

APPENDIX D. PUBLIC SCOPING SUMMARY

Pea Ridge National Military Park Vegetation Management Plan and Environmental Assessment Public Scoping Summary

Prepared for—

National Park Service
Denver Service Center
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287

Prepared by—

ERO Resources Corporation
1842 Clarkson Street
Denver, Colorado 80218
(303) 830-1188

February 13, 2013

Pea Ridge National Military Park Vegetation Management Plan and Environmental Assessment Public Scoping Summary

February 13, 2013

Introduction

Pursuant to section 101(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), the National Park Service (NPS) is preparing a Vegetation Management Plan and Environmental Assessment (plan/EA) for the Pea Ridge National Military Park (PERI or the park). In preparing this plan/EA, the NPS is following the planning process as required by NEPA and as provided for in agency guidance, Director's Order #12: Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis and Decision-Making and Handbook (Handbook, NPS 2011). The NPS will examine a range of feasible alternatives and evaluate potential impacts on these resources in the plan/EA.

The Comment Analysis Process

Comment analysis is a process used to compile and combine similar public comments into a format that can be used by decision makers and the plan/EA team.

Comment analysis assists the team in organizing, clarifying, and addressing technical information pursuant to NEPA regulations. It also aids in identifying the topics and issues to be evaluated and considered throughout the planning process.

The process includes five main components:

- Developing a coding structure
- Employing a comment database for comment management
- Reading and coding public comments
- Interpreting and analyzing the comments to identify issues and themes
- Preparing a comment summary

A coding structure was developed to help sort comments into logical groups by topics and issues. The coding structure was derived from an analysis of the range of topics discussed during internal NPS scoping, past planning documents, and the comments themselves. The coding structure was designed to capture all comment content rather than to restrict or exclude any ideas.

The NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) database was used for management of the comments. The database stores the full text of all correspondence and allows each comment to be coded by topic and issue. Some outputs from the database include tallies of the total number of correspondence and comments received,

1 sorting and reporting of comments by a particular topic or issue, and demographic
2 information regarding the sources of the comments.

3
4 The analysis of the public comments involved assignment of the codes to statements
5 made by the public in their letters, faxes, and PEPC entries. All comments were read
6 and analyzed.

7
8 Although the analysis process attempts to capture the full range of public concerns, this
9 content analysis report should be used with caution. Comments from people who chose
10 to respond do not necessarily represent the sentiments of the entire public. Furthermore,
11 this was not a vote-counting process, and the emphasis was on the content of the
12 comment rather than the number of times a comment was received. This report is
13 intended to be a summary of the comments received, rather than a statistical analysis.

15 **Definition of Terms**

16
17 The primary terms used in this document are defined below.

18
19 *Correspondence:* A correspondence is the entire document received from a commenter.
20 It can be in the form of a letter, email, fax, written comment form, note card, open house
21 transcript, or petition. Each piece of correspondence is assigned a unique identification
22 number in the PEPC system.

23
24 *Comment:* A comment is a portion of the text within a correspondence that addresses a
25 single subject. It should include information such as an expression of support or
26 opposition to the use of a potential management tool, additional data regarding an
27 existing condition, or an opinion debating the adequacy of the analysis.

28
29 *Code:* A code is a grouping centered on a common subject. The codes were developed
30 during the scoping process and are used to track major subjects throughout the EA
31 process.

32
33 *Concern:* Concerns are written summaries of all comments received under a particular
34 code. Some codes were further separated into several concern statements to better
35 focus on the content of the comments.

37 **Scoping Announcements**

38 ***Agency and Tribal***

39
40 Agency scoping for the plan/EA began with scoping letters sent on August 13, 2012 and
41 August 15, 2012 to the Arkansas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and U.S.
42 Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), respectively, to solicit input on issues of concern. As
43 part of tribal consultation, scoping letters were sent to Federally Recognized Tribes for
44 Consultation for PERI (see recipient list in Attachment A) on September 18, 2012 to
45 determine if any ethnographic or other resources were in the project area and to inquire
46 whether local tribes wanted to be involved in the environmental compliance process.
47 Agency and tribal scoping letters are in Attachment B.

1

2 ***Public***

3

4 PERI initiated public scoping with a press release that was sent to the *Arkansas*
5 *Democrat Gazette*, published on December 19, 2012. A scoping announcement was
6 also posted to the PEPC website on December 13, 2012. The scoping period was
7 defined as December 13, 2012 through January 14, 2013. Public scoping
8 announcements are in Attachment C.

9

10 No public scoping meetings were held for this project.

11

12 **Scoping Comments**

13 ***Agency and Tribal Comments***

14

15 The USFWS Arkansas Field Office responded to the scoping letter in a letter dated
16 September 5, 2012 concurring with the NPS determination that the proposed
17 management plan will have no effect on listed species.

18

19 The United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma responded to the
20 scoping letter in an email dated October 17, 2012, indicating they have no objection or
21 comments on the project; however, they would need to be contacted if any human
22 remains or funerary items are inadvertently discovered during the project.

23

24 The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma responded to the scoping letter in a letter dated
25 December 3, 2012, indicating the project is outside of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
26 historic area of interest and deferred to the other tribes that were contacted.

27

28 The Osage Nation Historic Preservation Office responded to the scoping letter in a letter
29 dated December 14, 2012, requesting a copy of the Environmental Impact Statement
30 [sic] to review and provide comments.

31

32 Responses from the USFWS and tribes are in Attachment D.

33

34 No response was received from the SHPO or other tribes by the end of the January 14,
35 2013 scoping period. Additional agency comments will be accepted and considered after
36 the deadline, and all comments regardless of receipt date will be included in the
37 Administrative Record.

38

39 ***Public Comments***

40

41 One correspondence was posted to the PEPC site on January 4, 2013 and a hard copy
42 letter dated December 28, 2012 was received.

43

44 One commenter indicated that Alternative D would accomplish the park's purpose, need,
45 and objectives. The correspondence also gave suggestions for vegetation management
46 tools and recommended against using annual food crops, as proposed in Alternative B.

PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PUBLIC SCOPING SUMMARY

The commenter opposes Alternative B due to concerns the crops it would include would be unsuccessful due to depletion by the current deer population; and the commenter was in favor of any alternative that increase grassland bird habitat.

The second commenter considers Alternative B the most desirable, followed by Alternatives C and D. The commenter stated that no one can fully appreciate the context of the soldiers' struggle without viewing first hand the physical challenges they faced, and believes a historically accurate landscape provides a constant reminder that the battle of Pea Ridge impacted a wide agricultural community. The commenter believes Alternative B should be the preferred alternative because it would depict a historically accurate landscape.

No other comments were received from the public by the end of the January 14, 2013 scoping period. Additional public comments will be accepted and considered after the deadline, provided they are submitted within a reasonable period of time during the preparation of the EA. Any additional public comments received will be included in the Administrative Record.

A Content Analysis Report is included in Attachment E. This report, which is generated in PEPC, summarizes the number of comments assigned to each code, and the number of correspondences and comments per correspondence.

Concern Statements

Concern statements have been developed to represent the summary of substantive issues for each topic brought forward during scoping. Comments expressing opinions on alternatives were accepted because the public was asked to comment on the preliminary alternatives presented in the public scoping newsletter. Concern statements identified during public scoping for this project are discussed below.

Comments Pertaining to Accuracy of Historic Landscape

Concern Statement: Alternative B is the superior alternative for depicting historical accuracy of the historic landscape.

Representative Quotes

Corr. ID: 3 **Comment ID: 305948**

"...students' understanding is enhanced in proportion to the accuracy of the historic ground cover."

Corr. ID: 3 **Comment ID: 305834**

"...a historically accurate landscape provides a constant reminder that the battle of Pea Ridge impacted a wide agricultural community."

Corr. ID: 3 **Comment ID: 305949**

"From my perspective as an educator, "Alternative B: Re-establish the Functional Agrarian Landscape" is the superior alternative..."

1

2 **Comments Pertaining to Vegetation Management Tools**

3

4 *Concern Statement: Prescribed burning and timber harvesting should be a part of*
5 *vegetation management for the park.*

6

7 Representative Quotes

8

9 **Corr. ID: 1 Comment ID: 305090**

10 "I believe prescribed burning should be the primary means of management, and also
11 timber harvesting. Prescribed burns will work well for establishing and maintaining native
12 warm season grasses, and to prevent the forests from becoming to[sic] congested
13 and/or overtaken by invasive species."

