

**GETTYSBURG TOURS, INC.
TRF CONCESSION SPECIALISTS OF FLORIDA, INC.
STATEMENT ON IMPROVING VISITOR SERVICES AND PROSPECTUS
DEVELOPMENT FOR NPS CONCESSION CONTRACTS
July 2015**

The companies stated above each operate a concession contract in a National Park. Gettysburg Tours, Inc. operates the Eisenhower Farm Shuttle Service in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. This contract is under \$500,000 in revenue and therefore has preferential right. TRF Concession Specialists of Florida, Inc. operates tram tours, bicycle rentals and a small souvenir shop in Shark Valley, Everglades National Park. This small business contract is under \$3,000,000 in revenue. The two companies are owned and managed by the same individuals.

Overall, National Park Service (NPS) staff in the parks in which we operate is open to new ideas and visitor services. However, direction from upper-level NPS management is not always clear and interpretation of what is permitted when modifying authorized services during the term of the contract varies from park to park. The services that we have requested during the term of the contract do not change the contract revenue or bottom-line profit materially. In most cases, these services are relatively insignificant to the total contract and are suggested more for visitor convenience than for increase in profitability of the contract.

However, whether these added services are significant to the revenue of the contract or not, if local NPS staff thinks the park and visitors are better served by adding a service, the NPS needs to provide direction to authorize the service promptly during the term of the contract. NPS needs to learn to adapt quickly to changes in demand for services if they wish to stay relevant to today's consumer.

Prospectus development for contracts needs to be simplified. The process is so complex and the cost to prepare a bid proposal so significant (\$75,000-\$100,000 for a contract under \$3,000,000 in revenue), that many business owners do not want to make the investment in the bid proposal costs, thus reducing the number of bidders on the smaller contracts. In addition, concessioners who perform above and beyond the terms of their contract should be given some points for their efforts in the evaluation process. This would provide some incentive during the contract term to perform at a level above "satisfactory" and continually make investments in the park in which they operate. The evaluation and award process needs to become more transparent, so that all participants understand the evaluation process and how awards are determined.

The National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA) has provided many detailed suggestions on improving visitor services and prospectus development. As NPHA members, we have contributed input and support the NPHA work in this area.