints due to diminished visitor experience (noise, dogs, DC, etc.).
- Protection of the government from liability, bad press.
- Threats affecting scarce, irreplaceable or at risk resources.



The Value of Protection: Our Challenge

Value of Law Enforcement in Public Safety...

Perception: Significant but a costly distraction from serving the *core* mission.

Result: Funded at minimal level necessary.

Value of Law Enforcement in Resource Preservation

Perception: The return on the investment is fairly minimal.

Result: Funds go to the natural & cultural science disciplines.

Undervalued!



Valuing Protection: Do's & Don'ts

Examples...

- During the past five years that has seen roughly a 25% reduction in the level of ranger traffic enforcement, MVA's has increased by 8%, resulting in a corresponding increase in fatalities and serious injuries.



Valuing Protection: Do's & Don'ts

Don't

Try to impress managers by measuring results based on incidents primarily handled by outside agencies (rescue squads, police departments, etc.).

Do

Focus on services, capabilities we have that are not repeated by cooperators, and/or show why cooperators cannot take up the slack generated by NPS staffing reductions.



Valuing Protection: Do's & Don'ts

Examples...

- If a concurrent jurisdiction LE agency usually takes the lead on serious criminal offenses, focus on your capacity to investigate resource protection crimes better than them (great opportunity). Measure and market this capacity...
- Specialize in needed areas of emergency services not well-handled by local organizations (backcountry EMS? SAR?).