



Preliminary Alternative F

Addition Lands General Management Plan

Big Cypress National Preserve

United States Department of the Interior • National Park Service
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ALTERNATIVE F

CONCEPT

The emphasis of this alternative would be on the preservation of native species and natural processes and the restoration of previously disturbed areas. Visitors would experience a natural landscape that reflects the wilderness character of the land and provides opportunities for solitude, challenge, and self-reliance. Resource preservation and restoration would be the overriding consideration in the Addition. Lands that have been altered would be restored to their natural conditions to the extent possible. Evidence of past uses, including roads, ORV trails, cattle grazing, and backcountry camps that are not excluded from acquisition by legislation, would be removed. Research would be emphasized, with new information used to manage and restore resources. Research would also provide opportunities for interpretive and educational experiences for visitors. Preserve staff would work closely with researchers to cooperatively interpret research efforts and educate visitors about the preserve’s resources.

There would be minimal new development in the Addition Lands. Small-scale parking areas would be along I-75 and State Highway 29, which would serve as walk-in access points for trips into the backcountry. Minimal information and interpretation would be offered within the Addition, and visitors would primarily rely on facilities elsewhere in the original preserve for these services. Hunting would be allowed by walk-in access only in designated areas and seasons determined by the National Park Service.

ZONE ALLOCATIONS AND RELATED ACTIONS

Developed Zone

The developed zone would include two recreational access points along I-75. Limited information and interpretation such as sign boards or waysides would be available at these parking areas/trailheads. One recreational access would be co-located with the Florida Department of Transportation rest area at mile marker 63. This access point would have parking and walk-in access on both the north and south sides of the highway. In addition to backcountry access, a short trail would enable visitors to experience a hardwood hammock area to the south. Interpretation would be available along the trail.

The second access point would be point would be near mile marker 67 on the north side of I-75 at Bundschu Grade. This site would provide walk-in access.

Near Copeland an acquired property would be included in the developed zone. This property has already been converted to a fire operations center.

This facility would be retained and expanded as necessary to accommodate other preserve operational needs.

Frontcountry Zone

Two areas along the State Highway 29 corridor would also be included in the frontcountry zone. Facilities and associated activities in these areas would be compatible with management of the adjacent lands within the original preserve.

The northernmost area would be at Bear Island Grade, approximately 5 miles north of I-75. At this location a small parking area would be developed to provide access to the preserve for bicyclists and hikers.

The frontcountry zone would also include the former homesite south of Deep Lake. A small parking area would be developed to provide access.

Primitive Backcountry Zone

This management zone would comprise much of the Addition Lands, including the lands in the northeast portion of the Addition. Access would be provided along the I-75 corridor.

The Florida National Scenic Trail would be included in this zone. It would be a primitive trail that would be minimally maintained as necessary for resource protection and safety. The Nobles and Bundschu Grade corridors would be restored to native vegetation and natural hydrology except for minimally maintained trails that would serve as the primary access corridors from which visitors could disperse into the backcountry. Other trails or marked routes would be limited.

The 1-mile strip along State Highway 29 would also be included in this zone. This would include the tidal areas in the southwest corner of the Addition, including the area south of U.S. Highway 41 and the tidally influenced portions of the canals along State Highway 29 and U.S. Highway 41. This area is dominated by estuarine mangrove forests and is habitat for the endangered West Indian manatee. This area would provide protection for the manatee by allowing nonmotorized access.

The southeast corner of the intersection of State Highway 29 and U.S. Highway 41 would also be included in this zone. This area is already developed and encumbered with leases to the Collier County Sheriff’s Office and Everglades City Chamber of Commerce. Upon expiration of the existing leases, this area would be restored.