



General Management Plan *NEWSLETTER UPDATE*

General Management Plan Preliminary Alternatives

News from the Superintendent

This important document is our second General Management Plan (GMP) newsletter. If you attended one of our public meetings or contacted us with suggestions, I appreciate your concern and your help. Your comments assist us in devising guidance for the Preserve and in the development of this GMP. In this second newsletter you will see that we have reviewed your suggestions, along with National Park Service (NPS) laws, policies and guidelines, and have developed draft alternatives. Now we need your help in reviewing and commenting on these preliminary alternatives. They cover a range of uses and resource protection schemes.

We value your input regarding the future management of the Preserve. This plan will guide us with issues such as the appropriate level of visitor use, conservation, and preservation of the resources of the Preserve. However, the only way we can be sure that we are going in the right direction is with your significant input and assistance. Please provide us with your comments on the enclosed form. We also invite you to attend any of the upcoming public meetings to learn more about the plan and the planning process.

John Bundy

The Plan's Purpose

The purpose of the General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/EIS) is to present a plan for managing the Preserve for the next 15 to 20 years. General management plans represent the broadest level of planning

conducted by the NPS and provide guidance for making informed decisions about the future of park resource conditions and visitor experiences.

The GMP (1) clearly defines the desired natural and cultural resource conditions to be achieved and maintained over time; (2) clearly defines the necessary conditions for visitors to understand, enjoy, and appreciate the park's significant resources; (3) identifies the kinds and levels of management activities, visitor use, and development that are appropriate for maintaining the desired conditions; and (4) identifies indicators and standards for maintaining the desired conditions.

In August and September of 2005, the NPS conducted public meetings to identify issues and to solicit public input on the park's future. Based on these meetings the planning team developed a preliminary set of management alternatives. This newsletter presents a summary of the principal features of each alternative as well as maps showing each respective management zone configuration. The alternatives are not final. They are being presented to you so that the NPS can benefit from your review and comment.

Please tell us what you think. Attend the public meetings or use the enclosed response card to provide us with your comments.

No postage is necessary. Simply fold and staple or tape closed the completed card and drop it in a mail box. We would appreciate receiving your comments by January 8, 2007.

Public Meeting Schedule

We would like to invite you to attend any of the public open house meetings so the NPS can obtain your comments and suggestions and answer any questions you might have. There will be no formal presentation so you are welcome to come any time during the open house hours.

Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce

110 Northwood Drive
Centre, Alabama
256-927-8455

December 5, 2006, 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Dekalb County Tourist Association

1503 Glenn Blvd., SW
Fort Payne, Alabama
256-845-3957

December 6, 2006, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

December 7, 2006, 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Planning Perspective

The key issues identified during the scoping process were: 1) How do we manage for natural resource diversity while accommodating increasing visitor use?; 2) How do we accommodate for different and potentially conflicting user interests?; and 3) What level and dispersion of

visitor services and amenities are appropriate?

The issues helped the team to develop proposed management zones. Each zone specifies a particular combination of future resource conditions, visitor experiences, and management approaches. Zones also determine the types and levels of visitor activities and facility development that may be appropriate. The planning team developed five zones (described below) that could be appropriate for the future management of the Preserve: *Park Support Zone*, *Visitor Services Zone*, *Sensitive Resource Zone*, *Recreation Zone*, and *Semi-Primitive Recreation Zone*.

Management Zones

The *Park Support Zone* represents areas that would focus on maintenance of buildings and grounds and staging for maintenance and natural and cultural resource protection activities in other zones. Visitors typically would not enter this zone except to conduct research or for official business.

The *Visitor Services Zone* represents areas where visitor experiences would

include such things as collecting information, orientation to the park, interpretation, education, and motor touring. Typical facilities and development in this zone would accommodate for these services and provide basic comforts to visitors. Facilities could include contact stations, parking areas, roads, trails, and exhibit areas.

The *Sensitive Resource Zone* represents areas that would focus on research, monitoring, prescribed fire operations, and interpretation. Visitors would have opportunities for access and education provided through guided tours.

The *Recreation Zone* represents areas that would focus on protecting natural and cultural resources while providing the widest variety of recreational opportunities. The types of visitor experiences would include such activities as hiking, hunting, ORV use, motor touring, climbing, swimming, kayaking, camping, and fishing.

The *Semi-Primitive Recreation Zone* represents areas that would focus on protecting natural and cultural resources while providing a variety of low impact recreational opportunities. In this zone, the types of visitor

experiences would include opportunities for hiking, hunting, climbing, swimming, kayaking, camping, and fishing, but would not allow such uses as ORVs and motor touring.

