

Navigating Tomorrow: Tourism's Changing Environment

IITA



FEBRUARY 11-14

2024

SUMMIT

MEMPHIS • TENNESSEE





NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

COMMERCIAL SERVICE PROGRAM

INTERNATIONAL INBOUND TRAVEL ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

MEMPHIS, TN



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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FEBRUARY 13, 2023

Topics



- Legislation
- RBCT CUA Program Relaunch
- Other Policy and Initiatives

Legislation



- Law
 - America's Outdoors Recreation Act (S.873)
- Regulations
 - Commercial Use Authorization Rule, 36 CFR 53
 - Concession Rule, 36 CFR 51
 - Visitor Experience Improvement Authority, 36 CFR 52





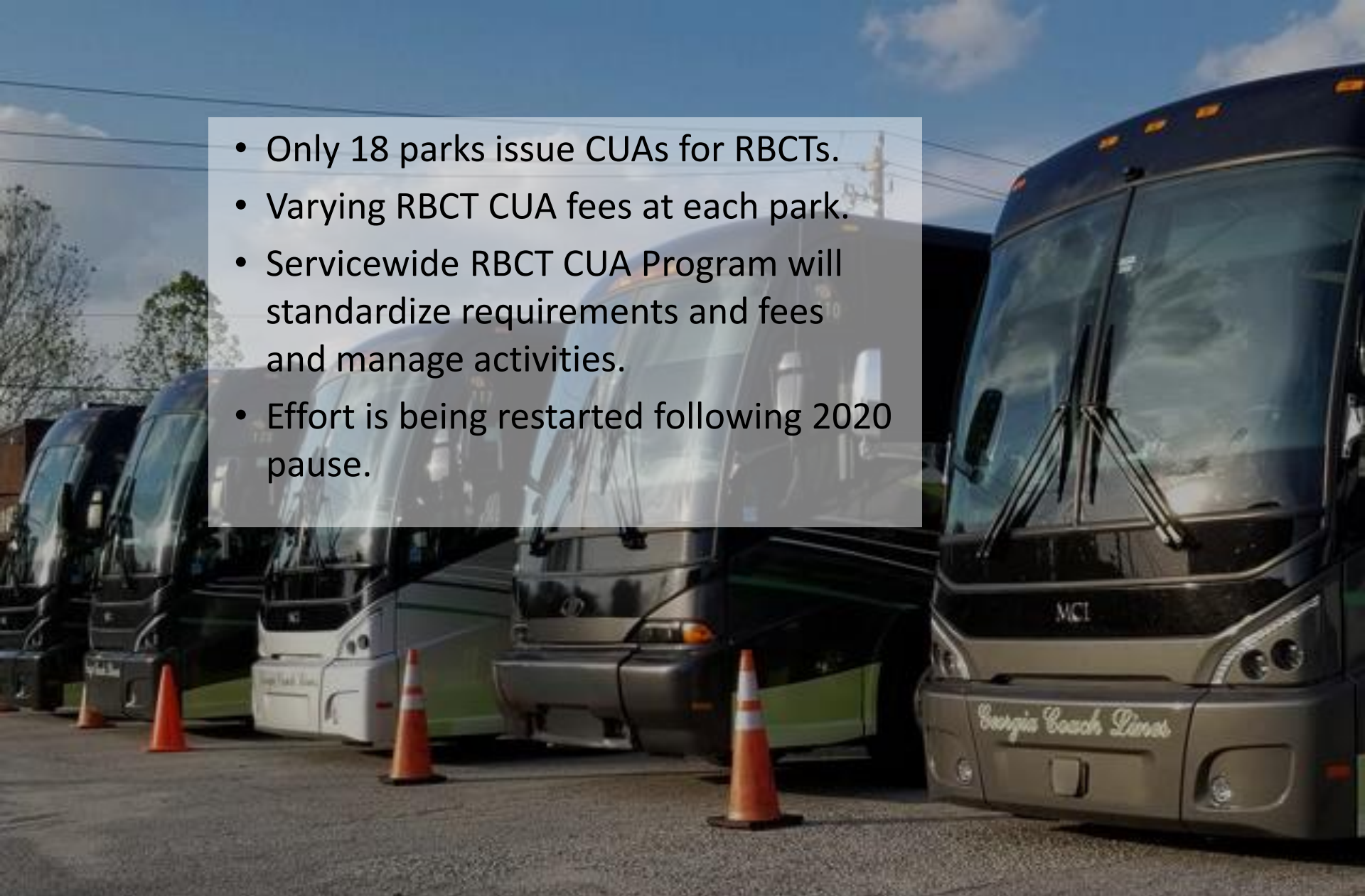
RBCT CUA Program Need

- No specific CUA regulations
- 36 CFR 5.3 requires a permit, contract, or other written agreement for commercial activities
- Law specifies CUAs and concession contracts as the permit types for commercial visitor services.



RBCT CUA Program Need

- Only 18 parks issue CUAs for RBCTs.
- Varying RBCT CUA fees at each park.
- Servicewide RBCT CUA Program will standardize requirements and fees and manage activities.
- Effort is being restarted following 2020 pause.



RBCT CUA Program Development

- Policy and Procedures
 - Who
 - When and How
- Components
 - On-line
 - Application and Reporting
- Fee Structure
 - Cost Recovery
 - Application and Management





RBCT CUA Program Development

- 2023
 - Restarted efforts through meetings with Industry Workgroup
- 2024
 - Continued engagement with Industry Workgroup
 - Definitions, policy and procedures
 - Developing On-line system (building off highly successful non-RBCT On-line system)
 - Public comment period

RBCT CUA Program Rollout

- For 2025:
 - Road-based Commercial Tours (RBCTs) CUAs in parks that currently issue
 - No fee change
 - Online system testing
- For 2026:
 - Full rollout across all parks with RBCTs
 - Online system full implementation
 - New standardized fee structure - TBD



Definitions



- Working with RBCT Industry to define and explain:
 1. Tour operator
 2. RBCT
 3. Who needs the RBCT CUA



Fees



- CUA application and management fees are TBD
- NPS must collect cost recovery, at a minimum
- Efficiency for industry don't necessary equate to lesser fees



Other Policy and Initiatives

- Managed Access Efforts
- Great America Outdoors Act (GAOA)
 - \$12B for various critical projects
 - Roads, Bridges, Water, Wastewater, etc.
- Sustainability
 - EV fleets
 - Waste Reduction/Plastics Elimination





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2030 Blueprint

IITA Focus:

Industrywide **awareness of and an appreciation for the inbound operator distribution** channel as being necessary to build international travel business to the U.S. destinations and travel industry.



2030 Blueprint

Strategies:

- **Education.** Educate and train the industry to build international business and understand the industry's challenges and opportunities.
- **Advocacy.** Ensure inbound operators and by extension the overseas operators' needs and insights are represented in critical policy discussions.
- **Business Opportunities.** Identify and strengthen business opportunities for members with an emphasis on emerging/re-emerging markets.
- **Sustainability.** Urge IITA members to embrace sustainability in their businesses, destinations and travel products.
- **Membership.** Grow membership by engaging with members, creating connections between members, and developing networking opportunities.

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Issues and Trends from last year:

- Hotels –
 - don't understand international anymore – new staff/lost contacts
 - Don't want international because of domestic boom
 - Will not work with inbound operators – particularly with static pricing because driven by revenue managers making short-term decisions on pricing
 - Service levels declined due to staffing shortages
 - Prices WAY TOO HIGH due to domestic boom
- National Parks
 - Access
 - Reservation systems for groups and international
 - Commercial Use Authorization (CUAs) for road-based commercial tours.