
Nov 1, 2016 Draft
A Second Century
A Five Year Vision Strategy for the Volunteers-In-Parks Program
at Cabrillo National Monument
2016 - 2020

Background

This report is based on observations and dialogue regarding the management and success of the VIP program. Drafting of the second five year document began with a planning retreat with the Chief of Interpretation, several members of the Volunteer Navigation Committee (VNC) of Cabrillo National Monument (CABR) and the volunteer program manager in attendance. The VNC provided revisions to the second draft and presented it at the volunteer appreciation dinner for CABR VIP's to make additions and comments. The document was then finalized and presented to the CABR management team for approval and buy-in.

This second draft was completed with suggestions from the management team and includes additional goals and key actions following the accepted format of the National Park Service (NPS) document Achieving Relevance in our Second Century: A Five-year Interdisciplinary Strategy for Interpretation, Education, and Volunteers as We Enter the Second Century of the National Park Service (https://www.nps.gov/interp/IEV%20Strategic%20Plan_FINAL.pdf)

The VNC continues to elevate the volunteer experience through training, continuing educational opportunities, a lecture series, field trips and other projects that support NPS objectives. The VNC aims to make CABR relevant, meaningful and appropriate to new and underserved audiences. The VIP program assists in the daily operations of CABR and extends to its gateway communities through outreach programs and a strong visual presence. The VNC looks toward the Second Century to create a volunteer program for San Diego that inspires, educates and promotes the mission of the NPS. Below is the vision for the Volunteers-In-Parks (VIP) program at CABR as we prepare to answer the Call to Action (C2A).

The Last Five Year Plan 2010 - 2015

The 2010 five year plan, entitled “Strategic Stewardship”, interwove several centennial objectives to capture future grant opportunities and find other funding sources. During that time the CABR VIP program:

- Established the Volunteer Navigation Committee (VNC), chartered March 2011, which created a support network for volunteers
- Developed a matrix of opportunities and job descriptions for volunteer duties
- Transitioned the manual volunteer hours bookkeeping and task assignments to Volgistics
- Increased our number of volunteers by **X% or to XXX**
- Assisted with the planning, presentation, and logistics of the annual TPERP Conference

- Produced the online Reference Manual/E-Binder
- Produced the online Volunteer Orientation Guide
- Produced the VIP Voice, a resource for volunteers and staff
- Kept current the Volunteer page of the park website
- Provided input to training protocols and materials
- Lead and participated in many community outreach events
- Submitted articles for the Cabrillo Journal
- Created an Artist-In-Residence program and built up an artistic collection to interpret the natural and cultural resources
- Founded a friends group, Cabrillo National Monument Conservancy (CNMC) to augment the support and fundraising done by the Cabrillo National Monument Foundation (CNMF)
- Developed an annual hiking program for youths and their families
- Established an internship program
- Continued to add training, continuing education, and lecture events after hours
- Grew in both volunteers and volunteer hours, which provided more support to CABR projects and daily operations
- Built a tidepool contact station and temporary office space
- Fully restored the base end station
- Supported multiple fundraising events at CABR
- Was awarded the George and Helen Hartzog Award for 2014 for Outstanding Volunteer Service in the Park VIP Category

The Next Five Year Plan 2016 – 2020

In his "Call To Action" for the 2016 Centennial, NPS Director Jon Jarvis set goals that are ambitious and appropriate. The four key themes of A Call to Action are:

- (1) "Connecting People to Parks"
- (2) "Advancing the Education Mission"
- (3) "Preserving America's Special Places"
- (4) "Enhancing Professional and Organizational Excellence."

CABR cannot accomplish this call to action without the aid and support of volunteers. The centennial challenge is a big endeavor and, with decreasing funding and lack of new permanent positions at CABR, it's all the more important to focus on smart volunteerism; using our resource (the volunteer) effectively and efficiently. There are several action items that the VIP program at CABR is currently implementing and continuing to develop in order to meet the calls to action.