14

15 **Comments Pertaining to Project Costs and Revenue**

16

17 *Concern Statement: Alternative B would have higher labor and capital costs from*
18 *producing annual food crops.*

19

20 Representative Quotes

21

22 **Corr. ID: 1 Comment ID305091**

23 "I would recommend against trying to establish annual food crops (e.g., corn, beans,
24 cotton). That would be labor intensive, with high costs for equipment, seed, fertilizer and
25 pesticides/herbicides. I believe annual crops would require irrigation to be successful in
26 many years, an addition[sic] cost."

27

28 **Comments Pertaining to Purpose and Need**

29

30 *Concern Statement: The purpose and need would be met if Alternative D is chosen.*

31

32 Representative Quotes

33

34 **Corr. ID: 1 Comment ID: 305088**

35 In response to topic question 1, "Yes, if Alternative D, 'establish natural agrarian
36 landscape' is chosen."

37

38 **Comments Pertaining to Management of Wildlife**

39

40 *Concern Statement: Wildlife management is important when considering alternatives.*

41

42 Representative Quotes

43

PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PUBLIC SCOPING SUMMARY

Corr. ID: 1 **Comment ID: 305953**

"I support any activities that contribute to grassland bird habitat. After all, the bird species composition at 1862 is also an important historical consideration that should be considered very important."

Corr. ID: 1 **Comment ID: 305955**

"The deer population needs to be controlled. Alternative B cannot even be considered without deer population control."

References

National Park Service (NPS). 2011. Director's Order #12: Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-Making. Approved: November 5.

PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PUBLIC SCOPING SUMMARY

1
2
3
4
5

**Attachment A – List of Federally Recognized Tribes for Consultation for Pea Ridge
National Military Park**

Federally Recognized Tribes for Consultation for Pea Ridge NMP

(1) ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE

**(2) CHEROKEE NATION OF
OKLAHOMA**

(3) CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA

(4) THE OSAGE NATION

(5) SHAWNEE TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA

(6) QUAPAW TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA

**(7) UNITED KEETOOWAH BAND OF
CHEROKEE INDIANS**

(8) THE CHICKASAW NATION

**(9) MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION OF
OKLAHOMA**

CHEROKEE NATION OF OKLAHOMA

P. O. Box 948

Tahlequah, OK 74465

Physical Address (Overnight Mail): 17675 S.
Muskogee

Tahlequah, OK 74465

918-453-5000 or 1-800-256-0671

918-458-5580 FAX

WEB SITE: www.cherokee.org

MR. Bill John Baker, PRINCIPAL CHIEF

E-MAIL: chad-smith@cherokee.org

MR. JOE GRAYSON, JR., DEPUTY CHIEF

E-MAIL: joe-grayson@cherokee.org

DR. RICHARD ALLEN, POLICY ANALYST
AND NAGPRA/SECTION 106 REVIEW
CONTACT

PHONE: 918-453-5466

E-MAIL: Richard-Allen@cherokee.org

CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA

P.O. Box 1210

Durant, OK 74702-1210

580-924-8280 or 1-800-522-6170

580-920-3181 FAX

WEB SITE: www.choctawnation.com

MR. GREGORY E. PYLE, CHIEF

MR. GARY BATTON, ASSISTANT CHIEF

MR. TERRY COLE, TRIBAL HISTORIC
PRESERVATION OFFICER & NAGPRA
PROGRAM COORDINATOR

PHONE: EXT. 2137

E-MAIL: tcole@chowtawnation.com

MR. OLIN WILLIAMS, SENIOR HERITAGE
RESOURCE TECHNICIAN

ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE

2025 S. Gordon Cooper

Shawnee, OK 74801

405-275-4030

405-878-4711 FAX

WEB SITE: www.astribes.com

MR. GEORGE BLANCHARD, GOVERNOR

MR. DAN LITTLEAXE, LT. GOVERNOR

MS. HENRIETTA ELLIS, TRIBAL HISTORIC
PRESERVATION OFFICER

PHONE: EXT. 199

E-MAIL: kkaniatobe@astribes.com

Federally Recognized Tribes for Consultation for Pea Ridge NMP

THE OSAGE NATION

P.O. Box 779
Pawhuska, OK 74056
Physical Address: 627 Grandview
Pawhuska, OK 74056
918-287-5555
918-287-5562 FAX
Museum: 918-287-5358
WEB SITE: www.osagetribe.com
MR. JOHN D. RED EAGLE, PRINCIPAL CHIEF
E-MAIL: jredeagle@osagetribe.org
MR. SCOTT BIGHORSE, ASSISTANT
PRINCIPAL CHIEF
E-MAIL: sbighorse@osagetribe.org
Dr. Andrea A. Hunter, Director, Tribal Historic
Preservation Officer
PHONE: 918-287-5671
FAX: 918-287-5376
E-MAIL: ahunter@osagetribe.org

QUAPAW TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA

Tribal Headquarters:
P.O. Box 765
Quapaw, OK 74363
918-542-1853 or 1-888-642-4724
918-542-4694 FAX
WEB SITE: www.quapawtribe.com
MR. JOHN BERREY, TRIBAL CHAIRPERSON
E-MAIL: john.berrey@QDSLCC.com
MS. JEAN ANN LAMBERT, TRIBAL HISTORIC
PRESERVATION OFFICER
E-MAIL: jlambert@quapawtribe.com

SHAWNEE TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA

Physical address: 29 S. Hwy. 69A
Miami, OK 74354
Mailing address: P.O. Box 189
Miami, OK 74355
29 South 69A Highway
Miami, OK 74354
918-542-2441
918-542-2922 FAX
WEB SITE: www.shawnee-tribe.com
MR. RON SPARKMAN, CHAIRMAN
E-MAIL: shawneetrib@neok.com
Ms. Kim Jumper, Historic Preservation Department
E-MAIL: kjumper_shawneetrib@hotmail.com

**UNITED KEETOOWAH BAND OF
CHEROKEE INDIANS**

P.O. Box 746
Tahlequah, OK 74465
918-456-6533
918-431-1873 FAX
WEB SITE: www.unitedkeetoowahband.org
MR. GEORGE WICKLIFFE, CHIEF
MR. CHARLES LOCUST, ASSISTANT CHIEF
MS. LISA LARUE, HISTORIC PRESERVATION
COORDINATOR
PHONE: 918-772-4389
E-MAIL: llarue@unitedkeetoowahband.org

Federally Recognized Tribes for Consultation for Pea Ridge NMP

THE CHICKASAW NATION

2020 Arlington, Suite 4

P.O. Box 1548

Ada, OK 74821-1548

580-436-2603

580-436-7297 FAX

WEB SITE: www.chickasaw.net

MR. BILL ANOATUBBY, GOVERNOR

MR. JEFFERSON KEEL, LT. GOVERNOR

MS. LADONNA BROWN, HISTORIC

PRESERVATION OFFICER

PHONE: 580-272-5593

FAX: 580-272-5327

E-MAIL: ladonna.brown@chickasaw.net

**MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION OF
OKLAHOMA**

P.O. Box 580

Okmulgee, OK 74447

918-756-8700 or 1-800-482-1979 or 918-732-7600

or 918-732-7604

918-758-1434 (ADMINISTRATION)

WEB SITE: www.muscogeenation-nsn.gov

MR. A.D. ELLIS, PRINCIPAL CHIEF

800-482-1979, ext. 7605 or 918-732-7605

E-MAIL: adellis@muscogeenation-nsn.gov

MR. TED ISHAM, CULTURAL

PRESERVATION OFFICE MANAGER

800-482-1979 ext. 7731 or 918-732-7731

E-MAIL: preservation@muscogeenation-nsn.gov

-MAIL: tisham@muscogeenation-nsn.gov

PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PUBLIC SCOPING SUMMARY

1
2
3
4
5
6
7

Attachment B – Agency and Tribal Scoping Letters

SHPO
USFWS
Tribes



United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Pea Ridge National Military Park
P.O. Box 700
Pea Ridge, AR 72751-0700

IN REPLY REFER TO:
H42 (PERI-VMP)

August 13, 2012

Mr. George McCluskey
Senior Archeologist and Section 106 Coordinator
The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
1500 Tower Building 323 Center Street
Little Rock, AR. 72201

Dear Mr. McCluskey,

Pea Ridge National Military Park (PERI), National Park Service, plans to develop a Vegetation Management Plan and associated Environmental Assessment (VMP/EA) for the park. The VMP/EA is an implementation document identifying treatments by vegetative type within the park to achieve desired resource conditions and visitor experiences as identified in PERI's General Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement, 2006, (GMP), digital copy attached. The GMP identifies four management zones, two of which are pertinent to this VMP/EA, the "Arkansas Highlands," and "Pea Ridge Battleground."

