

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Oklahoma



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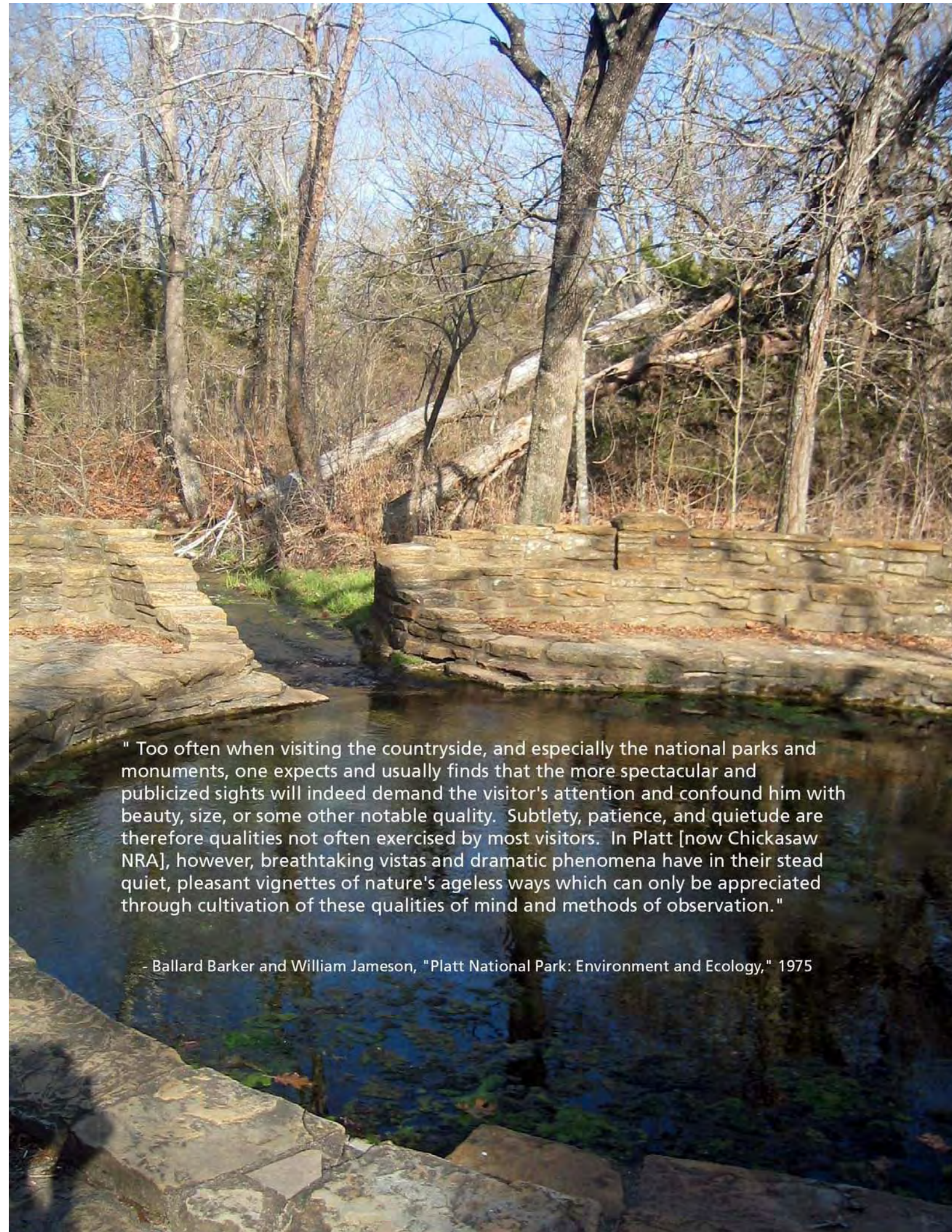


Chickasaw National Recreation Area
1008 West Second Street
Sulphur, OK 73086

Chickasaw National Recreation Area

General Management Plan

February 2008



" Too often when visiting the countryside, and especially the national parks and monuments, one expects and usually finds that the more spectacular and publicized sights will indeed demand the visitor's attention and confound him with beauty, size, or some other notable quality. Subtlety, patience, and quietude are therefore qualities not often exercised by most visitors. In Platt [now Chickasaw NRA], however, breathtaking vistas and dramatic phenomena have in their stead quiet, pleasant vignettes of nature's ageless ways which can only be appreciated through cultivation of these qualities of mind and methods of observation."

