

UMC GUIDE RECREATION PARKS & LEISURE

University of Missouri-Columbia Extension Division

Interpretive Brochures

BY GLENN WEAVER

Department of Recreation and Park Administration

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Interpreters and management agencies use brochures (folders, leaflets, pamphlets, or whatever the term used) for many different purposes. Like signs and other media, brochures may or may not be interpretive. They can *communicate an interpretive message* and take the place of an interpreter at a trail site, museum, or nature center, or they may simply *give information*.

Most brochures *promote* the program of the managing authority by describing the interpretive area and opportunities available at the park. The brochures might also *answer questions* frequently asked in correspondence, *give directions* and time schedules, or *relate information* about the history, importance, or regulations of a site.

Whether a brochure is interpretive or informational, the same general design principles apply. Attractive, well-designed and effectively worded brochures complement any interpretive program.

Brochures:

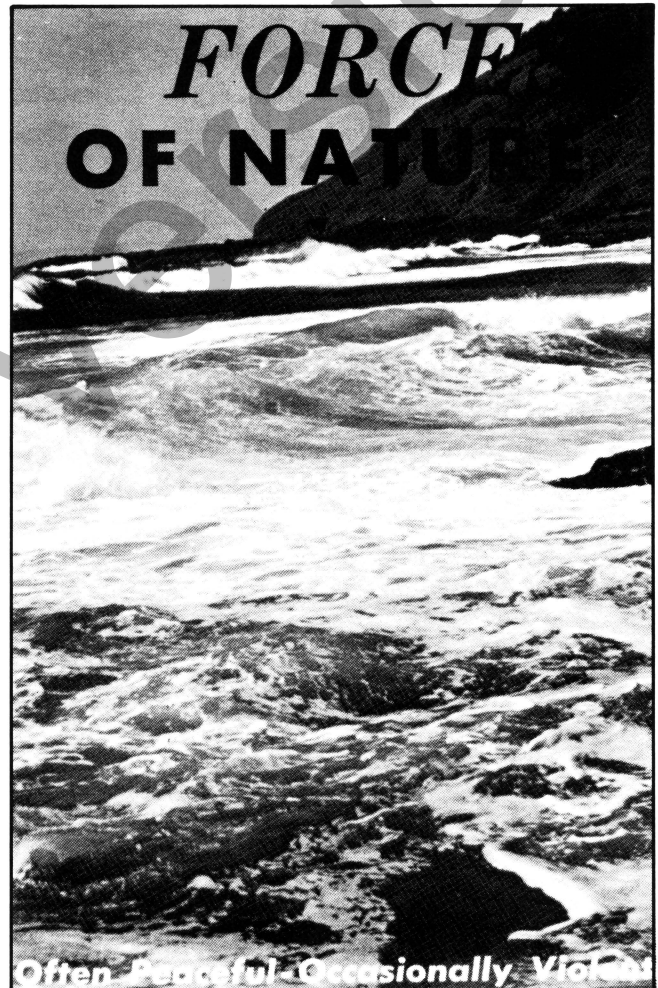
- Offer concise and ready answers to frequently asked questions.
- Can be produced by professionals whose services would not be available on a regular basis.

However, brochures can deliver an interpretive message *only* if they are read. They may be expensive to produce and can become a source of litter.

Professionally printed brochures with beautiful color photos are excellent ambassadors for any site but are expensive to produce. An attractive, inexpensive brochure can also be created by typing or hand-lettering the text and by duplicating the final version on mimeo machine or copier. If a staff person writes the copy, takes or selects the photos or illustrations, and does the initial layout, costs of professional printing are cut considerably. Even if the budget will cover the expense of hiring a professional to do the entire design, copy, and layout, knowing the guidelines for designing brochures will help one to judge the quality of the work done.

THE FIRST STEP: WHAT WILL IT SAY?

Deciding on the theme of the brochure is the first step. A close second is establishing the limits of the message.



Self-Guided Nature Trail

*Rockfalls Beach
Rocky Falls National Forest
Oregon*

Don't attempt to cover every topic. If the theme is "The history of site _____" don't also attempt to relate the importance of forest management unless the theme is "The History of Forest Management." Once theme and limits are determined, the title, text, illustrations, and captions can be planned.

Theme and title are closely related but are probably not identical word-for-word. *The title must capture the interest of the viewer* with a question, a leading phrase, or a short descriptive phrase. For example.

"The effects of forest fires on the present appearance of the site" might be a theme for a brochure but it would make a dull title. A title that incorporates the contradictory destructive and beneficial aspects of forest fires would be more effective: "The Forest Fire: Exterminator and Creator."