The table on page 7 shows examples of visitor activities and development that could be appropriate for each zone.

Developing Preliminary Alternatives

The NPS planning process requires a range of alternative future conditions and management. The preliminary alternatives for the Preserve were developed by arranging the management zones in different configurations in the park. The NPS has developed three alternatives, in addition to Alternative A described on page 3, for your consideration to guide the park for the next 15 to 20 years.

Similarities Among Alternatives

Existing regulations for the Preserve help frame every alternative. Special mandates set forth in the Preserve's enabling legislation permit hunting, trapping, and fishing within the Preserve and allow for designated zones and periods when those activities will not be permitted for reasons related to public safety, administration, fish and wildlife habitat, or public use and enjoyment.

Alternatives B, C, and D all provide broader opportunities to preserve, maintain, and protect areas with sensitive resources from human impacts. The Sensitive Resource Zone is configured the same for Alternatives B, C, and D. They also allow for trails to be designated for specific user groups.

DeSoto State Park would continue to operate as it currently does, and this situation is reflected the same in the zoning of Alternatives B, C, and D.



Little River Falls

Alternative A

Alternative A is the no action alternative, in which current management practices and trends would continue into the future. This alternative is used as a way to evaluate the effects of the other three alternatives and is also useful in understanding why the NPS or the public may believe that changes are necessary.

- Alternative A would involve the continuation of the existing levels and types of visitor experiences, including visitor service areas.
- Trails could be modified for optimal distances and configurations.
- Current natural and cultural resource management practices, enforcement, compliance, permits; administrative and staffing practices and levels would continue.



Visitors at Little River Falls Overlook

Alternative B

The general theme of Alternative B is to emphasize the preservation of the natural environment and cultural resources with minimal opportunities for the development of facilities; while accommodating for a diversity of user groups and opportunities for solitude. A zoning map of Alternative B is on page 4.



Canyon View

- Alternative B provides the most area and opportunities for visitors seeking primitive trails, low-impact recreational activities, and solitude.
- It has the greatest potential to reduce contact between motorized and non-motorized recreational user groups.
 - Six small areas zoned for visitor services and amenities are dispersed across the Preserve at key access points, including Canyon Mouth and Little River Falls.
- This alternative also has the highest potential of all the alternatives for resource protection.

Alternative C

The general theme of Alternative C is to provide visitor services with moderate opportunities for the development of facilities to enhance visitor experiences. A zoning map of Alternative C is on page 5.

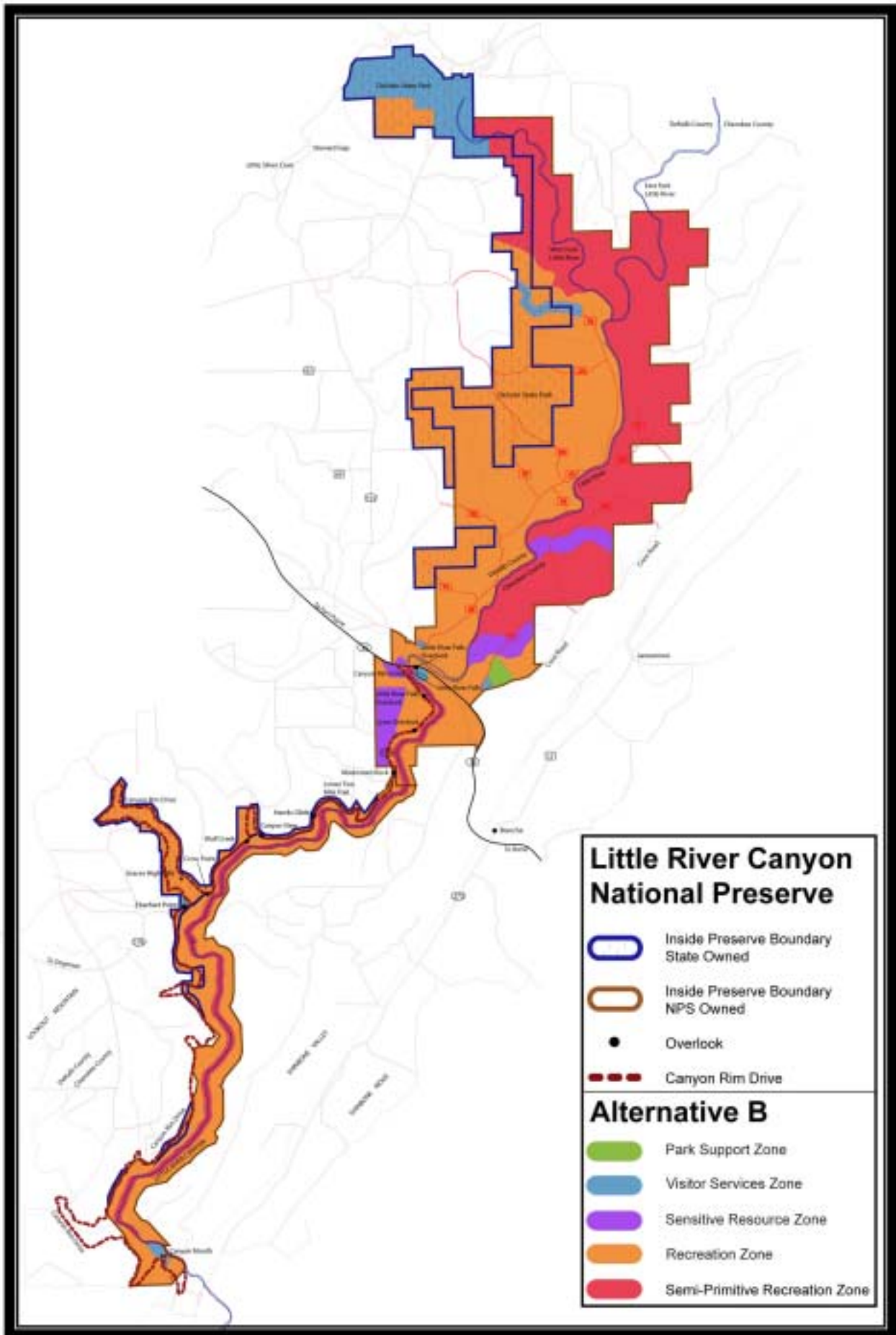
- Alternative C provides less opportunities than Alternatives B and D for visitors seeking primitive trails, low-impact recreational activities, and solitude.