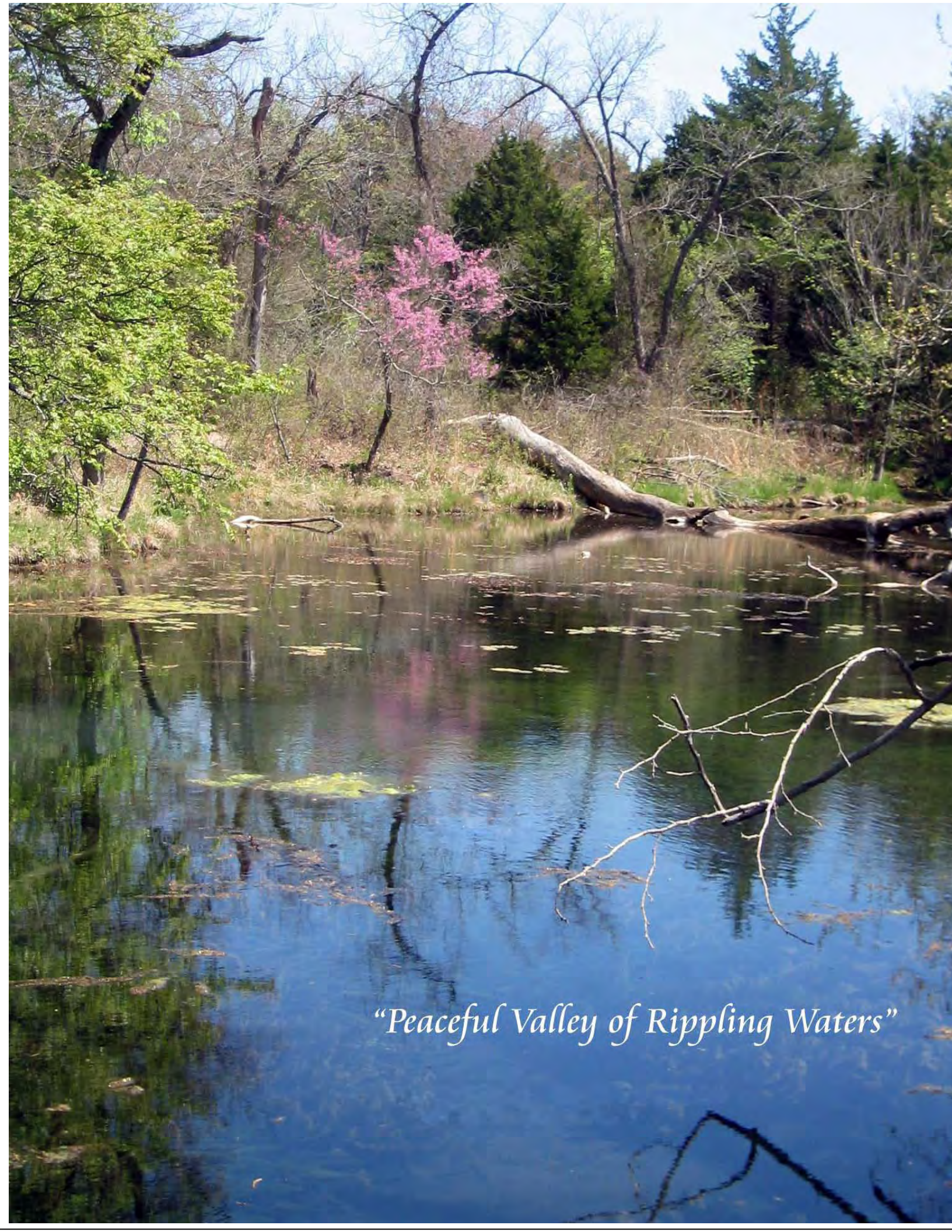
- Ballard Barker and William Jameson, "Platt National Park: Environment and Ecology," 1975

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Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Oklahoma



General Management Plan



“Peaceful Valley of Rippling Waters”

Summary

The purpose of this *General Management Plan* is to present the general path the National Park Service intends to follow in managing in Chickasaw National Recreation Area over the next 15 to 20 years.

The plan provides a framework for NPS managers to use when making decisions about how best to protect national recreation area resources, how to provide a diverse range of visitor experience opportunities, how to manage visitor use, and what kinds of facilities to develop in Chickasaw National Recreation Area.