The park is comprised of 4,300 acres and is broken into two units. The main unit contains 4,244 acres; the detached area consists of 56 acres. The administrative area, 12 acres, is located in the main unit and includes the visitor center, administrative and maintenance buildings, and associated parking and mowed areas. The remainder of the park is comprised of the Arkansas Highlands and Pea Ridge zones.

The Arkansas Highlands is in the physiographic zone known as the Ozark Plateau. This zone, as identified in the GMP, makes up approximately 3,216 acres of the park and includes hardwood forests, small prairies, tableland, rocky highlands, narrow valleys, and deep ravines. Management objectives in this area, per the GMP, are to reestablish the natural landscape features of the Ozark Plateau. Prairies are to be maintained or restored and woodlands are to be preserved or reestablished in areas cleared for agriculture prior to park establishment.

The Pea Ridge Battleground management zone consists of the remaining 25% of the park, 1072 acres, and contains historic fields, forests, and prairie. Management objectives for this

zone focus on retaining and enhancing the historic character of the landscape that defined the 1862 era Pea Ridge battlefield.

The primary objective of both management zones is the restoration, preservation, and maintenance of the cultural landscape, circa 1862, such that the landscape characteristics that defined the way the battle unfolded are attained.

As such, this VMP/EA will identify specific treatments by location in each management zone to achieve then maintain this objective.

Currently, of the 4,300 acres, the park contains 1,000 acres of solid stands of Eastern Red Cedar, 540 acres of historic fields, 240 acres identified as forest in 1862 but cleared for agriculture prior to park establishment, 70 acres of reestablished prairie, 12 acres of administrative areas, 22 acres in paved roads, approximately 2 acres in parking lots, 30 acres of mowed grass, and 2,384 acres of mixed hardwoods.

Government Land Office notes (1837, 1838, and 1842) were utilized, in corporation with first-hand accounts, a base map of 1862 fields and roads, a park-wide archeological assessment, and other associated records to identify fields, forests, and vegetation stand and structure of the park circa 1862. Additionally, the leading historian on the Battle of Pea Ridge, Dr. William L. Shea was consulted and comments and suggestions incorporated so that all of the information could be compiled to produce a historic vegetative base map, attached. This vegetative base map will provide the backdrop, spatially and compositionally, to identify a point of beginning for project locations and management actions in all alternatives of the VMP/EA.

Thus, this implementation plan/project will provide specific management actions of historic fields, forests, fallow fields, stands of Eastern Red Cedar, and possibly the relocation and/or abandonment and mitigation of modern hiking and horse trails through these vegetative types.

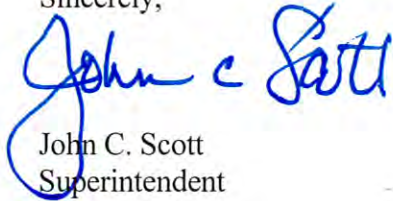
This letter will serve as a record that the NPS is initiating consultation pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2 .c.1.

The following enclosed documents provide additional information about the existing conditions and park guiding document(s):

1. Pea Ridge National Military Park General Management Plan
2. Historical Land Cover/Use Classification of Pea Ridge NMP (Historic Vegetative Base Map)
3. 1940 Aerial Map of Pea Ridge National Military Park
4. 2011 Aerial Map of Pea Ridge National Military Park
5. Cultural Landscape Inventory
6. Project Area Map

Please respond to Kevin Eads, Chief of Resource Management, at (479) 451-8122 extension 239, if you have any questions or concerns about this request, or if you require additional information.

Sincerely,



John C. Scott
Superintendent

Enclosures



United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Pea Ridge National Military Park
P.O. Box 700
Pea Ridge, AR 72751-0700

IN REPLY REFER TO:
D50-10 (PERI-VMP)

August 15, 2012

Mr. Jim Boggs
Field Supervisor
Arkansas Field Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
110 S. Amity Road, Suite 300
Conway, AR. 72032

Dear Mr. Boggs,

Pea Ridge National Military Park (PERI), National Park Service, plans to develop a Vegetation Management Plan and associated Environmental Assessment for the park. PERI is located in Benton County in Northwest Arkansas; map attached, and is contained primarily within the Pea Ridge, Arkansas USGS Quadrangle with a small portion residing in the Garfield, Arkansas Quadrangle. Specifically, PERI is located in the following Township(s), Range(s), and Section(s) in the aforementioned Quadrangles:

- (1) Township: 20 North, Range: 29 West, Sections 3, 2, 10.
- (2) Township: 21 North, Range: 29 West, Sections 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34, 35, and 36.
- (3) Township: 21 North, Range: 28 West, Sections 30, 31.

The Vegetation Management Plan and associated Environmental Assessment (VMP/EA) is an implementation document identifying treatments by vegetative type within the park to achieve desired resource conditions and visitor experiences as identified in PERI's General Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement, 2006, (GMP). The GMP identifies four management zones, two of which are pertinent to this VMP/EA, the "Arkansas Highlands," and "Pea Ridge Battleground."

The park is comprised of 4,300 acres and is broken into two units. The main unit contains 4,244 acres; the detached area consists of 56 acres. The administrative area, 12 acres, is located in the main unit and includes the visitor center, administrative and maintenance

buildings, and associated parking and mowed areas. The remainder of the park is comprised of the Arkansas Highlands and Pea Ridge zones.

The Arkansas Highlands is in the physiographic zone known as the Ozark Plateau. This zone, as identified in the GMP, makes up approximately 3,216 acres of the park and includes hardwood forests, small prairies, tableland, rocky highlands, narrow valleys, and deep ravines. Management objectives in this area, per the GMP, are to reestablish the natural landscape features of the Ozark Plateau. Prairies are to be maintained or restored and woodlands are to be preserved or re-established in areas cleared for agriculture prior to park establishment.

The Pea Ridge Battleground management zone consists of the remaining 25% of the park, 1072 acres, and contains historic fields, forests, and prairie. Management objectives for this zone focus on retaining and enhancing the historic character of the landscape that defined the 1862 era Pea Ridge battlefield.

The primary objective of both management zones is the restoration, preservation, and maintenance of the cultural landscape, circa 1862, such that the landscape characteristics that defined the way the battle unfolded are attained.

As such, this VMP/EA will identify specific treatments by location in each management zone to achieve then maintain this objective.

Currently, of the 4,300 acres, the park contains 1,000 acres of solid stands of Eastern Red Cedar, 540 acres of historic fields, 240 acres identified as forest in 1862 but cleared for agriculture prior to park establishment, 70 acres of reestablished prairie, 12 acres of administrative areas, 22 acres in paved roads, approximately 2 acres in parking lots, 30 acres of mowed grass, and 2,384 acres of mixed hardwoods.

Winton Spring and its associated, unnamed creek, totaling 1,642 feet, and seven ephemeral stream channels totaling 37,302 feet are contained within the 4,244 acres of the main unit. The 56 acre detached area is bounded by Little Sugar creek on the southern end, 1,696 feet, and contains 1,028 feet of ephemeral creek channel.

Government Land Office notes (1837, 1838, and 1842) were utilized, in corporation with first-hand accounts, a base map of 1862 fields and roads, a park-wide archeological assessment, and other associated records to identify fields, forests, and vegetation stand and structure of the park circa 1862. Additionally, the leading historian on the Battle of Pea Ridge, Dr. William L. Shea was consulted and comments and suggestions incorporated so that all of the information could be compiled to produce a vegetative base map. This vegetative base map will provide the backdrop, spatially and compositionally, to identify a point of beginning for project locations and management actions in all alternatives of the VMP/EA.

The Heartland Inventory and Monitoring Network (I&M) is in the process of completing a vegetation map of existing conditions. Accuracy assessments have been completed and

a final map will be produced by the end of 2012. This map will provide the data necessary to determine the point of departure from existing conditions to those identified in the historic vegetative base map. This information will then be utilized in the determination of management actions by alternative.