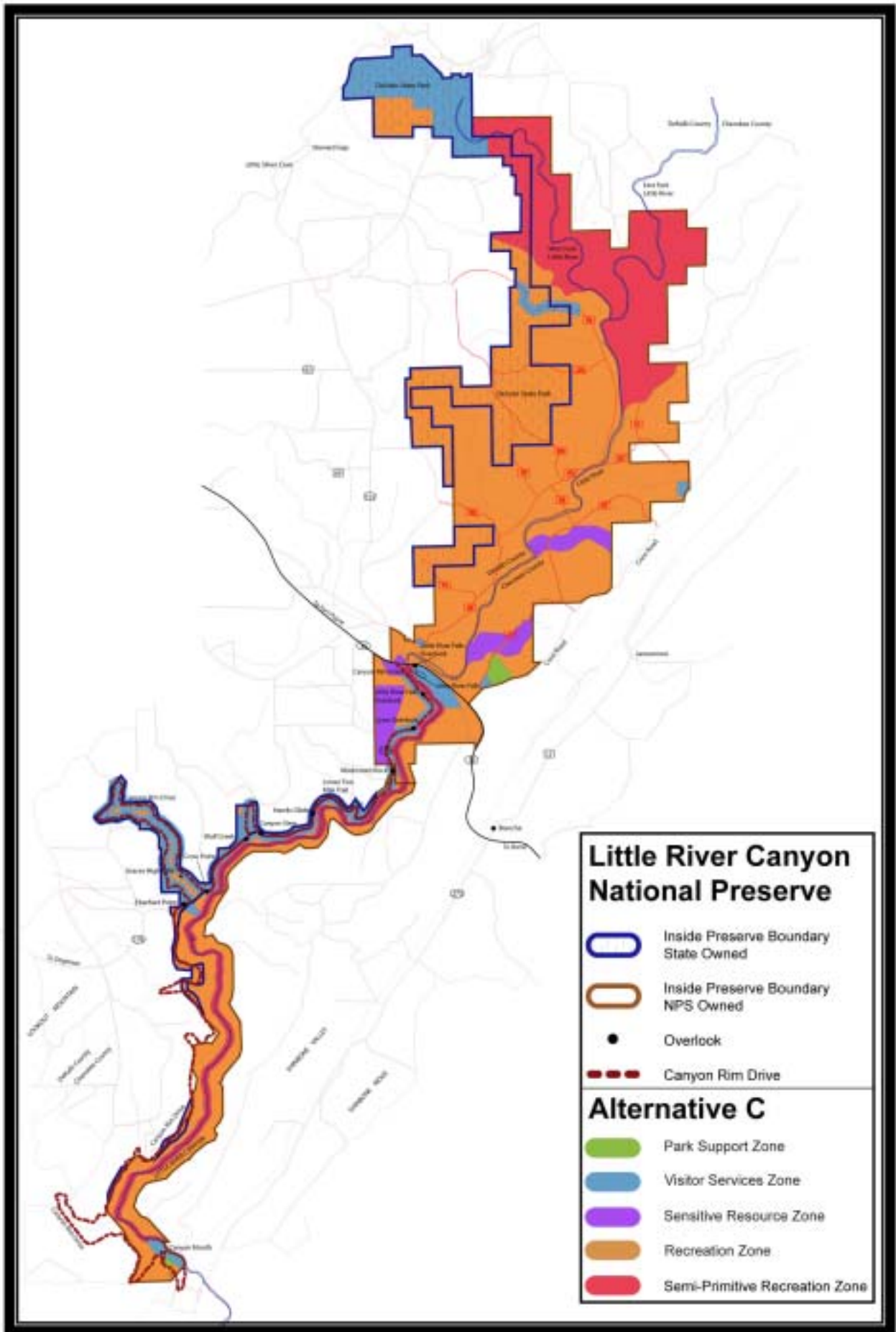
- It has the greatest potential for contact between motorized and non-motorized recreational user groups.
- Eight small areas zoned for visitor services and amenities are dispersed across the Preserve at key access points, including a slightly larger area at Canyon Mouth than in B, a slightly larger area at Little River Falls than in B, and 12 miles of Canyon Rim Road.