The primary focus of the plan is to improve selected natural and cultural resources while enhancing visitor facilities and interpretive opportunities. The NPS will continue to maintain and protect natural and cultural resources in Chickasaw National Recreation Area and will not permit new developments that are inappropriate for a park unit. Any new facilities, where possible, will be constructed in previously disturbed areas. Disturbance to sensitive areas, such as threatened and endangered species habitat and archeological sites will also be avoided or mitigated whenever possible.

Specific actions under the plan include the following:

- Chickasaw National Recreation Area will actively encourage a partnership to identify approaches to manage the aquifer. This includes increased monitoring, additional studies, and protection of recharge areas.
- Chickasaw National Recreation Area will emphasize preservation and protection of cultural resources (historic structures, cultural landscapes, archeological resources, ethnographic resources, and museum collections). The *Cultural Landscape Report* will provide general guidance for the treatment of historic properties within the Platt Historic District.
- The bison pasture will be restored to prairie and the bison herd maintained at an appropriate size. A study will be completed to determine the possibility of introducing bison from the Platt District to the Upper Guy Sandy.
- The museum collections and archives currently housed at Chickasaw National Recreation Area in one of the maintenance area buildings will be moved to an appropriate site.
- The Travertine Nature Center will continue to focus on resource education, provide programs to school groups and the public, and add formal programs that more fully interpret primary interpretive themes.
- Up to two additional day use picnic shelters and the addition of shower facilities will be added to the Platt District.
- The National Park Service will manage the Vendome Well to reduce the discharge of groundwater during times when it is not being used or enjoyed by the public.
- Improvements to the Cold Springs campground include adding vegetation to buffer campsites, making road repairs, improving drainage, and upgrading the restroom facilities.
- The trail link between Flower Park and Central Campground will be reinstated.
- The Central campground and restroom facilities will be upgraded.
- New restrooms will be constructed and fishing dock facilities will be replaced at Veterans Lake. A trail link to the Rock Creek campground will be built and the universally accessible trail around the lake will be completed.

Summary

- The possibility of adding recreational opportunities such as a horse camp, staging area, or group campsite at Veterans Lake will be considered.
- Maintenance operations will be relocated outside Chickasaw National Recreation Area or within Chickasaw National Recreation Area, but outside of the historic district. The historic structures in the existing maintenance area will be adaptively rehabilitated and reused. Some of the nonhistoric structures will be removed or replaced.
- The trail system in the Rock Creek Corridor will be maintained and upgraded. There will be additional work to address erosion problems.
- At the Lake of the Arbuckles Area, commercial operations such as boat tours, ecotours, boat rentals, bus tours, and lakeside cabin rentals may be provided if there is sufficient interest and demand. Picnic shelters and new restrooms will be added and areas along the lake that have been adversely affected by erosion will be restored.
- The Point and Buckhorn campgrounds will be maintained and operated with the current number of campsites. However, some of the sites that do not currently have utilities will be upgraded. There will be improvements to vegetative screening between campsites and trails in these areas. Parking within the campgrounds will be redesigned to better limit impacts. New restrooms at picnic areas near the lake will be constructed. A new restroom with showers will be constructed and the entrance road to the campground will be upgraded at the Point campground. The Buckhorn campground amphitheater and electrical service will also be upgraded.
- The Guy Sandy campground will be improved. Dock area restrooms will also be improved. A picnic shelter with additional picnic sites will be provided for day users.
- There will be no changes in management of the Goddard Youth Camp. It will continue to be managed under a special use permit that recognizes compliance with NPS standards.
- The Upper Guy Sandy area will continue to be restored to natural conditions.



Contents

Summary	iii
Contents	v

Foundation for the Plan 1

Purpose of and Need for the Plan	1
Introduction	1
Purpose of the Plan	2
Need for the Plan	4
Brief Description of Chickasaw National Recreation Area	4
Relationship with the Oklahoma City National Memorial	5
Implementation of the Plan	5
Purpose and Significance of Chickasaw National Recreation Area	6
Primary Interpretive Themes	6
Servicewide Laws and Policies	7
Wilderness Suitability	8
Special Mandates and Administrative Commitments	25
Relationship of Other Planning Efforts to this General Management Plan	25
Planning Issues/Concerns	28
Issues	29
Issues Not Addressed in this General Management Plan	30
Decision Points	31