It is the aim of the VNC to offer a structured and well-organized volunteer program to San Diego by 2016. It is the VIP program's Centennial legacy project. The VNC is committed to this vision and is already beginning the necessary steps toward making this goal a reality.

The VIP program aims to be a leader in environmental stewardship and springboard the NPS brand to the almost one million visitors and the roughly seven million residents of the gateway communities of San Diego, Coronado and Tijuana.

With the energy and dedication from Cabrillo’s volunteers, and the organization and execution strategy of the VNC to improve the standards of the volunteer program, this report aims to foster their perpetual motion and to expand measures of support.

As the VIP program grows, monetary allocations must be made to support the program. A success last year was new financial support for the VIP program by CNMC. However, more funding is needed and we hope to see an increase of funding from CNMF and CNMC together. This would allow for the creation of the infrastructure necessary to then grow the program even further in 2016 and beyond.

VIP Program Mission:

our reason for being, why do we exist - something like: To assist the park’s rangers and staff in meeting the NPS and CABR missions by providing labor, expertise, skills, and talents to all areas of the park

VIP Program Vision:

our future, where do we want to be - something like: To be an integrated, indispensable and value-added partner of CABR that consistently attracts vibrant and productive members of the community to become volunteers; to provide strength through a diversity of skills, talents, expertise, ages, nationalities, neighborhoods, and community networks; to be the embodiment of "smart" volunteerism

VIP Program Values:

what do we believe in; values help guide our planning and operations; our goals and actions must always keep these values in mind - something like: Integrity, Teamwork, Partnership, Visitor Experience, Inspiration, Fun.

VIP Program Focus Areas:

Our goals, and strategies for achieving those goals, support these main VIP Program elements;

- VIP Program Strength
- Partnerships and Outreach
- Park and Park Programs Support and Enhancements

VIP Program Goals and Key Actions:

Focus Area 1: VIP Program Strength
Baseline current VIP Program
Goal #1: Document and evaluate the current conditions of our VIP Program
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the current baseline of volunteers by assessing through Volgistics the numbers and types of volunteers currently in the program; what skills, abilities, and talents they have ▪ Assess the current state of our VIP Program by conducting a survey of VIPs and park staff, identify our strengths highlighting outcomes, results, and achievements and identify areas that could benefit from improvements and

<p>define those improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ for what people and documents to survey, what questions need to be asked, and how to document the results ▪ Develop strategies to implements these improvements
<p>Goal #2: Investigate NPS industry VIP Program best practices and determine appropriateness of instituting them at Cabrillo, e.g. establishing "self-directed volunteer" arm to the current VIP Program</p>
<p>Key Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define which parks are similar to us, who at the their park would be the best contact, what questions to ask them, and how to document the results
<p>Goal #3: Review and update as appropriate the VNC Charter</p>
<p>Key Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review what should be in a Charter, review our own Charter, add or update sections as appropriate ▪ Get approval of VIPS and Cabrillo staff
<p>Recruitment</p>
<p>Goal #4: Recruit XXX new volunteers each year</p>
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determine how many volunteers are needed and in what areas ▪ Analyze historic attrition numbers and reasons
<p>Goal #5: Expand Areas of Recruitment, especially within underserved communities</p>
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document where recruitment now takes place, and which is most successful ▪ Research potential new targets and provide them with how-to-volunteer information
<p>Goal #6: Establish and publicize a volunteer program that supports a diversity of talents, skills, expertise, ages, nationalities, neighborhoods, and community networks</p>
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VNC to re-establish the Recruitment Sub-committee to help develop a Recruitment Process
<p>Retention</p>
<p>Goal #7: Create a work, gathering, meeting place for volunteers</p>
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Add to current desk and shelf space by providing a meeting space and computer support
<p>Goal #8: Create a network of professional volunteers to facilitate training sessions, to act as work crew leaders and mentors to new volunteers and paid staff</p>
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define "professional volunteer"