Thus, this project will provide specific management actions of historic fields, forests, fallow fields, stands of Eastern Red Cedar, and possibly the relocation and/or abandonment and mitigation of modern hiking and horse trails through these vegetative types.

The following list of species is identified as being found in Benton County, Arkansas.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Fed Status</u>
Benton Ozark Cavefish (<i>Amblyopsis rosae</i>)	LT
Cave Crayfish (<i>Cambarus aculabrum</i>)	LE
Bald Eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	BGEPA
Gray Bat (<i>Myotis grisescens</i>)	LE
Indiana Bat (<i>Myotis sodalis</i>)	LE
Ozark Big-Eared Bat (<i>Corynorhinus townsendii ingens</i>)	LE
Neosho Mucket (<i>Lampsilis rafinesqueana</i>)	Cand.
Arkansas darter (<i>Etheostoma cragini</i>)	Cand.
Rabbitsfoot (<i>Quadrula cylindrica cylindrica</i>)	Cand.
Piping Plover (<i>Charadrius melodus</i>)	LT

LT = Listed threatened, LE = Listed Endangered, Cand. = Candidate species, BGEPA = Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act protected

None of these species has been documented on the park (GMP, Fire Management Plan) nor have any of these species, with the exception of the Bald Eagle, been sighted by park staff or recorded through I&M studies or inventories.

The following enclosed documents provide additional information about the existing conditions and park guiding document(s):

1. Pea Ridge National Military Park General Management Plan
2. Pea Ridge National Military Park Fire Management Plan
3. Project Area Map

This letter constitutes initiation of informal consultation under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act for the Vegetation Management Plan and associated Environmental Assessment for Pea Ridge National Military Park. No adverse effects to listed species are expected as a result of the proposed action. Bald eagles do not nest in the project area and no other species has been identified as residing in the park. Based on

this information, the attached GMP/EIS, of which this project is an implementation document, and the attached FMP, Pea Ridge National Military Park has made a no effect determination concerning this project.

Please respond to Kevin Eads, Chief of Resource Management, at (479) 451-8122 extension 239, if you have any questions or concerns about this request, or if you require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John C. Scott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "S".

John C. Scott
Superintendent,

Enclosures

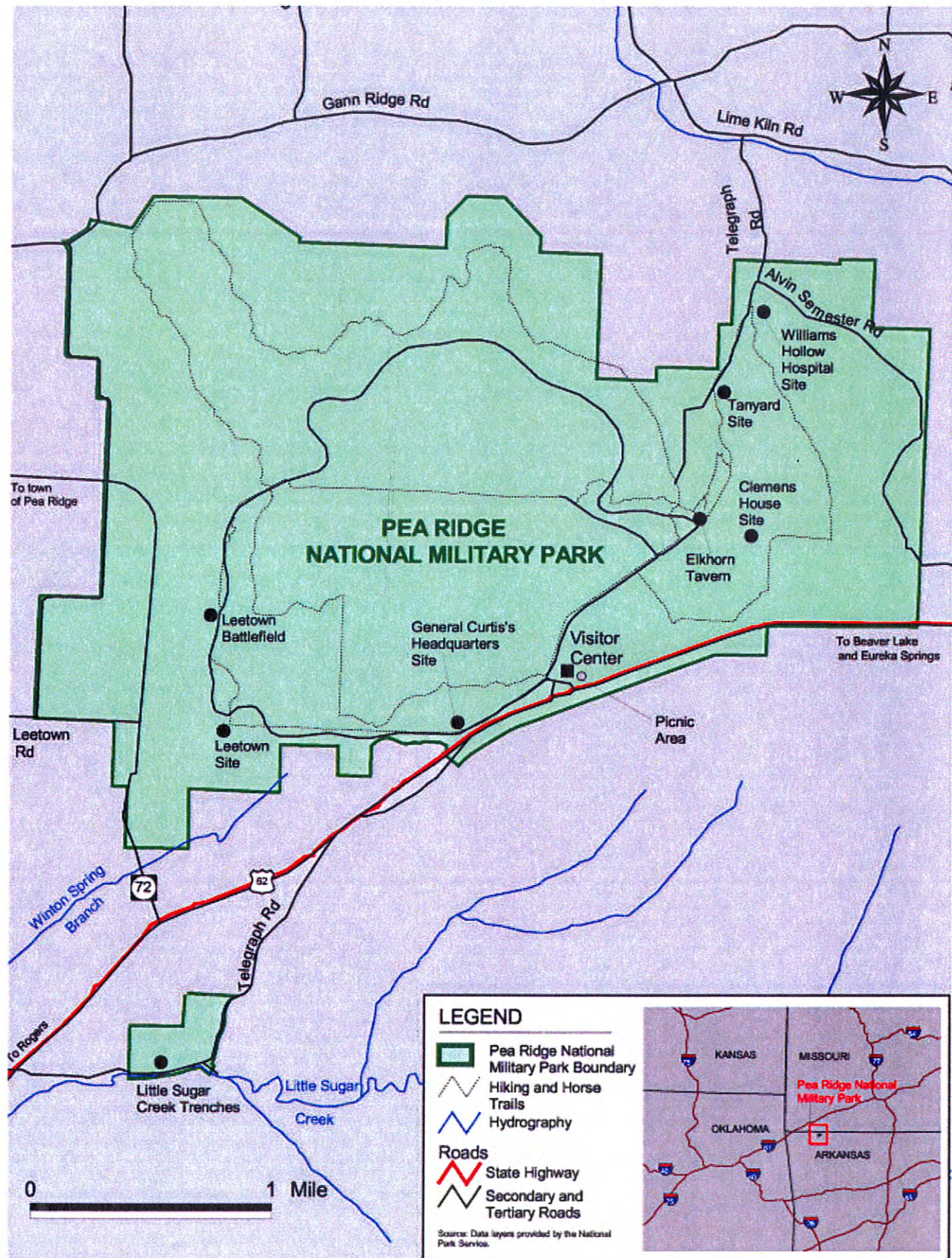
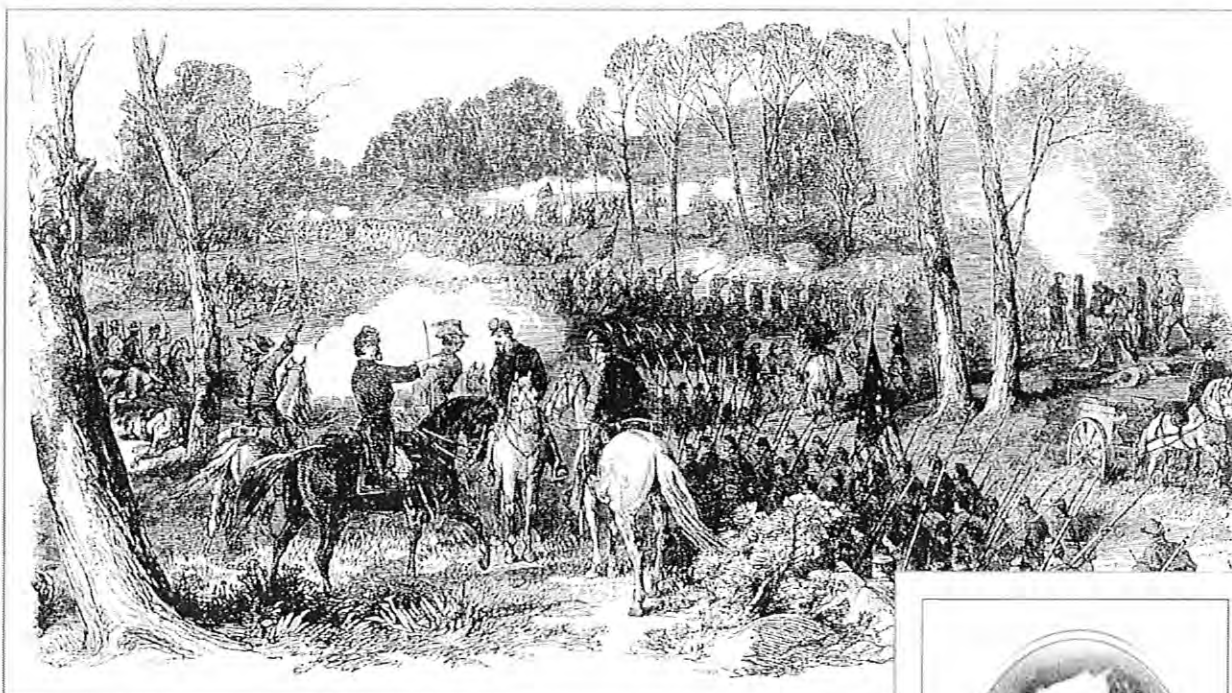


Figure 1 – Pea Ridge National Military Park Vicinity Map



Draft
General Management Plan
Environmental Impact Statement

PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK



NATURAL RESOURCES

SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

The National Park Service consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission to obtain current lists of Special Status Species that could occur in the park. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service identified one threatened and three endangered species that could occur in the park (see table 5).