The Plan 33

Introduction	31
User Capacity	33
Potential for Boundary Adjustments	34
Implementation of the Plan	34
Management Prescriptions	35
Concept of the Plan	39
Detailed Description	39

Appendixes, Selected Bibliography, Preparers and Consultants, and Index 43

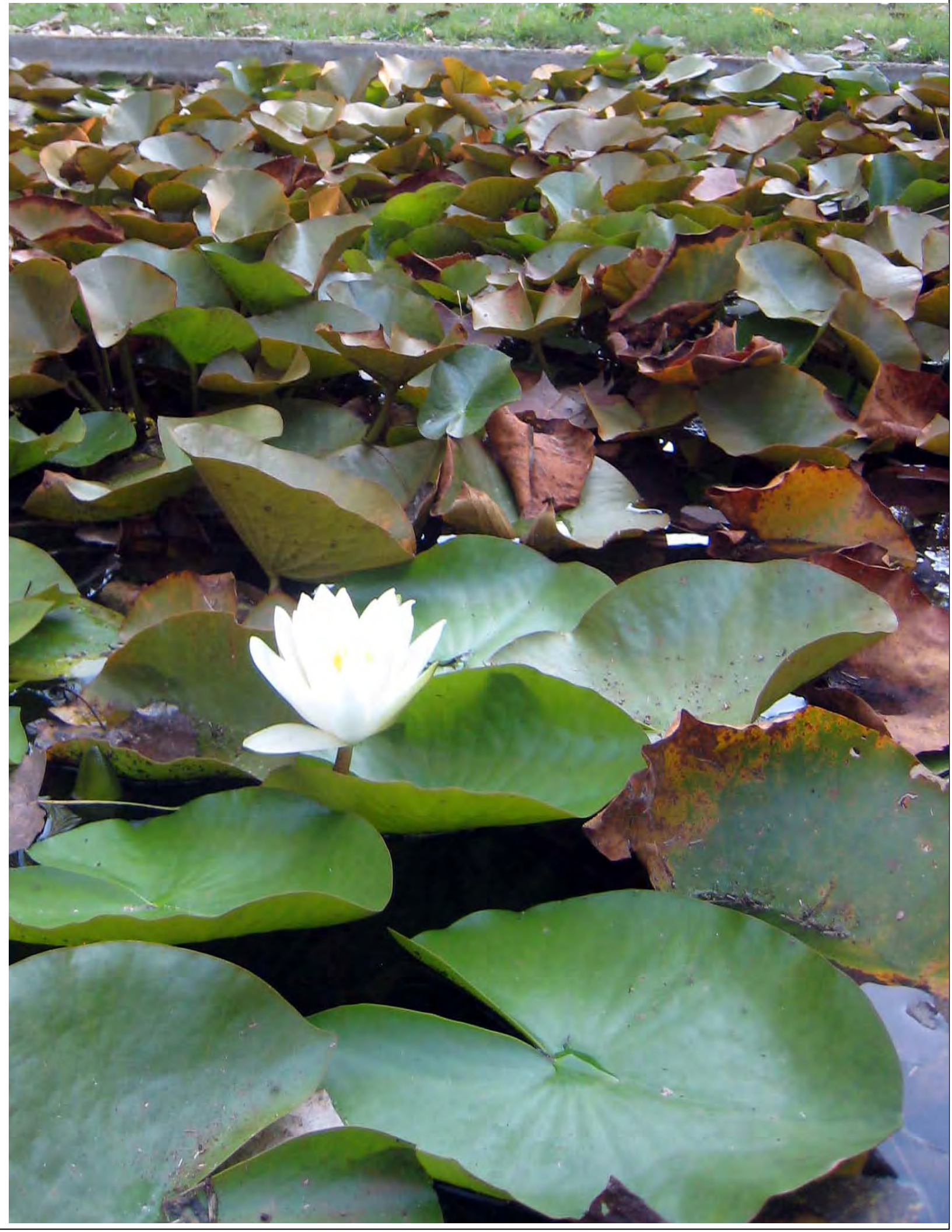
Appendix A: Finding of No Significant Impact	43
Appendix B: Statement of Findings	69
Appendix C: Legislation	74
Appendix D: USFW Service Section 7 Consultation	82
Appendix E: Cultural Landscape Report Recommendations	84
Selected Bibliography	88
Preparers and Consultants	90
Index	92

