



National Park Service
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Wayne Prokopetz Named Superintendent of Big Thicket National Preserve

DENVER – Wayne Prokopetz, a 40-year veteran of federal government service, has been named superintendent of Big Thicket National Preserve in southeastern Texas, according to Intermountain Region Director Sue Masica. Prokopetz begins his new assignment effective immediately.

Prokopetz's federal government career includes 24 years with the National Park Service (NPS). He comes to Big Thicket from Dinosaur National Monument (CO/UT), where he served as chief of research and resources management, and cultural resources program manager.



Wayne Prokopetz - NPS photo

"Wayne brings decades of experience in natural and cultural resource management to his new position," Masica said. "He will be a tremendous asset to the park and will work closely with local communities and stakeholders. I know Wayne will excel in managing the resources at Big Thicket National Preserve."

Prokopetz's previous leadership positions with the NPS include archeologist in the former Pacific Northwest Region Office (Seattle, WA), the former Southwest Region Office, (Santa Fe, NM) and the Southeast Archeological Center (Tallahassee, FL). Prokopetz's other federal government positions include regional archeologist for the Upper Colorado Region, Bureau of Reclamation (Salt Lake City) and archeologist for national forest lands (U.S. Forest Service) in Florida.

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"I am honored to have been selected and am excited to work with the staff and world-class resources of Big Thicket," Prokopetz said. "I look forward to working closely with the southeast Texas communities that have worked so diligently to establish and protect the preserve. The preserve staff are planning great projects for next year's NPS Centennial and I am excited to work alongside them as we transition into a second century of stewardship and engagement."

Prokopetz is a graduate of the Department of the Interior's Department Managers Development Program. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees in anthropology from Florida State University and is "ABD" (all but dissertation) in history at the University of Utah.

As superintendent of Big Thicket, Prokopetz will oversee a workforce of 22 employees and an annual operating budget of more than \$2.4 million.

Prokopetz and his wife Mary, enjoy all water sports and compete in Western and English horse shows.

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About the National Park Service: More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 407 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at www.nps.gov.

