



Preliminary Alternative D

Addition Lands General Management Plan
Big Cypress National Preserve

United States Department of the Interior • National Park Service
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The second area would include the area north of I-75 extending from the Addition boundary on the west to an elevated road on the east. Portions of this area would be open to ORVs that would be provided access from the Nobles Grade recreational access points. A system of sustainable, ORV-designated trails would be developed in this area.

The area south of U.S. Highway 41 would be open to both motorized and non-motorized boats. Paddling trails would be marked and maintained. Motorized boating would be allowed subject to restrictions (e.g., speed limits, horsepower limits) to protect the estuarine mangrove forests and endangered West Indian manatee critical habitat. The preserve would implement and enforce strict protective measures in this area consistent with the NPS policy of manatee conservation. The preserve would provide camping opportunities for boaters by erecting one or two chickees (platform campsites), similar to those found in Everglades National Park.

Under this alternative the preserve would seek to have commercial boat tours provided in this area, which would emphasize an educational experience associated with mangrove habitat and protection of its inherent flora and fauna, such as manatees. The commercial tour operation would be evaluated to determine if it was economically feasible prior to seeking proposals for operation. In accordance with the Addition Act, the opportunity to provide commercial services would be offered first to the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida and the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

Primitive Backcountry Zone

This management zone would comprise most of the Addition Lands and would allow visitors to explore these areas where natural processes predominate. The zoning would also limit development of facilities. The Florida National Scenic Trail would pass through this zone. The trail would be marked and maintained as necessary for resource protection and safety.

ALTERNATIVE D

CONCEPT

The emphasis of this alternative is on providing a variety of backcountry recreational opportunities within the Addition and enhanced day-use and interpretive opportunities along the I-75 and State Highway 29 corridors. There would be a mix of ORV, bicycle, boating, hunting, fishing, camping, and hiking access, with uses separated to minimize conflicts. Facilities would be constructed along the two major road corridors to facilitate backcountry access and to provide for education, orientation, and other structured activi-

ties requiring developed facilities. Personal services, such as roving interpretive rangers; ranger-led hiking, canoeing, bicycling, and backpacking trips; and multiday seminars on backcountry use would be provided. A range of commercial services would be encouraged. Natural resources and processes would be protected, but restoration would receive less emphasis in this alternative to provide increased visitor use and enjoyment. Operational facilities would be provided to support more extensive maintenance, enforcement, and resource management activities needed to effectively manage increased visitor use and protect resources.

ZONE ALLOCATIONS AND RELATED ACTIONS

Developed Zone

The developed zone would include two recreational access points along I-75 that would serve primarily as backcountry staging areas. Information and interpretation would provide orientation to the preserve and its resources for backcountry users as well as I-75 travelers. Restrooms would also be provided.

An access point would be co-located with the Florida Department of Transportation rest area at mile marker 63. This access point would have facilities on both the north and south sides of the highway, including preserve operational facilities. The south side facility would include a parking area and a trailhead for walk-in access. In addition to backcountry access, an educational trail/boardwalk would enable visitors to experience various habitats to the south. The National Park Service would seek a partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation to use the I-75 rest area building for interpretive exhibits. The north side facility would include a parking area that would allow ORV, bicycling, and hiking access to Nobles Grade.

The second location for a recreational access point along I-75 would be near mile marker 67. A parking area would be constructed on the north side of the highway near an existing road known locally as Bundschu Grade that would provide hiking and bicycling access. Restrooms would be constructed.

At the intersection of I-75 and State Highway 29 a multiagency visitor center would be developed. The National Park Service would seek partnerships with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Park Service, and other agencies to help manage this facility. This facility would provide information and orientation to the resources of the region and also the recreational opportunities available. This facility would also include areas needed for preserve administration and operations, including office space and equipment storage.

At Deep Lake, the former homesite would be developed into a day-use area. Facilities would include parking, a resource education center, and a