Maps

Vicinity map	3
Management Prescriptions map	38

Tables

Table 1: Servicewide Mandates and Policies Pertaining to Chickasaw National Recreation Area	9
Table 2: Management Prescriptions	36



Purpose of and Need for the Plan

Introduction

This Final Chickasaw National Recreation Area General Management Plan was developed based on the recreation area's Draft General Management Plan/Environmental Assessment, which was published in March 2007. The final plan does not include all of the chapters and NEPA compliance text that was included in the environmental assessment. Specifically, "Affected Environment" (chapter 3), "Environmental Consequences" (chapter 4), and the alternatives that were considered in the environmental assessment (chapter 2) are not included in this final plan. (For these details, see the Draft General Management Plan/Environmental Assessment.)

This final plan focuses on 1) the foundation for the general management plan (e.g., purpose of and need for a plan, the recreation area's purposes and significance, NPS mandates and policies, and issues and concerns for the plan); and 2) the plan the National Park Service will implement at Chickasaw National Recreation Area (including management prescriptions [zones] and management directions that will be followed in specific parts of the recreation area). A list of preparers, the finding of no significant impact (FONSI) (appendix A), the decision document signed by the Intermountain regional director approving the plan (appendix B), a copy of the recreation area's enabling legislation (appendix C), the USFW Service Section 7 Consultation (appendix D), and the Cultural Landscape Report Recommendations for Platt Historic District (appendix E) are included in this final plan.

The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 requires each unit of the National Park Service (NPS) to have a general management plan (GMP or plan); and NPS *Management Policies 2001* states "[t]he Service will maintain an up-to-date management plan for each unit of the national park system" (2.3.1 General Management Planning). But what is the value, or usefulness, of general management planning?

The purpose of a GMP is to ensure that a national park system unit (park unit) has a clearly defined direction for resource preservation and visitor use to best achieve the NPS's mandate to preserve resources unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. In addition, general management planning makes the National Park Service more effective, collaborative, and accountable by:

- providing a balance between continuity and adaptability in decision making — This defines the desired conditions to be achieved and maintained in a park unit and provides a touchstone that allows NPS managers and staff to constantly adapt their actions to changing situations, while staying focused on what is most important about the park unit
- analyzing the park unit in relation to its surrounding ecosystem, cultural setting, and community — This helps NPS managers and staff understand how the park unit can interrelate with neighbors and others in ways that are ecologically, socially, and economically sustainable. Decisions made within such a larger context are more likely to be successful over time

- affording everyone who has a stake in decisions affecting a park unit an opportunity to be involved in the planning process and to understand the decisions that are made — park units are often the focus of intense public interest. Public involvement throughout the planning process provides focused opportunities for NPS managers and staff to interact with the public and learn about public concerns, expectations, and values. Public involvement also provides opportunities for NPS managers and staff to share information about the park unit's purpose and significance, as well as opportunities and constraints for the management of park unit lands

The ultimate outcome of general management planning for park units is an agreement among the National Park Service, its partners, and the public on why each area is managed as part of the national park system, what resource conditions and visitor experience should exist, and how those conditions can best be achieved and maintained over time.

This *General Management Plan* presents the plan for future direction of the management and use of Chickasaw National Recreation Area (see Vicinity map).

GMPs are intended to be long-term documents that establish and articulate a management philosophy and framework for decision making and problem solving in the parks. GMPs usually provide guidance for 15–20 years.

Actions directed by GMPs or in subsequent implementation plans are accomplished over time. Budget restrictions, requirements for additional data or regulatory compliance, and competing national park system priorities prevent immediate implementation of many actions. Major or especially costly actions could be implemented 10 or more years into the future.

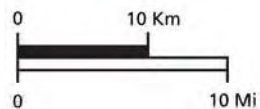
Purpose of the Plan

This plan is the basic document for managing Chickasaw National Recreation Area for the next 15–20 years. The purposes of this plan are as follows:

- Confirm the purpose, significance, and special mandates of Chickasaw National Recreation Area
- Clearly define resource conditions and visitor uses and experiences to be achieved in Chickasaw National Recreation Area
- Provide a framework for national recreation area managers to use when making decisions about how to best protect national recreation area resources, how to provide quality visitor uses and experiences, how to manage visitor use, and what types of facilities, if any, to develop in/near Chickasaw National Recreation Area
- Ensure that this foundation for decision making has been developed in consultation with interested stakeholders and adopted by the NPS leadership

Legislation establishing the National Park Service as an agency and governing its management provides the fundamental direction for the administration of Chickasaw National Recreation Area (and other units and programs of the national park system). This GMP will build on these laws and the legislation that established Chickasaw National Recreation Area to provide a vision for Chickasaw National Recreation Area's future. The later "Servicewide Mandates and Policies" section calls the reader's attention to topics that are important to understanding the management direction at Chickasaw National Recreation Area.