TABLE 5: THREATENED AND
ENDANGERED SPECIES

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Ozark cavefish	<i>Amblyopsis rosae</i>	Threatened
Cave crayfish	<i>Cambarus aculabrum</i>	Endangered
Gray bat	<i>Myotis grisescens</i>	Endangered
Indiana bat	<i>Myotis sodalis</i>	Endangered

The cave crayfish (*Cambarus aculabrum*) and Ozark cavefish (*Amblyopsis rosae*) require karst streams with pools. There are no known karst streams in the park. The gray bat (*Myotis grisescens*) requires well-developed caves providing specific temperatures for roosting, hibernacula, and maternity. The Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) typically uses limestone caves with midwinter temperatures between 37 and 43 degrees Fahrenheit for hibernation. Hibernating colonies of the Indiana bat disperse in late March and most migrate to more northern habitat for the summer.

The Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission conducted a survey of the park for plants of special concern 2001 (ANHC 2001). That survey identified two occur-

rences of the Ozark chinquapin, a member of the chestnut family, the lobed spleenwort (*Asplenium pinnatifidum*), and Ashe's juniper (*Juniperus ashei*). Although none of these species are considered endangered or threatened by the state, they are uncommon or have conservation concerns. Ozark chinquapin is affected by the chestnut blight. Most of these trees persist as stump sprouts with few producing fruit. Ashe's juniper and the lobed spleenwort are on the periphery of their ranges in Arkansas. A single specimen of Kentucky spleenwort (*Asplenium X kentuckiense*) was recorded in the park in 1943. It is the exceedingly rare hybrid of *A. pinnatifidum* and *A. platyneuron*. The plant was not found in the 2001 survey. Both progenitors occur in the park and it is possible that the plant grows in the park. There are no state wildlife or fish special status species in the park.

NPS policy directs that all species listed as threatened or endangered be identified and protected, and that listed species that are native to a park unit be recovered. Policy also directs the Park Service to inventory, monitor, and manage state and locally listed special status species in a manner similar to the treatment afforded federally listed threatened and endangered species.

The identified species and their habitat requirements were reviewed to determine the presence of threatened or endangered species. There are no suitable cave habitats for the four federally listed threatened or endangered species. In earlier surveys the Ozark chinquapin was found growing in the park.

PLANT COMMUNITIES

The park is on the Springfield Plateau, which is a component of the larger Ozark Plateau. Rolling hills, narrow hollows, and broad uplands define the landscape. The predominant climax vegetation type is oak-hickory forest. Historic documentation describes much of the landscape as wooded except for the Round Prairie area and areas cleared for cultivation. Climax vegetation communities include post oak/blackjack oak, black oak, mixed oak (white oak, black oak, and post oak), and white oak. Disturbed sites are forested by eastern red cedar.

Pea Ridge was the home of an agricultural community during the Civil War. After the war agriculture expanded, resulting in additional clearing. Since the park was established, cleared land, other than that in agricultural use at the time of the battle has been allowed to revert to woodland. Fire, a natural element influencing the landscape, decreased in frequency, a direct result of the policy of suppression. Fire reduces the frequency of shade tolerant species and maintains the oak-hickory composition.

Vegetation at Pea Ridge National Military Park is a mosaic of second growth oak-hickory forest with some mature oak-hickory interspersed, and woodland, prairie plantings, and fescue fields with numerous nonnative species intermixed. Each vegetation type exhibits various stages of succession. Composition and density vary in accordance with historic and current use patterns or fire frequency

and suppression. Some areas have a high density of red cedar, a manifestation of succession from open field or open woodland without the benefit of fire to control this plant. Some of these areas were cleared after the battle but reverted to forest when agricultural use ended. Fields cultivated at the time of the battle have been maintained by planting with domestic grasses for agricultural purposes.

The Park Service has initiated a vegetation management program for Pea Ridge. The program includes management treatments such as prescribed fire and the use of herbicides to accelerate succession and manage plant community structure and composition.

WETLANDS

There are limited surface water sources within Pea Ridge National Military Park. There are several streams that originate in the park, and a number of stock ponds, which are remnants from agricultural practices prior to park establishment. The actions considered in the alternatives would have a negligible effect on surface or ground water within the park.

However, there is the potential that former and potential wetlands may be found in the Leetown area. If historic drainage patterns are restored as a result of implementation of the management zones, these wetlands could be restored. This would impact approximately 100 acres in the park.

Pea Ridge National Military Park

Pea Ridge, Arkansas

Fire Management Plan Environmental Assessment



April 2005



U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service



opportunities for enjoyment of the park, and (3) identified as a goal in the park's plans or other Park Service planning documents. Indeed, Alternatives 1 and 2 are likely to have beneficial effects on the Park's wildlife resources.

3.5 THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

3.5.1 Affected Environment

No Federal threatened or endangered species of plants or animals are documented at Pea Ridge National Military Park (Dikeman, 2001). However, three listed species do occur on adjacent lands: the endangered gray bat (*Myotis grisescens*), Indiana Bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and the endangered Ozark cavefish (*Amblyopsis rosae*). The bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) has also been frequently sighted on adjacent lands.

- Gray Myotis – Most members of the known surviving populations of this species are concentrated in only nine cave hibernacula each winter, where they are extremely vulnerable to human disturbance. Exceptionally cold caves are needed for hibernation and exceptionally warm caves for the rearing of young. Human disturbance and vandalism of these critical caves, along with the adverse effects of siltation and pollution of waterways over which the bats feed, resulted in a precipitous 80% decline in total gray myotis numbers in under two decades. In 1976, this bat was one of the first to be listed as Endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Since the gray bat was listed, several critical hibernation and maternity caves have been gated, leading to stable and growing populations in many areas (BCI, 2002).

- The Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) was listed as endangered throughout its range in March 1967. There are currently about 500,000 individuals of this species in existence. It is a medium size myotis, closely resembling the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*). The Indiana bat occurs in the Midwest and eastern United States. Its historic range extends from the western edge of the Ozark region in Oklahoma to southern Wisconsin, east to Vermont, and south to northern Florida. In winter, the bat hibernates in limestone caves with a preferred temperature range of from 37 to 43 degrees Fahrenheit. The bat typically forms tight clusters on the cave ceiling during hibernation. In summer the females and young generally roost in trees with scaly or sloughing bark. The females and young forage in and around riparian and floodplain trees. Males may roost under bridges, in old buildings, or in caves and tend to forage over floodplain ridges and hillside forests. Foraging areas average 11.2 acres per animal in midsummer. The bat typically leaves its hibernaculum in late March and migrates north to its summer habitat. The bats begin returning to their hibernation area in August, and feed heavily through September and October before entering hibernation by late November.

The decline in the species population has been attributed to commercialization of roosting caves, wanton destruction by vandals, disturbances caused by increased numbers of spelunkers and bat banding programs. Some winter hibernacula have been rendered unsuitable as a result of blocking or impeding air flow into the caves and thereby changing the cave's climate. The Indiana bat is nearly extinct over most of its former range in the northeastern states, and since 1950, the major winter colonies in caves of West Virginia, Indiana, and Illinois have disappeared. A high degree of aggregation during winter makes the species vulnerable. During this period approximately 87 percent of the entire population hibernates in only seven caves.

- Ozark cavefish – This small, colorless, blind fish lives its entire life in springs, cave streams, and underground waters. It is well-adapted to the cave environment, living most or all of its life in total darkness. It also has a relatively restricted range. Water pollution, habitat destruction, human disturbance, and collection have placed the Ozark cavefish's survival in jeopardy (CCM, 2000).

- Bald eagle – The bald eagle was listed by the USFWS in the 1970's as a result of drastically declining numbers from habitat destruction, poaching, but primarily pesticide poisoning, which thinned eggshells and decimated the species' reproduction. Since the banning of DDT and other organochlorine insecticides in the 1970's and 1980's, this species has been making a gradual comeback throughout North America, and has subsequently been de-listed.