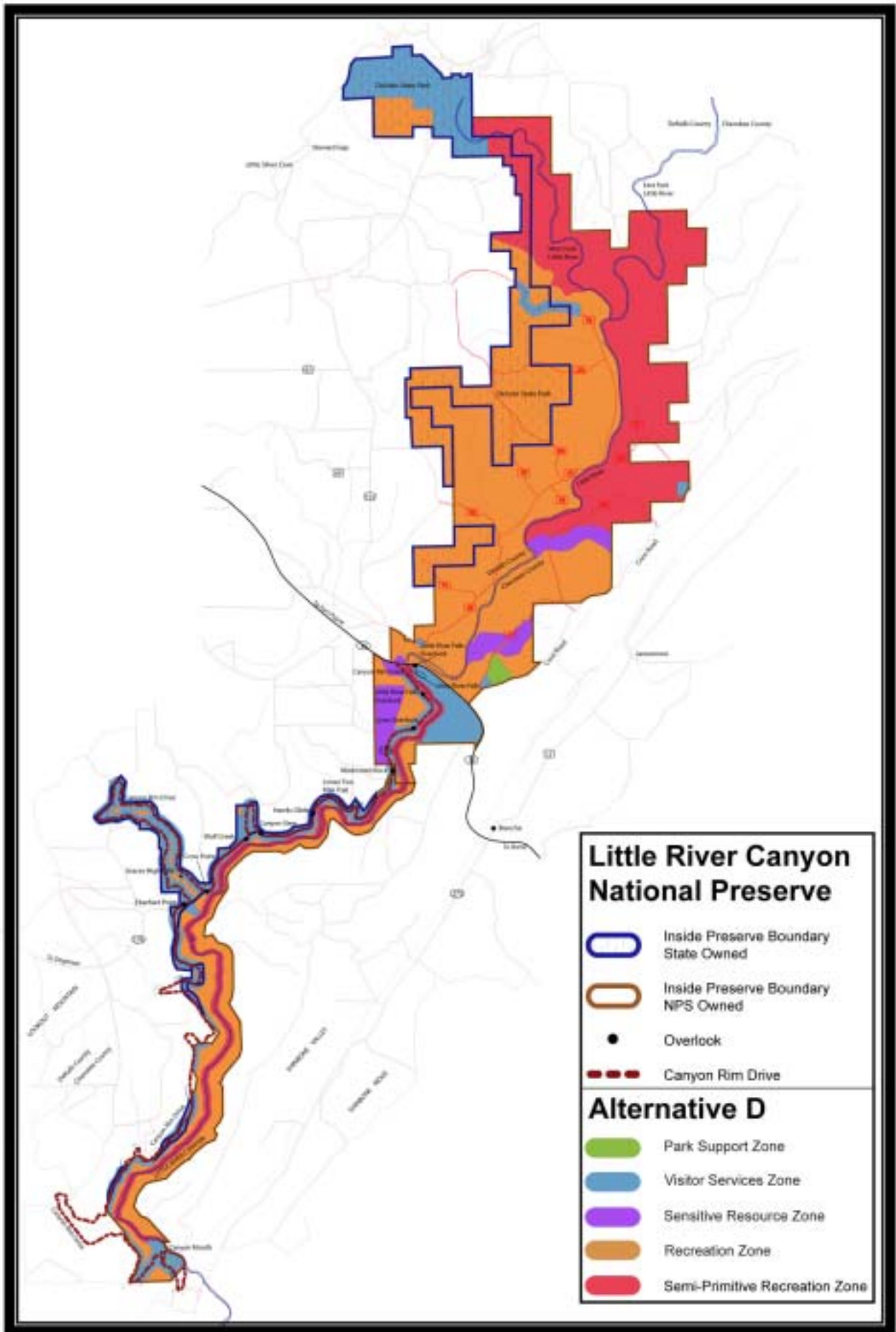
Alternative D

Alternative D provides the widest variety of visitor services and recreational opportunities. A zoning map of Alternative D is on page 6.

- Alternative D provides a moderate level of opportunities for visitors seeking primitive trails, low-impact recreational activities, and solitude.
- It has a moderate level of potential for contact between motorized and non-motorized recreational user groups.
- Eight small areas zoned for visitor services and amenities are dispersed across the Preserve at key access points, including an area at Canyon Mouth the same size as in Alternative C, a larger area at Little River Falls than in B and C, and 23 miles of Canyon Rim Road.







Summary of Management Zones

	Park Support Zone	Visitor Services Zone	Sensitive Resource Zone	Recreation Zone	Semi-Primitive Recreation Zone
VISITOR ACTIVITIES					
ORV		•		•	
Backpacking (overnight)				•	•
Barbecuing		•		•	•
Camping		•		•	•
Cycling		•		•	•
Fishing				•	•
Guided tours		•	•	•	•
Hiking – day		•	• (limited)	•	•
Horseback riding		• (limited)		•	•
Hunting				•	•
Kayaking/Canoeing			•	•	•
Motor touring		•		•	
Motorized boating					
Mountain biking		•		•	•
Park orientation		•		•	•
Picnicking		•		•	•
Repelling		•		•	•
Rock climbing		•		•	•
Scenic viewing		•	• (limited)	•	•
Scientific research (by permit)	•	•	•	•	•
Scuba diving				•	•
Sunbathing		•		•	•
Swimming		• (DSP pool)		•	•
Trapping				•	•
FACILITIES AND DEVELOPMENT					
BBQ facilities	•	•		•	
Comfort station (restrooms)	•	•		•	
Dedicated hiking trails			•	•	•
Dedicated horse-use trails				•	•
Dedicated mountain bike trails				•	•
Developed campgrounds		•			
Game check-in station		•		•	
Group program areas		•		•	
Headquarters	•	•			
Kiosk		•		•	•
Maintenance buildings	•	•			
Overlooks		•		•	
Paved roads	•	•		•	
Primitive campsites				•	•
Primitive horse campsites				•	•
Ranger station/offices	•	•			
Unpaved roads		•	•	•	
Vault/pit toilets		•		•	
