

SECTION 5: CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

SCOPING AND AGENCY COORDINATION

Scoping is an open process performed at the beginning of the environmental assessment process to determine the breadth of environmental issues to be addressed, and to identify potential alternatives. The National Park Service conducted both internal scoping with NPS staff members, and external scoping with the public and affected groups, as well as federal, state, and local agencies.

Internal scoping meetings were held at Tremont during the week of May 8, 2006. Meetings were attended by planning team participants (see list below) including resource management, maintenance, interpretation, and enforcement personnel.

A coordination letter was prepared for the purpose of outlining the proposed action and requesting agency concerns/comments related to the proposed action. A copy of this letter is included in Appendix A. The scoping letters were sent to the agencies in September 2006. A list of agencies that received the letter is listed below. Responses of the agencies to the coordination letters are included in Appendix A.

Public scoping for the proposed action was facilitated through the National Park Service Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website. A brief project synopsis, including the purpose and need of the proposed action and alternatives descriptions, were posted on the website along with instructions for providing comments. The comment period was extended from August 15, 2007 through September 15, 2007. A total of 16 comments were received through the PEPC website (see Section 2 or Appendix A for a summary).

External scoping meetings were also held as part of the external scoping process. Public meetings were held at Tremont and the Blount County Library during the week of August 14, 2006. Sixteen comments were received during the meetings and the 30-day comment period that followed. The comments that were received are presented in Appendix A. A newsletter announcing the project and describing the preliminary alternatives was sent out in July 2006. The newsletter also announced the public scoping meetings that were held August 14 and 15, 2006 at Tremont and the Maryville Public library, respectively. The newsletter included a request for comments on the project with National Park Service points of contacts and links to the project website. The comment period was also announced via articles published in the local newspapers.

The following is a summary of the major issues identified during scoping of the project:

- Issues and concerns affecting this proposal were identified from past National Park Service planning efforts and by input from Tremont staff, local, state, and federal agencies; local and regional organizations; and the general public. The major issues and concerns include:



- Buildings at Tremont are 40 years old, were not designed to function as an education facility, and do not function well in meeting current programmatic, visitor, or employee needs.
- Facilities are not sustainable and were not designed to fit within the park environment, either in function or aesthetics.
- The campus buildings and grounds do not demonstrate the principles that Tremont teaches and do not embody the core philosophies of the National Park Service related to ecology, biodiversity, and environmental stewardship through sustainable designs.
- The designed campus landscape needs improvement to support natural and cultural resource learning and to meet National Park Service mandates and policies.
- The infrastructure at Tremont is inadequate for current needs.
- The site plan at Tremont does not support its purpose and goals to serve as an example of sustainability and environmental awareness.

PLANNING TEAM PARTICIPANTS

National Park Service, Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Dale Ditmanson	Superintendent
Kevin FitzGerald	Deputy Superintendent
Alan Sumeriski	Chief, Facility Management
Nancy Finley	Chief, Resource Management and Science
Ben Dieterle	Project Manager
Cathy Cook	Chief of Resource Education
Karen Ballentine	Supervisor, Interpretive Ranger
Keith Langdon	I&M Coordinator
Shawn Bengé	Superintendent Chickamauga and Chattanooga NMB (Former Chief, Facility Management, GRSM)
Dianne Flaugh	Supervisory Landscape Architect
Eric Kreusch	Cultural Resources Manager, National Park Service, Southeast Region
Steven Wright	Planning and Compliance, Project Manager

Great Smoky Mountain National Park Institute at Tremont

Ken Voorhis	Executive Director
Fred Forster	Board of Directors



Dick Ray	Board of Directors
Pat Atkins	Board of Directors
Charlene Stewart	Office Manager
Kathy Burns	(Former) Office Manager
Jennifer Webster	School Program Director
John DiDiego	Education Director
Amber Parker	(Former) Education Director
Mike Gross	Finance Manager
Jason Love	Citizen Science Director
Maribel Koella	Board of Directors
Julie Brown	Registrar/Assistant Office Manager
Dixie Maxwale	International Intern
Sheri Liles	Teacher Naturalist

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North Carolina State Agencies

State Clearinghouse
North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
State Historic Preservation Officer
Division of Water Quality
Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians in North Carolina
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Tennessee Valley Authority
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Forest Service
Blue Ridge Parkway
Appalachian National Scenic Trail

Tennessee State Agencies

Department of Environment and Conservation
Planning and Standards Section Division of Water Pollution Control
Department of Environment and Conservation Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency



Department of Environment & Conservation Division of Natural Heritage

In addition, individuals on the park's mailing list received copies and this environmental assessment was posted in local libraries in Townsend and Maryville, Tennessee.

