USDA Forest Service http://www.fs.fed.us

Mission: "Caring for the Land and Serving People". As set forth in law, the mission is to achieve quality land management under the sustainable multiple-use management concept to meet the diverse needs of people.

History: Congress established the Forest Service in 1905 to provide quality water and timber for the Nation’s benefit. Over the years, the public has expanded the list of what they want from national forests and grasslands. Congress responded by directing the Forest Service to manage national forests for additional multiple uses and benefits and for the sustained yield of renewable resources such as water, forage, wildlife, wood, and recreation. Multiple use means managing resources under the best combination of uses to benefit the American people while ensuring the productivity of the land and protecting the quality of the environment.

Facts: National forests encompass 191 million acres (77.3 million hectares) of land, which is an area equivalent to the size of Texas. National forests provide opportunities for recreation in open spaces and natural environments.

National Park Service http://www.nps.gov

Mission: The mission of the National Park Service is to protect and regulate the use of National Parks, Monuments, and other Lands to "conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment for the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

History: The Service was formally created when the National Park Service Organic Act was passed in 1916. Over the years, the system has expanded to include not only national parks, but also monuments, recreation areas, historic sites and other similar lands.

Facts: The National Park System encompasses approximately 80.7 million acres, of which more than 2.8 million acres remain in private ownership. The largest area is Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, Alaska. At 13,200,000 acres it is 16.3 percent of the entire system. The smallest unit in the system is Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial, Pennsylvania, at 0.02 of an acre.

Bureau of Land Management http://www.blm.gov

Mission: It is the mission of the Bureau of Land Management to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

History: In 1946, the Grazing Service was merged with the General Land Office to form the Bureau of Land Management within the Department of the Interior. When the BLM was initially created, there were over 2,000 unrelated and often conflicting laws for managing the public lands. The BLM had no unified legislative mandate until Congress enacted the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).

Facts: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for managing 264 million acres of land—about one-eighth of the land in the United States—and about 300 million additional acres of subsurface mineral resources. The Bureau is also responsible for wildfire management and suppression on 388 million acres. Most of the lands the BLM manages are located in the western United States, including
Alaska, and are dominated by extensive grasslands, forests, high mountains, arctic tundra, and deserts. The BLM manages a wide variety of resources and uses, including energy and minerals; timber; forage; wild horse and burro populations; fish and wildlife habitat; wilderness areas; archaeological, paleontological, and historical sites; and other natural heritage values.

US Fish & Wildlife Service [http://www.fws.gov]

Mission: "Working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people…"

History: The Bureaus of Fisheries and Biological Survey were transferred to the Department of the Interior in 1939. One year later, in 1940, they were combined and named the Fish and Wildlife Service. Further reorganization came in 1956 when the Fish and Wildlife Act created the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and established within the agency two separate bureaus -- Commercial Fisheries and Sport Fisheries and Wildlife.

Facts: Over 500 national wildlife refuges are spread out across the country. These refuges protect some 93 million acres of wildlife habitat and provide for a wide variety of wildlife viewing opportunities. Approximately 300 million people visit these refuges every year.


Mission: The mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is to provide quality, responsive engineering services to the Army and the nation.

History: The Corps of Engineers was established in 1802, by Congressional statute. Primary responsibility of the Corps was constructing seacoast fortifications. The Corps saw combat in the War of 1812, that demonstrated the need to improve the nation's defense and transportation systems. In 1824, the General Survey Act authorized the President to use Army engineers to survey road and canal routes. A separate measure involved employing public engineers to improve navigation on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, beginning the Army's involvement in civil works activities. In May 1846, on the eve of the Mexican War, Congress authorized the first regular company of engineer troops. During the Civil War, their numbers increased. In the following decade, the Corps' involvement in civil works mushroomed. Key developments occurred on the Ohio River and on the lower Mississippi, which led Congress to establish the Mississippi River Commission in 1879. The Flood Control Act of 1936 recognized flood control in general as a proper activity of the federal government and gave responsibility for most federal projects to the Corps of Engineers. After World War II, multi-purpose projects involving navigation, water storage, irrigation, power and recreation, in addition to flood control, predominated.

Facts: The Corps serves as custodian to 11.7 million acres of land for the Defense Department. The Corps operates 4,400 recreation areas at civil works projects that attract more than 380 million visits each year. The Corps responds directly to natural disasters and other emergencies as the nation's primary federal engineering agency. One tenth of the U.S. population visit a Corps' project at least once per year. They are the nation's fourth provider of hydroelectric power. The Corps also built the 1,671-mile Alcan Highway in Alaska and the Ledo Road from India to Burma.
Bureau of Reclamation http://www.usbr.gov

**Mission:** "... to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally sound manner in the interest of the American Public."

**History:** The Bureau of Reclamation (formerly: Reclamation Service) was created in 1902 through the Reclamation Act. The Reclamation Service was organized within the U.S. Geological Survey to administer the act; in 1907 the Service was removed from the Geological Survey and established under a director. In 1923 another organizational change was effected; the Secretary of the Interior created the position of Commissioner of Reclamation and renamed the Service: the Bureau of Reclamation. In 1979 it changed its name to the Water and Power Resources Service; however, under the Reagan administration it changed its name back to: Bureau of Reclamation. The Bureau of Reclamation is best known for the dams, powerplants, and canals it constructed in the Western States. Reclamation has constructed more than 600 dams and reservoirs including the Hoover Dam on the Colorado River and Grand Coulee on the Columbia River.

**Facts:** The Bureau of reclamation serves as the fifth largest electric utility in the 17 Western States and is the nation's second largest wholesaler of water, administering 348 reservoirs with a total storage capacity of 245 million acre-feet. It delivers 10 trillion gallons of water to more than 31 million people each year. The Bureau operates 58 hydroelectric powerplants averaging 42 billion kilowatt-hours annually. It provides 1 out of 5 Western farmers with irrigation water for 10 million farmland acres that produce 60% of the nation's vegetables and 25% of its fruits and nuts. In partnerships, the Bureau manages 308 recreation sites that are visited by 90 million people a year.

Natural Resources Conservation Service http://www.nrcs.usda.gov

**Mission:** "To provide leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, improve, and sustain our natural resources and environment."

**History:** The Natural resources conservation Service, formerly the Soil Conservation Service was established in 1935 within the Department of Agriculture through the Soil Conservation Act. The Service organized farmers into Soil Conservation Districts. In 1942 the Service was consolidated with other agencies to form the Agricultural Conservation and Adjustment Administration; less than a year later it was transferred to the Food Production Administration, where it remained for 4 months, then it was transferred to the War Food Administration. After the war it returned under the control of the secretary of Agriculture. In 1994 Congress passed the Agriculture Department Reorganisation Act, under which parts of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (which for long was the Service's closest competitor) and the Soil Conservation Service formed the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

**Facts:** At the heart of the conservation delivery system are 3,000 conservation districts. The districts are local government units, organized by citizens under state law. Most of the NRCS' workforce serve in the local, county-based offices of the department of agriculture; the agency has almost 2500 field offices. Nearly three-fourths of the agencies technical assistance goes to helping farmers and ranchers develop conservation systems.