

Presidential Documents

Title 3—**Proclamation 7086 of April 22, 1998****The President****National Park Week, 1998****By the President of the United States of America****A Proclamation**

Within our national parks, we find all the rich diversity and extraordinary beauty of America's natural heritage. From the majestic Grand Tetons to the mysterious Everglades, our parks preserve for us the treasures of our magnificent country: the astonishing variety of plant and animal life, the tranquility of forests and meadows, and the breathtaking grandeur of our great rivers, deserts, and mountains. Our national park sites also provide us with vital links to our heritage as a people and a Nation. They tell us the stories of the individuals, places, and events that have shaped the American character.

The Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island are tangible reminders of the more than 12 million immigrants who came to the United States through this small gateway to a new world and a new life. For many Americans, this national park site tells a very personal story of family struggles and triumphs and of the courage it takes to seek freedom.

Many African Americans took a different but equally brave route to freedom. Their story has been preserved for us by the National Park Service in the many historic sites marking the route of the Underground Railroad. In homes, churches, and farms in communities throughout Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, New York, and elsewhere, we can experience the determination and indomitable spirit of African American men and women fleeing the bonds of slavery, and we can learn more about the many heroes like Harriet Tubman who helped them on their dangerous trek north to freedom.

This summer, our Nation will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York. That event will be commemorated at Women's Rights National Historical Park, where we are reminded that the idea that men and women are created equal was once considered radical. On this site, visionaries such as Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Frederick Douglass helped our Nation take an important first step toward legal, political, and educational rights for American women.

At these and so many other historic places across our Nation, the National Park Service preserves and protects the American legacy, reminding us not only of who we are as a people, but also of how far we have traveled together on our great American journey. Our national parks are classrooms and laboratories, windows on our past and doorways to our future. As we celebrate National Park Week, I commend all the talented and dedicated men and women of the National Park Service for telling the story of the people and places that have shaped our destiny and for preserving for our children the riches of our natural and cultural heritage.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 20 through April 26, 1998, as National Park Week.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-second day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William Clinton

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