Visitor center		•			
Visitor contact station		•			
Wildlife openings				•	•



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Little River Canyon NP GMP
Amy Wirsching
Planning Division, SER
100 Alabama Street, 1924 Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

Contacts

The National Park Service appreciates your input into this planning process and would like your feedback. You may provide your comments at the public meetings, through the internet (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>. Under "Choose a Park" click on "Little River Canyon NPres" and follow the link to the GMP), or by mail using the following contact information:

National Park Service
Little River Canyon GMP
SERO - Amy Wirsching
100 Alabama ST SW
1924 Building
Atlanta GA 30303-9725



Little River Canyon Parkway

Little River Canyon National Preserve National Park Service

COMMENT FORM

Please provide us with feedback on the preliminary alternatives for Little River Canyon National Preserve. If you need more space, feel free to attach additional pages to this form. If you prefer, you may comment online at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>. Under "Choose a Park" click on "Little River Canyon NPRES" and follow the link to the GMP. We would appreciate receiving your comments by January 8, 2007.

1. Which alternative do you like most? Least? Please explain.

2. Which elements or features of the alternatives do you like best?

3. Which elements or features of the alternatives do you dislike?

4. Additional suggestions?

Do you want to be on the mailing list for the Little River Canyon General Management Plan? If you are not on our mailing list or have a correction to make, please check the appropriate box below and fill out the mailing information.

- Please remove my name from the mailing list.
- The name or address you have is incorrect. Please change to the address below:
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