The National Park Service was created by an act signed by President Woodrow Wilson on August 25, 1916:

**An Act To Establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes.**

By August 1916 the Department of Interior oversaw 14 national parks, 21 national monuments, and the Hot Springs and Casa Grande Ruin reservations, but there was no unified leadership or organization to operate them. Lacking this, the parks and monuments were vulnerable to competing interests. With encouragement from future directors Stephen T. Mather and Horace Albright, the National Geographic Society, journalists, railroad interests and others, Congress passed what is often known as the Organic Act, which established the National Park Service and placed all the existing parks under its management. The legislation established the basis for the fundamental mission, philosophy, and policies of the National Park Service.

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