In addition to the above Federally-listed species, which are found not on the park proper but on adjacent lands, one variety of species of vascular plants have been documented in the park itself which is listed by the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission as an Inventory Element and is a state listed species: the Ozark chinquapin (*Castanea pumila* var. *ozarkensis*). The Ozark chinquapin grows in oak-pine and oak-hickory forests on relatively dry, acidic soils on ridge tops and upper slopes adjacent to ravines (ONH, 1999). It is endemic to the Ozark Plateau region of Arkansas, Missouri and Oklahoma. Currently, this variety of chinquapin is threatened by the same chestnut blight (caused by the fungus *Endothia parasitica* brought to the U.S. in 1904) which decimated the American chestnut in the Appalachians. The Ashe's juniper (*Juniperus ashei*), which is also listed by the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, may occur on the park. It typically grows in upland hardwood areas around glades, generally restricted to limestone-dolomite outcrops.

3.5.2 Environmental Consequences

Impacts to threatened and endangered species from the alternative FMP's were qualitatively assessed by means of a literature review of the effects of fire on these species, consultation with biologists and agencies, and professional judgment.

3.5.2.1 Alternative 1 – No Action

None of the Federally-listed species known to occur on adjacent lands is likely to be adversely affected by the suppression efforts, mechanical thinning, and prescribed fire associated with this alternative. Conceivably, smoke from prescribed fires could temporarily cause bald eagles, gray bats and Indiana bats to move away toward cleaner air, but this effect would be transitory and not severe. The possibility of prescribed fire escaping the park and causing direct or indirect harm to either of these species is negligible. Any Ozark cavefish occurring on adjacent lands in springs or caves would not likely to be adversely affected in any way.

Chinquapins are a fire adapted species. They may be topkilled by a fire, particularly smaller individuals, but they sprout vigorously following the fire (Silker 1957). Prescribed fires should have minimal impact on the population. Individuals of this species would be avoided in mechanical treatments.



United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Pea Ridge National Military Park
15930 US Hwy. 62 East
Garfield, AR 7232

IN REPLY REFER TO:
H42 (PERI-VMP)

September 18, 2012

Mr. Bill John Baker, Principal Chief
Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 948
Tahlequah, OK 74465

Dear Principal Chief Baker:

Pea Ridge National Military Park (PERI), National Park Service, plans to develop a Vegetation Management Plan and associated Environmental Assessment (VMP/EA) for the park. The VMP/EA is an implementation document identifying treatments by vegetative type within the park to achieve desired resource conditions and visitor experiences as identified in PERI's General Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement, 2006, (GMP), digital copy attached. The GMP identifies four management zones, two of which are pertinent to this VMP/EA, the "Arkansas Highlands," and "Pea Ridge Battleground."

The park is comprised of 4,300 acres and is broken into two units. The main unit contains 4,244 acres; the detached area consists of 56 acres. The administrative area, 12 acres, is located in the main unit and includes the visitor center, administrative and maintenance buildings, and associated parking and mowed areas. The remainder of the park is comprised of the Arkansas Highlands and Pea Ridge zones.

The Arkansas Highlands is in the physiographic zone known as the Ozark Plateau. This zone, as identified in the GMP, makes up approximately 3,216 acres of the park and includes hardwood forests, small prairies, tableland, rocky highlands, narrow valleys, and deep ravines. Management objectives in this area, per the GMP, are to reestablish the natural landscape features of the Ozark Plateau. Prairies are to be maintained or restored and woodlands are to be preserved or reestablished in areas cleared for agriculture prior to park establishment.

The Pea Ridge Battleground management zone consists of the remaining 25% of the park, 1072 acres, and contains historic fields, forests, and prairie. Management objectives for this zone focus on retaining and enhancing the historic character of the landscape that defined the 1862 era Pea Ridge battlefield.

The primary objective of both management zones is the restoration, preservation, and maintenance of the cultural landscape, circa 1862, such that the landscape characteristics that defined the way the battle unfolded are attained.

As such, this VMP/EA will identify specific treatments by location in each management zone to achieve then maintain this objective.

Currently, of the 4,300 acres, the park contains 1,000 acres of solid stands of Eastern Red Cedar, 540 acres of historic fields, 240 acres identified as forest in 1862 but cleared for agriculture prior to park establishment, 70 acres of reestablished prairie, 12 acres of administrative areas, 22 acres in paved roads, approximately 2 acres in parking lots, 30 acres of mowed grass, and 2,384 acres of mixed hardwoods.

Government Land Office notes (1837, 1838, and 1842) were utilized, in corporation with first-hand accounts, a base map of 1862 fields and roads, a park-wide archeological assessment, and other associated records to identify fields, forests, and vegetation stand and structure of the park circa 1862. Additionally, the leading historian on the Battle of Pea Ridge, Dr. William L. Shea was consulted and comments and suggestions incorporated so that all of the information could be compiled to produce a historic vegetative base map, attached. This vegetative base map will provide the backdrop, spatially and compositionally, to identify a point of beginning for project locations and management actions in all alternatives of the VMP/EA.

Thus, this implementation plan/project will provide specific management actions of historic fields, forests, fallow fields, stands of Eastern Red Cedar, and possibly the relocation and/or abandonment and mitigation of modern hiking and horse trails through these vegetative types.

This letter serves as notification and invites your participation, through consultation with the National Park Service, in the analysis of potential environmental impacts from a variety of alternatives focusing on vegetation management for the restoration and preservation of the 1862 landscape, and in the development of a final implementation plan.

We invite you to participate in informal consultation with the park early in the process and to review and comment on the draft Plan/EA, during the designated comment period. If you express an interest, via a written response to this letter, future documents will be made available for your review and comment. We will also notify you when the review period opens for the EA.

The following enclosed documents provide additional information about the existing conditions and park guiding document(s):

1. Pea Ridge National Military Park General Management Plan
2. Historical Land Cover/Use Classification of Pea Ridge NMP (Historic Vegetative Base Map)
3. 1940 Aerial Map of Pea Ridge National Military Park
4. 2011 Aerial Map of Pea Ridge National Military Park

5. Cultural Landscape Inventory
6. Project Area Map

Please respond to Kevin Eads, Chief of Resource Management, at (479) 451-8122 extension 239, or email at kevin_eads@nps.gov if you have any questions or concerns about this request, or if you require additional information.

Sincerely,



John C. Scott
Superintendent

Enclosures

CC:

Dr. Richard Allen, Policy Analyst and NAGPRA/Section 106 Review, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma

PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PUBLIC SCOPING SUMMARY

1
2
3
4
5
6
7

Attachment C – Scoping Announcements

Newspaper scoping announcement

Public scoping announcement



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Pea Ridge
National Military Park

15930 Highway 62
Garfield, AR 72732
<http://www.nps.gov/peri>

479-451-8122 phone
479-451-0219 fax

Pea Ridge National Military Park News Release

December 19, 2012
For Immediate Release
Media Contact Kevin Eads 479-451-8122 x 239

Vegetation Management Plan Environmental Assessment planned at Pea Ridge National Military Park

Pea Ridge National Military Park is pleased to announce that it is in the process of developing a Vegetation Management Plan Environmental Assessment. The purpose of the proposed plan is to modify and/or establish the vegetation patterns in the park to represent the look and feel of the 1862 battlefield landscape. "This plan will promote active vegetation restoration and support protection and preservation of cultural resources and is being considered because the park's General Management Plan, which was completed in 2006, set the goals for landscape management at the park" said Superintendent Scott.

We invite you to participate, through consultation with the park, in the analysis of draft alternatives by going to our Planning, Environment and Public Comment website located at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=42064>.

Public review for this plan is currently open and will close January 14, 2013. The public's participation in the development of this plan is greatly valued and wanted.

