



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Pea Ridge National Military
Park
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Pea Ridge National Military Park News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Pea Ridge National Military Park Trail Master Plan Environmental Assessment

Garfield, AR – The National Park Service (NPS) proposes to implement a Trail Master Plan (Trail Plan) for Pea Ridge National Military Park in Garfield, Arkansas. The NPS seeks to improve visitor access to the park's historical and interpretive sites while avoiding or minimizing impacts to these sites by consolidating and restructuring the existing trail network. The overall purpose of the Trail Plan is to: 1) improve multi-modal connections within the park; 2) make external connections for the regional trail network; 3) develop procedures and priorities for the proposed changes to the current trail network; 4) improve accessibility within the park; 5) reduce the need for trail maintenance; and 6) enhance interpretation opportunities throughout the park. The NPS has released an environmental assessment (EA) that describes two action alternatives and the no-action alternative, as well as the environmental consequences of implementing each alternative.

Under the no-action alternative, the NPS would maintain the current conditions at the park. Alternative 2 would be an enhanced trail network focused on interpretation. Under alternative 2, the NPS would implement a series of improvements to the existing trail network that would provide for expanded and enhanced opportunities for interpretation of the park's resources. Alternative 3 (NPS Preferred and Proposed Action) would be an enhanced trail network focused on interpretation with expanded opportunities for recreation. Alternative 3 would have many of the same elements as alternative 2 and include additional hiking trails and adding a paved shoulder to the tour road in sections with narrow curves and steeper uphill and downhill grades to enhance bicycle safety.

The EA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA); regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) (40 CFR 1500-1508); NPS *Director's Order #12: Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-Making* (NPS 2001); and the NPS NEPA Handbook (NPS 2015). The NPS is also separately and concurrently preparing an assessment of effect to comply with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as amended (54 USC 306108), and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800).

The Superintendent of Pea Ridge National Military Park has announced a 30-day public review period, from November 22 to December 22, 2017, to invite public comments on the EA. In addition, a public meeting will be held in an Open House format. Project team members will be in attendance to discuss the project and answer questions. A series of graphic displays on the proposed project will also be provided. The meeting will be held on **Wednesday, December 13, 2017** from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at the park visitor center located at 15930 US Hwy 62 East, Garfield, Arkansas 72732.

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Anyone may submit comments electronically at the Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website for the National Park Service: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/peri> (the NPS preferred method for receiving comments). Written comments may be mailed to the following address, postmarked by **December 22, 2017** to receive consideration. **Only written comments will be accepted.**

Attn: Superintendent
Pea Ridge National Military Park
15930 US Hwy 62 East
Garfield, AR 72732

Before including a personal address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in written comments, anyone providing written comment should be aware their entire comment – including their personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While anyone wishing to comment may ask the National Park Service in their comment to withhold their personal identifying information from public review, the National Park Service cannot guarantee it will be able to do so.

Inclement weather may require the NPS to cancel the public meeting. In this circumstance, every effort will be made to reschedule cancelled meetings and notify the public of changes to the project schedule.

-National Park Service-