This GMP does not describe how particular programs or projects should be prioritized or implemented. Those decisions will be addressed in future more detailed planning efforts. All future plans will tier from this GMP.



Vicinity

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DSC • October 2007 • 107 • 20049

The GMP contains information about recreational activity such as hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, and boating. The GMP is not intended to be a recreation plan, but will serve as the basis of further recreational planning that may be conducted in the future.

Need for the Plan

This new management plan for Chickasaw National Recreation Area is necessary because the last comprehensive planning effort for Chickasaw National Recreation Area was completed in 1979, and amended in 1994. Much has occurred since then — new facilities have been developed or are being developed, and patterns and types of visitor use continue to change. Each of these changes has implications for how visitors access and use the area, how these facilities need to be used to support those uses, how the area's resources are managed, and how the NPS manages its operations.

A GMP also is necessary to meet the requirements of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978, NPS *Management Policies 2001*, and NPS policy, which mandate development of a GMP for each unit in the national park system.

Brief Description of Chickasaw National Recreation Area

Chickasaw National Recreation Area is in south-central Oklahoma, between Dallas, Texas and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Chickasaw National Recreation Area was originally authorized in 1902 as Sulphur Springs Reservation and was renamed and redesignated as Platt National Park in 1906. In 1976, Platt National Park, Arbuckle National Recreation Area, and additional lands were combined to establish Chickasaw National Recreation Area (PL 94-235; see appendix C).

From prehistoric times to the present, access to the combination of cool water, mineral springs, cool breezes, shade, and wildlife has created at Chickasaw National Recreation Area an experience that sets it apart from the surrounding environment.

The springs and streams in Chickasaw National Recreation Area originate within a region of Oklahoma characterized by complex geology. Intensive faulting, folding, and deformation associated with major uplift and subsequent erosion of the area have combined to form a land surface characterized by gently rolling hills dissected by streams. The springs and streams have had cultural, economic, and environmental significance throughout the history of the region.

Dating from the public works era of the 1930s, classic examples of NPS design and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) work can be found in the Platt Historic District of Chickasaw National Recreation Area. This area is a unique and fascinating piece of CCC development that has kept its integrity. The site work and landscape structures are elaborate and of high quality. This district has also been identified as one the finest examples of CCC work in existence in terms of rustic design, the number and variety of structures, and construction techniques and materials.

Chickasaw National Recreation Area has a diversity of natural resources. These unique flora, fauna, waters, and geological formations have withstood the external pressures of human-made and natural changes. The combination of these resources has created an area unlike any in the surrounding region.

Chickasaw National Recreation Area lies in a transition zone where the eastern deciduous forest and the western prairies meet. It has flora and fauna from both environments, and other flora and fauna specific to such transition areas. The view at Veterans Lake, especially beautiful at sunset, illustrates this transition.

Chickasaw National Recreation Area provides opportunities to experience a wide range of outdoor experiences — swimming, boating, fishing, hiking, observing nature, hunting, camping, and picnicking — reminding us of the rural character in the history of the American people. It adds measurably to the quality of life for visitors and area residents.

Chickasaw National Recreation Area has been the setting for generations of traditional family activity that represents part of the American heritage.

Relationship with the Oklahoma City National Memorial

The Oklahoma City National Memorial was created to honor those who were killed, those who survived, and those who were changed forever by the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. The Memorial serves 365,000 visitors annually and has crafted an important and relevant message regarding the consequences of terrorism. The site is managed in partnership with other private organizations including the Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation and the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism.

Originally established as a unit of the National Park Service in 1997, the Oklahoma City National Memorial was de-authorized by Congress in 2004. Since that time, the National Park Service presence at the Memorial has been managed as part of Chickasaw National Recreation Area, which provides administrative controls and executive direction for the site. The Memorial is staffed with nine FTEs (full-time equivalents)—two permanent employees and seven term employees. Because the merger of these two park areas occurred after the start of the general management planning process for Chickasaw National Recreation Area, the Memorial is not specifically included in this plan.