THE TEXT: SAY IT IN WORDS

The essence of the brochure is contained in the text.

All other captions and illustrations serve to emphasize points made in the text. The themes and limits have been determined. Now match the message to the reader. What do they want to know about this site? What are they curious about, concerned about? Also, what management concerns must be communicated? The concerns of the interpreter (or interpretive staff), management, and audience must be brought together through this written message. Presenting these ideas in a logical, understandable sequence is a job demanding careful thought and precise use of language.

The guidelines suggested below for simplifying and clarifying text in brochures also apply to other print media:

- Use words common to everyone's vocabulary.
 - Don't use academic or scientific jargon.
 - Keep sentences short. Don't add unnecessary modifiers: find the *one* word that conveys the meaning.
 - Choose active verbs over passive. Avoid beginning a sentence with "There is (are)...." or "It is generally accepted that...."
- These constructions waste words and bore the reader.
- Use words accurately. The dictionary should be a constant text-writing companion.
 - Seek brevity but don't sacrifice clarity for brevity.
 - Limit paragraphs to six lines of print and leave space between paragraphs.

ILLUSTRATIONS: SAY IT WITH PICTURES

Pictures give visual reinforcement to the text, break up long portions of printing, and add eye appeal. Text and illustrations must work together; choice of illustrations and layout design should complement each other.

Illustrations may be sketched or reproduced from photographs. "Clip Art" illustrations can also be purchased and attached to the brochure layout.

Captions explain illustrations and introduce subject matter. They should be stimulating, informative, and help visitors identify with the scene. Captions for text could ask a question or give a brief description of what will follow.

THE LAYOUT: PUTTING IT TOGETHER

A pocket-sized brochure is a good size for most purposes. The number of pages or fold-outs can vary from two to twenty or more. All brochures contain a **cover page, content pages, and a back page.**

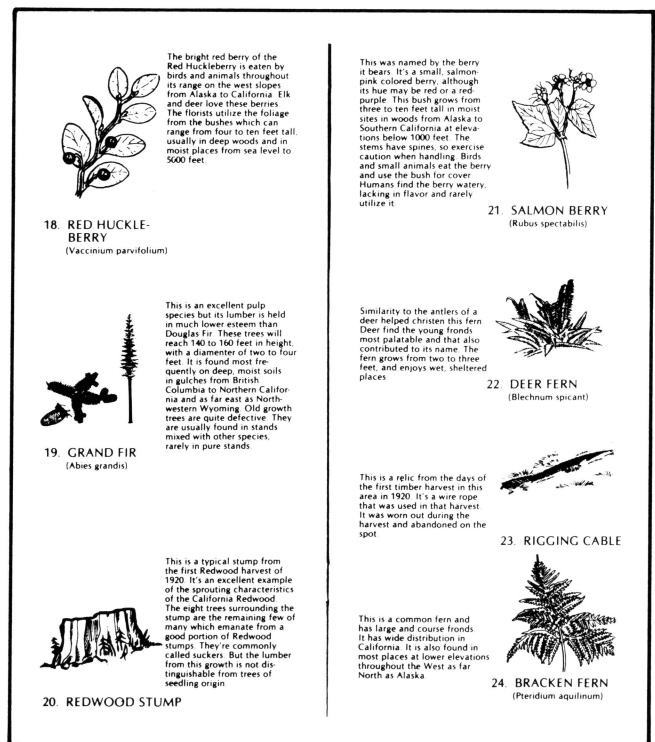
The Cover of the brochure should include the title and caption of the brochure, name of the managing agency, and the subject category, e.g. trail, nature study. The remainder of the cover could be a photograph or other illustration. Viewers receive their first impressions of the brochure from the cover. It must invite the visitor to select the brochure and read the material.

Content Pages. The reader's next impression will be based on the first page seen as the brochure is opened. Pictures and concise, descriptive statements are usually effective. The design of the remaining pages should be a balance of space, text, and illustrations. Visually each paragraph is a separate form that must be weighed and balanced to achieve maximum readability and eye appeal. Illustrations within or beside a paragraph can also create interest.

Use space to lead the reader's eye. Every available inch need not be covered with copy or drawings. It will only discourage further reading.

The Back Page may list sources of additional information. The complete name and location of the managing authority is also printed here.

A suggested front and back layout for an 8½" by 11" brochure that folds to pocket size is on the final page of this guide.