- Develop job descriptions for duties such as facilitators and work crew leaders
- Identify other areas that can benefit from "professional volunteer" leadership
- Provide training for each type of duty

Goal #9: Ensure every volunteer receives the training they need for their assigned duties

Key Actions:

- Review and update current matrix and descriptions of volunteer opportunities
- Define training each duty needs; use TPERP Conference as an example
- With park staff, develop training modules for each duty
- Review current volunteer Orientation Training requirements and update if necessary
- Develop a yearly refresher training checklist
- Ensure every volunteer has access to and support for appropriate Eppley online courses
- Develop a Process for how to put on a formal training event: use TPERP Conference as example
- Review and update Opportunities for Self-Training Checklist
- Collect completed training for each VIP through Volgistics

Goal #10: Expand Continuing Education Opportunities

Key Actions:

- Identify appropriate topics and lecturers

Goal #11: Establish a Docent volunteer who can represent the park in the community, lead training sessions for interns and volunteers, provide mentorship for student interns, and assist the park's mission at an elevated capacity

Key Actions:

- Develop job description, including qualifying requirements such as reaching 200 hours per year or making significant contributions to the park in a particular category
- Track hours and contributions through Volgistics

Goal #12: Establish a Naturalist Guide Program to lead nature walks and hikes both inside and outside the boundaries of CABR in both formal and informal settings and provide interpretive programs

Key Actions:

- Define the duties of a Naturalist Guide
- Identify and provide required training such as those listed in Appendix I
- Provide patches or pins signifying volunteer qualifies as a Naturalist Guide

Goal #13: Ensure volunteer input is used to determine new directions and responsibilities of the VNC and the park management in supporting the VIP Program

Key Actions:

- Regularly collect volunteer suggestions about program enhancements
- Establish a mechanism for collection of volunteer inputs

Goal #14: Raise the awareness and use of the Reference Manual/e-binder and VIP Voice so that all volunteers and staff use them as a go-to source

Key Actions:

-

Reward

Goal #15: Ensure all volunteers are current in receipt of an appropriate reward, award, or recognition

Key Actions:

- Define types of rewards, awards, and recognition available to volunteers such as yearly appreciation event, pins, coins, badges, plaques, passes, uniforms, training events, highlighted in Journal or other park media, entrance to park sponsored fee-based programs, appropriate reimbursement, uniforms, and small recognition items such as logo'd park paraphernalia
- Define what triggers each reward by reviewing and updating the Volunteer Rewards chart in Appendix II
- Reconcile Volunteer hours logged into Volgistics with deserved rewards and ensure triggers are set to alert when a reward is due
- Distribute appropriate rewards

Release

Goal #16: Provide a pleasant experience for volunteers on both their entrance to and release from the VIP Program at CABR

Key Actions:

- Develop/update a checklist for activities to be completed when a volunteer leaves the program to include such items as return the uniform, rewards and appreciation, removal from Volgistics and access to government computers if such was granted, exit interview on their experience
- Establish a process for when and how to move inactive volunteers into an inactive status in Volgistics

Focus Area 2: Partnerships, Internships, and Outreach

Outreach

Goal #17: Develop creative new programming to heighten public engagement and awareness of our resource and projects

Key Actions:

-

Goal #18: Raise public awareness and support via outreach activities in our global community

Key Actions:

-

Goal #20: Develop programs to engage and inspire the youth of our community to include Scouts, Boys & Girls Clubs, and other youth organizations