Implementation of the Plan

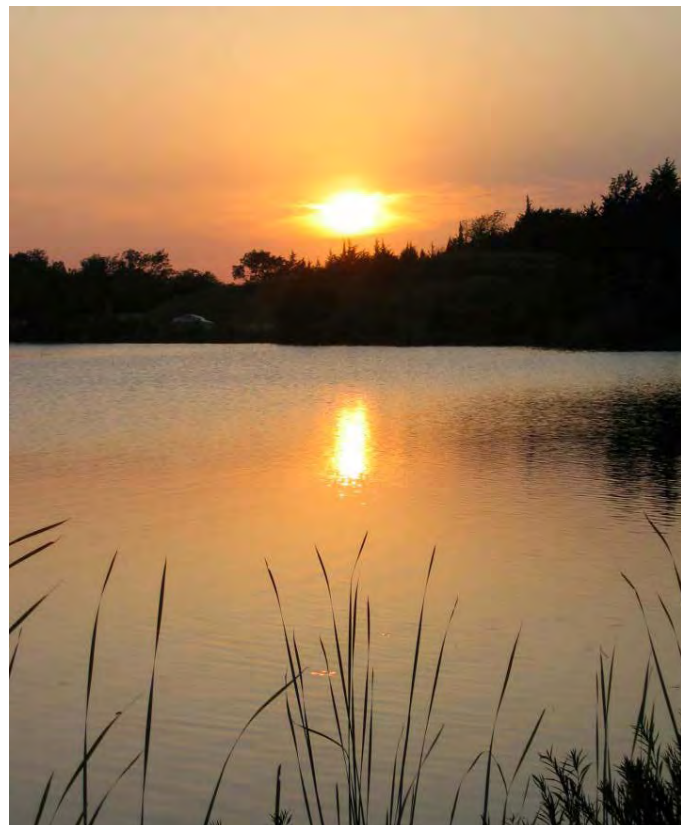
The implementation of this plan will depend on future funding. The approval of a plan does not guarantee that the funding and staffing needed to implement the plan will be forthcoming. Full implementation of the approved plan could be many years in the future.

The implementation of this plan also could be affected by other factors. Once the GMP has

been approved, additional feasibility studies, and more detailed planning and environmental documentation, would be completed, as appropriate, before any proposed actions can be carried out. For example,

- Additional environmental documentation may need to be completed
- Appropriate permits will be obtained before implementing actions that would impact wetlands
- Appropriate federal and state agencies will be consulted concerning actions that could affect threatened and endangered species
- Native American tribes and the state historic preservation officer will be consulted

These more-detailed plans will tier from this plan, describing specific actions managers intend to take to achieve desired conditions and long-term goals.



Purpose and Significance of Chickasaw National Recreation Area

Purpose

Purpose statements are based on Chickasaw National Recreation Area's legislation and legislative history and NPS policies. The statements reaffirm the reasons for which the area was set aside as a park unit, and provide the foundation for the area's management and use.

The purpose of Chickasaw National Recreation Area is to:

protect the springs and waters; preserve areas of archeological or ethnological interest; provide outdoor recreation; protect scenic, scientific, natural, and historic values; and memorialize the Chickasaw Indian Nation.

Significance

Significance statements capture the essence of Chickasaw National Recreation Area's importance to our country's natural and cultural heritage. Significance statements do not inventory an area's resources; rather, they describe the area's distinctiveness and help place Chickasaw National Recreation Area within its regional, national, and international contexts. Significance statements answer questions such as: Why are Chickasaw National Recreation Area resources distinctive? What do they contribute to our natural/cultural heritage? Defining the area's significance helps managers make decisions that preserve the resources and values necessary to accomplish Chickasaw National Recreation Area's purpose.

The significance of Chickasaw National Recreation Area is as follows.

- Chickasaw National Recreation Area contains mineral and fresh water, which comes from one of the most complex geological and hydrological features in the United States.
- The cultural landscape of the proposed Platt National Park Historic District in Chickasaw

National Recreation Area reflects the primary era of 1933–1940, when the Civilian Conservation Corps implemented National Park Service “rustic” designs. This is one of the most intact landscapes of that period.