INSIDE SPREAD: Illustrations to the outside with explanations toward the center give flexibility and openness.



CLIP ART: Several services are available, especially through printers. This sample is from the Agricultural Communicators in Education.



As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U. S. administration.



Logo

For further information contact:

Refuge Manager
 Brigantine National Wildlife Refuge
 Great Creek Road, P. O. Box 72
 Oceanville, New Jersey 08231
 Telephone: (609) 652-1665

**Name
 and
 Address**

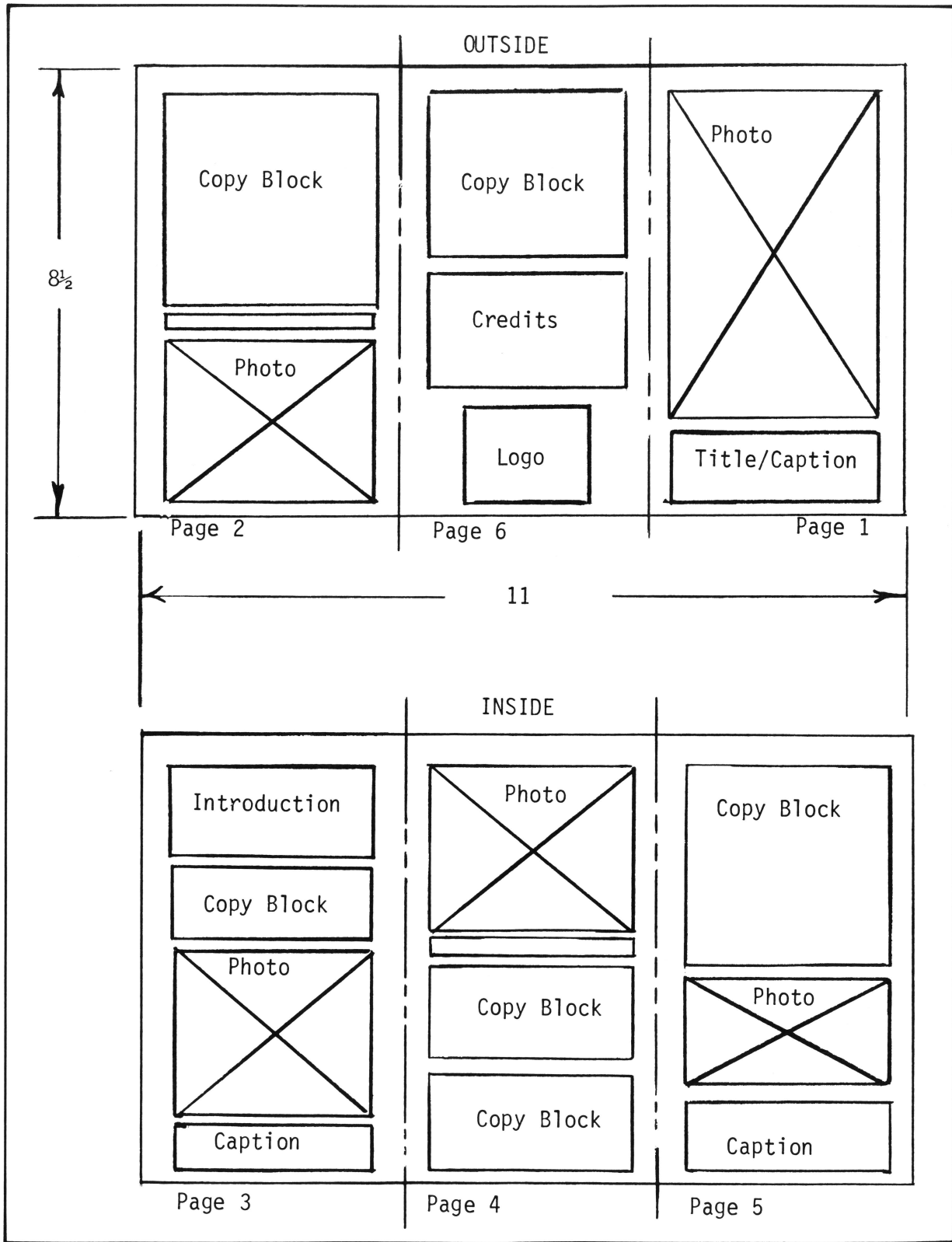
UNITED STATES
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE **Agency**

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BACK PAGES contain your organization's "logo," or symbol, credits and where to get more information.

OVER FOR SAMPLE LAYOUT

SAMPLE BROCHURE LAYOUT



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