<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
<p>Goal #21: Establish and strengthen the volunteer reciprocity relationships with other community organizations such as the Docent League, San Diego Zoo, and Maritime Museum</p>
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
<p>Partnerships</p>
<p>Goal #22: Strengthen the internship program and relationships with local universities, colleges, and schools</p>
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
<p>Goal #23: Expand international partnerships with Baja Norte and Sur to develop joint endeavors in resource stewardship</p>
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
<p>Goal #24: Take the five new partnerships at CABR to the next level of engagement. These include Trails and Rails, Hornblower Cruises, DOI/VISTA, SCA, and LHIP interns (others?)</p>
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
<p>Goal #25: Make volunteers an integral and productive member of the park's Whipstaff Committee, and strengthen relationships with the park's other non-profit partners, CNMF and CNMC</p>
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
<p>Internships (should we eliminate this area per Debbie at VNC 9/10/16 meeting?)</p>
<p>Goal #26: Establish the processes by which the DOI/VISTA, SCA, and LHIP positions can thrive. The DOI/VISTA volunteer focuses on urban gardening, native scaping, and encouraging healthy practices for participants; the SCA position is supporting the Centennial initiative, the LHIP position promotes outreach efforts and offers career opportunities to underserved populations as a pathway for employment</p>
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
<p>Goal #27: Institutionalize ongoing work projects being done by interns to include The Dusty Socks Club, Convergence on the Point, and Citizen Science</p>
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪

Goal #28: Create new work projects for interns
Key Actions: ▪
Goal #29: Develop criteria for selecting and vetting interns
Key Actions: ▪
Goal #30:
Key Actions: ▪
Focus Area: Park and Park Programs Improvements and Enhancements
(Are there natural Sub-Focus areas we could use to organize Goals more efficiently? Like areas of the park or by program?)
Goal #31: TPERP (Bonnie, Pauline, and Beth are developing Goals for this program)
Key Actions: ▪
Goal #32: Continue to grow the significance of the Artist-in-Residence (AIR) program and establish a dedicated studio space within the park
Key Actions: ▪
Goal #33: Establish regular support for the Quarterly Cabrillo Journal
Key Actions: ▪
Goal #34: Train more VIPs in all areas of Living History
Key Actions: ▪
Goal #35: Establish a Lighthouse Station and supporting volunteer committee
Key Actions: ▪
Goal #36: Increase the time allocated time for the VIP Coordinator to manage the VIP Program from 20% to 30%
Key Actions: ▪
Goal #37: Increase funding for the VIP Program
Key Actions:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify potential sources of funding: park, CNMF, CNMC, grants.....) ▪ Identify projects and products needed to enhance the VIP Program ▪ Develop funding grant requests for each potential funding source and project/product
<p>Goal #38: (SO many more Goals for using volunteers to support, improve, and enhance the park and it's programs!)</p>
<p>Key Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪

Appendix I

Naturalist Guide Program

Goal: To organize a team of volunteers who are trained as interpretive naturalists to lead nature walks and hikes both inside and outside the boundaries of Cabrillo National Monument in formal and informal interpretive settings.

Rationale: CABR has a dynamic and growing Volunteers-in-Parks (VIP) program. This is particularly evident in the success of the TPERP program. However, there remains a critical need for docents who are knowledgeable in the terrestrial ecology of the region and are comfortable interpreting these resources to our visitors. Furthermore, by increasing the number of hikes and walks that the park offers to the public, CABR meets the goals established by the *Healthy Parks Healthy People* campaign.

Proposed Training Protocol: Docents interested in this program would need to complete a rigorous training requirement to be considered a Naturalist Guide at CABR. This training includes, but is not limited to:

- Completion of Eppley courses (“Foundations of Interpretation,” “Informal Visitor Contacts,” and “Advanced Interpretive Talk”)
- Complete minimum 16 hours at Visitor Center information desk
- Complete minimum 16 hours invasive species eradication and/or native plant propagation (greenhouse)
- Complete at least one shorebird survey
- Complete at least one tidepool monitoring
- Complete at least one herpetology survey
- Shadow at least three interpretive hikes/walks (at CABR or similar site)
- Participate in the Canyoneers program at the San Diego Natural History Museum