

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The occurrence of a major emergency is termed an “incident”. An incident on a national park can, for example, include major natural disasters, terrorist attacks, wildland and urban fires, floods, hazardous materials spills, aircraft accidents, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, tropical storms, public health and medical emergencies, and other occurrences requiring an emergency response.

In the aftermath of a severe natural disaster or other major emergency at a national park, at the site of a park partner, or in other protected and designated areas under the jurisdiction of tribal, state, or local authorities, a rapid response is needed to stabilize, protect, preserve, recover, or restore natural and cultural resources and historic properties. This response typically involves a team of National Park Service (NPS) experts who converge at the impacted site immediately after the disaster. The mix of skills needed differs by the incident and could, as an example, include a wetland ecologist, historical architect, wildlife biologist and archeologist. NPS often must turn to non-NPS experts, such as university employees, to provide specialized skills that NPS lacks in type or quantity. For this purpose, a pre-existing resources list of skills and expertise is used to help expedite this process and facilitate quick deployment of experts to an impacted location.

The PSAC CESU (Piedmont–South Atlantic Coast Cooperative Ecosystems Study Unit) university partners have been exclusively selected at this time by NPS to enroll on the emergency response roster. Specifically, the university partners are asked to provide natural and cultural resources technical assistance, as needed, during NPS responses to major emergencies. A list of needed skills is provided on the [Emergency Response Priority Skills List](#).

The emergency response roster is a new concept for the NPS. It is being tested through the PSAC CESU. If successful, it would be implemented in CESU networks throughout the country to expand NPS emergency response capability.

Review the [Statement of Interest](#) for more specific information about the intent and purpose of the emergency response roster.