Pea Ridge National Military Park was established in 1956 to commemorate and preserve the site of the March 1862 Civil War battle that helped Union forces gain control of Missouri. The park is located 10 miles north of Rogers on Highway 62.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Pea Ridge National Military Park
15930 E Highway 62
Garfield, AR 72732

First Class Mail
Postage and Fees
PAID
National Park Service
Permit No. G83

Pea Ridge National Military Park
Arkansas

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Pea Ridge National Military Park

Vegetation Management Plan And Environmental Assessment

Newsletter 1

December 2012

Dear Friends,

Pea Ridge National Military Park (the park) was established by Congress on July 20, 1956 to “preserve and protect the landscapes and resources associated with the Battle of Pea Ridge” and “interpret the battle as an integral part of the social, political, and military history of the Civil War.” The park’s General Management Plan (GMP), completed in 2006, set the goals for landscape management at the park. The overarching goals of the GMP were “returning the battlefield landscape to the 1862 appearance” and “providing views of the battlefield that convey the open space and woodlands present at the time of the battle.” The landscape of Pea Ridge was a highly human-modified landscape in 1862. The major purpose of this Vegetation Management Plan (plan) is to design ways to adjust and/or establish the vegetation patterns that represent the look and feel of the 1862 landscape. The park proposes the development of a vegetation management plan to establish methods by which to create, then maintain, those patterns to maximize benefits to natural and cultural resources.

As part of this effort, the National Park Service (NPS or Park Service) is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) for an evaluation of alternatives for the plan. The plan will look at a variety of treatment options to replicate the vegetative conditions existing in 1862 from farm fields and pastures to forested areas.

This newsletter initiates a public scoping process as part of the EA being prepared by the Park Service to evaluate the proposed plan. We invite the public, government agencies, and other interested persons and organizations to provide comments.

I encourage you to become involved in the future of Pea Ridge National Military Park by providing us with your thoughts. For more details on how to provide comments, please see the “How to Provide Input” section of this newsletter.

Thank you for your continued interest and involvement with Pea Ridge National Military Park. Public communication, collaboration, and cooperation are essential to implementing a successful project that will enhance the park’s mission. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

John Scott
Superintendent

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA



Questions to consider:

Do the purpose, need and objectives reflect what you think the park needs to accomplish with this project? If not, what else do you think needs to be accomplished?

Do the purpose, need, and objectives reflect what you think the park needs to accomplish with this project? If not, what else do you think needs to be accomplished?

What management tools should the park consider for managing vegetation?

What other issues or opportunities should the park consider in this planning process?

What concerns do you have about the potential impacts of the proposed plan? How could these concerns be addressed?

Do the preliminary alternatives presented in this newsletter seem reasonable? Are there other alternatives you would suggest?

Please note: Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. Although you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

How to Provide Input

We need your input to identify any issues or concerns related to vegetation management in the park to consider them in the planning process. You can provide input in three ways:

- 1.** Submit comments electronically at the NPS planning website (**preferred method**):
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=42064>
- 2.** Fax comments to Kevin Eads at 479-451-0219
- 3.** Provide written comments to:
National Park Service
Attention: Vegetation Management Plan
Pea Ridge National Military Park
15930 Hwy 62
Garfield, AR 72732

Please submit all comments by January 14, 2013.

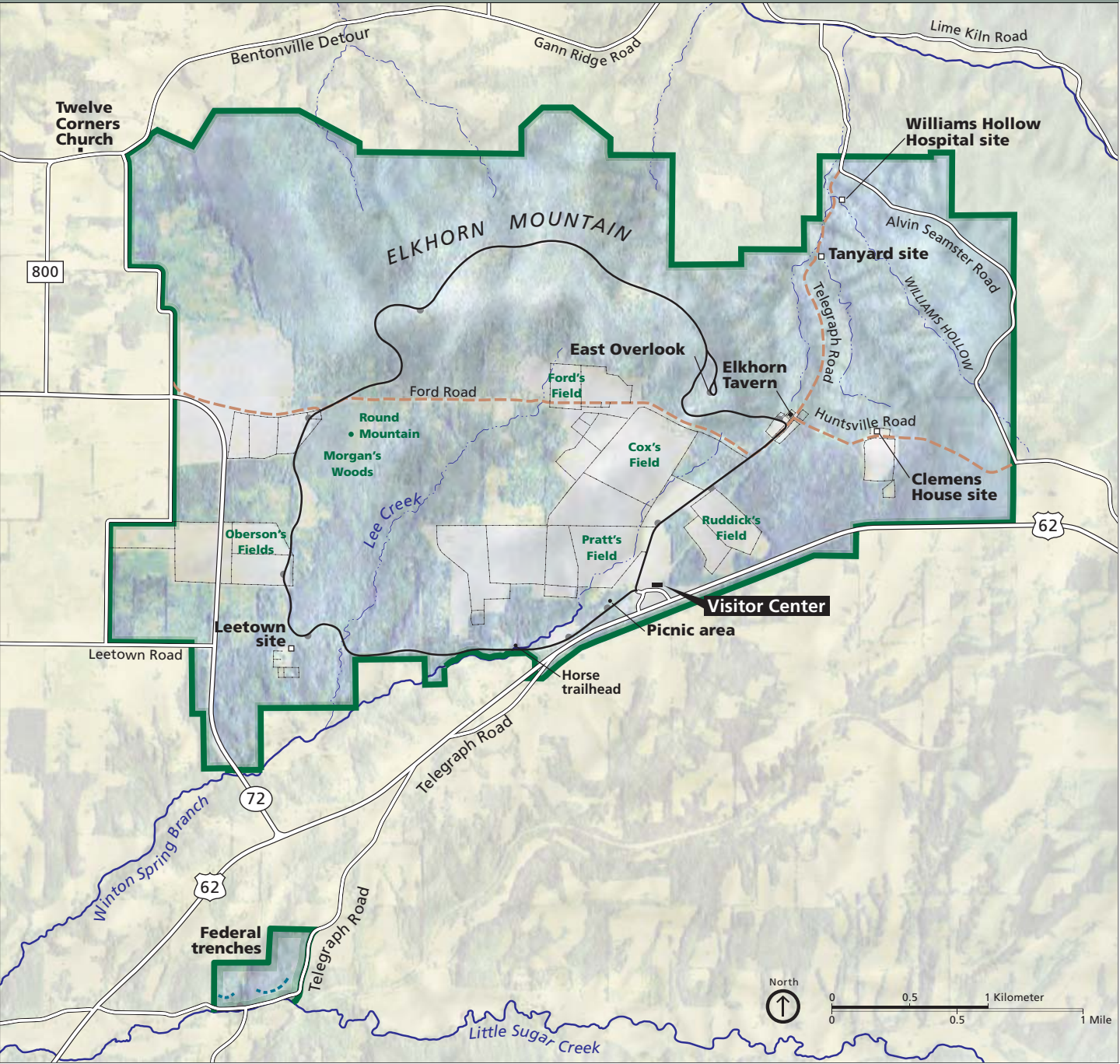
WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN?

► The purpose of the proposed plan is to modify and/or establish the vegetation patterns in the park to represent the look and feel of the 1862 battlefield landscape. The plan would promote active vegetation restoration and support protection and preservation of cultural resources. The proposed project is being considered because the park’s GMP, completed in 2006, set the goals for landscape management at the park.

WHY IS THE PROJECT NEEDED?

► Natural and man-made changes to the landscape of the Pea Ridge area and environs have occurred over the past 150 years since the time of the battle. A vegetation management plan is needed to provide the steps necessary to achieve the goals in the GMP, primarily to return the battlefield landscape to its 1862 appearance. The plan is needed to establish methods by which to create, and then maintain, those patterns to maximize benefits to natural and cultural resources.

PROJECT AREA



PLAN OBJECTIVES

- The objectives of the proposed project are to:
- Manage the vegetation to support the goal of returning the battlefield landscape to its 1862 appearance to as great a degree as feasible.
 - Convey the visual character of the battlefield to the visitor by orchestrating views and vistas, including the contrast of open fields to the surrounding woodlands, through vegetation management.
 - Achieve and maintain healthy fields and forests characteristic of the Arkansas Highlands Zone, as identified in the GMP.
 - Develop a plan that provides reasonable guidelines with site-specific methodologies that would allow the park to achieve and maintain the landscape, in concert with other park guiding documents.

POTENTIAL ISSUES

- In October 2012, park and other NPS staff conducted internal scoping meetings for the project. During those meetings, park staff identified potential issues that may result from this project. The park is requesting your input on these issues, as well as identification of other issues or concerns with this project. The main issues the park has identified for this project include the following.
- Vegetation management techniques, such as mechanical treatment or controlled burns, could have either adverse or beneficial impacts on historic structures and artifacts, archeological resources, and historic battle sites.
 - Invasive and exotic plant species can impact the native vegetation that makes up the landscape of the park.
 - Enhancement of native vegetation can provide habitat for wildlife and promote biological diversity.
 - Vegetation can obstruct viewsheds and vistas, which are the primary means by which the visitor is able to experience the battle sites.
 - Areas that were originally used for agricultural purposes are important culturally, but restoring these areas to their original uses may create challenges for park management.
 - Vegetation management techniques, such as mowing, clearing, and planting, could have either adverse or beneficial impacts on visitor areas such as the Tour Road, historic and “social” trails, the visitor center, and other park features.
 - Vegetation management techniques should contribute to visitor education and interpretation of the 1862 battle, while not adding cumbersome maintenance activities for park staff.

PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES

► During an October 2012 internal scoping meeting, a full range of preliminary reasonable alternatives (including a “no action” alternative) for vegetation management was developed. Three action alternatives were determined to meet the park’s purpose, need, and objectives for taking action and are summarized here.

Alternative A – No Action (Continue Existing Management)

Alternative B – Re-establish the Functional Agrarian Landscape This alternative presents a landscape of open fields contrasted by surrounding woods that would have existed in winter 1862 around the time of the battle. This alternative would reestablish historic spaces with the specific crops, orchards, pastures, and open woods that would have existed at the time of the battle.

Alternative C – Establish a Visual Agrarian Landscape This alternative presents an agrarian landscape that visually represents the open fields and surrounding woodlands that would have existed in 1862 around the time of battle. This alternative uses a range of vegetation types that are visually and structurally similar to that which existed historically, but are not necessarily the specific crop or species that existed historically.

Alternative D – Establish a Natural Agrarian Landscape This alternative presents an agrarian landscape that incorporates primarily native vegetation to visually represent the open fields and surrounding woods that would have existed at the time of the 1862 battle. This alternative uses a range of hardy and indigenous species to visually and structurally represent the historic scene.

Nine vegetation types describe the range of historic vegetation that would have existed at the time of the 1862 battle and that currently exists. Alternatives B, C, and D would provide a prescriptive treatment for each vegetation type:

- Fields
- Open woodlands
- Wood lot
- Ozark Highlands forest
- Battlefield forest
- Prairie
- Cedar glades
- Orchards
- Historic trees

Visitor and cultural zones would be identified and excluded from these treatment alternatives as they would be addressed under a separate project, the *Cultural Landscape Report* (currently under development).

PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PUBLIC SCOPING SUMMARY

Attachment D – Agency and Tribal Scoping Responses

- USFWS September 5, 2012 response to PERI letter
- United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma October 17, 2012 response to PERI letter
- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma December 3, 2012 response to PERI letter
- Osage Nation Historic Preservation Office December 14, 2012 response to PERI letter



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

110 South Amity Road, Suite 300
Conway, Arkansas 72032
Tel.: 501/513-4470 Fax: 501/513-4480

September 5, 2012

Mr. Kevin Eads
Chief of Resources Management
Pea Ridge National Military Park
P.O. Box 700
Pea Ridge, Arkansas 72251-0700

Dear Mr. Eads:

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed your letter and attached information for the Vegetation Management Plan for the Pea Ridge National Military Park, Benton County, Arkansas. Our comments are submitted in accordance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA; 16 U.S.C. 661-667e) and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

Listed species in Benton County, Arkansas evaluated in the documents included the endangered Indiana, gray, and Ozark Big-eared bats, and cave crayfish, the threatened Ozark crayfish, and piping plover, candidate Neosho mucket, rabbitsfoot and Arkansas darter, and the bald eagle. The Service concurs with your determination that the proposed management plan will have no effect on listed species.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

Margaret Harney
for
Jim Boggs
Field Supervisor

larue@yahoo.com>

10/17/2012 10:38 AM

To kevin_eads@nps.gov

cc lstapleton@unitedkeetoowahband.org

Subject Pea Ridge Battleground vegetation, AR

Please respond to ukbthpo-larue@yahoo.com

The United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma has reviewed your projects for Section 106 NHPA purposes, and cultural resources. At this time, we have no objection or comment. However, if any human remains or funerary items are inadvertently discovered, please cease all work and contact us immediately.

Lisa LaRue-Baker

Acting THPO

United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma

PO Box 746

Tahlequah, OK 74465

c 918.822.1952 f 918.458.6889

ukbthpo-larue@yahoo.com



Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

P.O. Box 1210 • Durant, OK 74702-1210 • (580) 924-8280

Gregory E. Pyle
Chief

Gary Batton
Assistant Chief

December 3, 2012

COPY

John C. Scott
National Park Service
Pea Ridge National Military Park
15930 US Hwy, 62 East
Garfield, AR 7232

RE: Pea Ridge Military Park, development of a Vegetation Management Plan and EA for the Park, Benton County, AR.

Dear Mr. Scott,

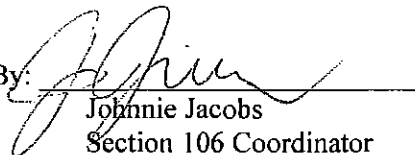
Thank you for your correspondence regarding the above referenced project. Benton County is outside of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma historic area of interest. We respectfully defer to the other Tribes that have been contacted.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ian Thompson
Director, Historic Preservation Department
THPO, Tribal Archaeologist, NAGPRA Specialist
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
PO Drawer 1210
Durant, OK 74701

By:


Johnnie Jacobs
Section 106 Coordinator



COPY

TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

Date: December 14, 2012

File: 1213-782AR-10

RE: NPS Pea Ridge National Military Park Vegetation Management Plan in Benton County, Arkansas

Pea Ridge National Military Park
John F. Scott
15930 Hwy 62 East
Garfield, AR 72732

Dear Mr. Scott,

The Osage Nation Historic Preservation Office has received notification and accompanying information for the proposed project listed as NPS Pea Ridge National Military Park Vegetation Management Plan in Benton County, Arkansas. **The Osage Nation requests a copy of the Environmental Impact Statement.**

In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, (NHPA) [16 U.S.C. 470 §§ 470-470w-6] 1966, undertakings subject to the review process are referred to in S101 (d)(6)(A), which clarifies that historic properties may have religious and cultural significance to Indian tribes. Additionally, Section 106 of NHPA requires Federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic properties (36 CFR Part 800) as does the National Environmental Policy Act (43 U.S.C. 4321 and 4331-35 and 40 CFR 1501.7(a) of 1969).

The Osage Nation has a vital interest in protecting its historic and ancestral cultural resources. **The Osage Nation anticipates reviewing and commenting on the planned Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed NPS Pea Ridge National Military Park Vegetation Management Plan in Benton County, Arkansas.**

Should you have any questions or need any additional information please feel free to contact me at the number listed below. Thank you for consulting with the Osage Nation on this matter.

Barker Fariss, Ph.D.
Archaeologist I

PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PUBLIC SCOPING SUMMARY

1
2
3
4
5

Attachment E – Content Analysis Report

Content Analysis Report (02/05/2013)

Document ID: 50969

Document Title: Pea Ridge NMP Vegetation Management Plan Environmental Assessment Newsletter
Issue 1 December 2012

Comment Distribution by Status

Status	Number of Comments
Coded	14
In Process	1
Total	15

Correspondence Distribution by State

State	Percentage	Number of Correspondence
AR	66.7 %	2
MO	33.3 %	1
Total	—	3

Correspondence Distribution by Country

Country	Percentage	Number of Correspondence
USA	100.0 %	3
Total	—	3

Correspondence Signature Count by Organization Type

Organization Type	Correspondences	Signatures
Unaffiliated Individual	3	3
Total	3	3

Correspondence Distribution by Code

(Note: Each correspondence may have multiple codes. As a result, the total number of Correspondence may be different than the actual comment totals)

Code	Description	Correspondences	Signatures
PN1000	Comment on purpose, need, and objectives	1	1
TQ2-50969	Do the purpose, need, and objectives reflect what	1	1
TQ1-50969	Do the purpose, need and objectives reflect what y	1	1
PM1000	Park Management Issues	1	1
PA1000	Comment on preliminary alternatives	1	1
MA1000	Comment on management tools	1	1
PA1200	Comment on Alternative D	1	1
PA1100	Comment on Alternative B	1	1
PM1100	Park Management on Wildlife	1	1

Correspondence Distribution by Correspondence Type

Type	Number of
------	-----------

Corrspondences	
Web Form	2—
Letter	1—
Total	3—



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has the responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; 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 ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Pea Ridge National Military Park
Arkansas



Pea Ridge National Military Park
15930 E Highway 62
Garfield, AR 72732