- Recreational opportunities are available to experience a wide range of outdoor activities — swimming, boating, fishing, hiking, observing nature, hunting, camping, bicycling, horseback riding, family reunions, and picnicking — all of which remind us of the rural character in the history of the American people.
- Chickasaw National Recreation Area is home to a transition zone where the eastern deciduous forest meets the western prairies, which is unique to the central part of the United States.
- The long history of Chickasaw National Recreation Area exemplifies the evolution of the American conservation movement and the national park system. The significance of naming the area “Chickasaw” is meant to memorialize the foresight that this Indian tribe showed when they agreed to protect the natural freshwater and mineral water resources of this area through public government ownership over private ownership.

Primary Interpretive Themes

Based on Chickasaw National Recreation Area's purpose, significance, and primary resources, the following interpretive themes have been developed. Primary interpretive themes are the key stories, concepts, and ideas of a park unit. They are the groundwork that NPS staff will use for educating visitors about the park unit and for inspiring visitors to care for and about its resources. With these themes, visitors can form intellectual and emotional connections with a park unit's resources and experiences. These themes are as follows for Chickasaw National Recreation Area.

A — Chickasaw National Recreation Area's 500-million-year record of sedimentary deposition, complex hydrogeological system, and diverse flora and fauna foster

enriched connections with the dynamic relationships among geology, water, and life.

B — The attractive and intimate scale of the landscape, the wide range of recreational opportunities, the history of the freshwater and mineral springs, and the comfortable, rustic-built environment of Chickasaw National Recreation Area invite an exploration of the concepts of personal and societal health and well being.

C — The eastern woodlands – western plains ecotone at Chickasaw National Recreation Area offers outstanding opportunities to appreciate the rich ecological relationships that nurture and sustain our civilization.

Servicewide Laws and Policies

This section identifies what must be done at Chickasaw National Recreation Area to comply with federal laws and policies of the National Park Service. Many of the area’s management directives are specified in laws and policies guiding the National Park Service and are; therefore, not subject to alternative approaches. For example, there are laws and policies concerning managing environmental quality (such as the Clean Air Act, the Endangered Species Act, and Executive Order 11990 “Protection of Wetlands”); laws governing the preservation of cultural resources (such as the National Historic Preservation Act [NHPA] and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act); and laws regarding public services (such as the Americans with Disabilities Act) — to name only a few. In other words, a GMP is not needed to decide, for instance, that it is appropriate to protect endangered species, control exotic species, protect archeological sites, preserve the cultural landscape, conserve artifacts, or provide access for those with disabilities. Laws and policies have already decided those and many other matters for us. Although attaining some of the conditions set forth in these laws and policies may have been temporarily deferred in Chickasaw National Recreation Area because of funding or staffing limitations, the National Park Service will

continue to strive to implement these requirements with or without a new GMP.

Some of these laws and executive orders are applicable solely or primarily to units of the national park system. These include the 1916 Organic Act that created the National Park Service; the General Authorities Act of 1970; the Redwood Amendment Act of March 27, 1978 relating to the management of the national park system; and the National Parks Omnibus Management Act (1998). Other laws and executive orders have much broader application, such as the Endangered Species Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and Executive Order 11990 addressing the protection of wetlands.

The NPS Organic Act (16 USC § 1) provides the following fundamental management direction for all units of the national park system:

[P]romote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations . . . by such means and measures as conform to the fundamental purpose of said parks, monuments, and reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

The National Park System General Authorities Act (16 USC § 1a-1 et seq.) affirms that while all park units remain “distinct in character,” they are “united through their interrelated purposes and resources into one national park system as cumulative expressions of a single national heritage.” The act makes it clear that the National Park Service Organic Act and other protective mandates apply equally to all park units. Further, amendments state that NPS management of park units should not “derogate[e] . . . the purposes and values for which these various areas have been established.”

The National Park Service also has established policies for all park units under its stewardship. These are identified and explained in a guidance manual titled *NPS Management Policies 2001*. This plan incorporates and complies with the provisions of these mandates and policies.

Table 1 shows some of the most pertinent servicewide mandates and policy topics related to planning and managing Chickasaw National Recreation Area; across from each topic are the desired conditions that the staff is striving to achieve for that topic and thus that part of the table is written in the present tense. The strategies for achieving these desired conditions are also shown in the table. This GMP addresses the desired future conditions that are not mandated by law and policy.

Wilderness Suitability

The Wilderness Act and NPS *Management Policies 2001* (§ 6.2.1, NPS 2000) require that all lands administered by the National Park Service be evaluated for their suitability for inclusion within the national wilderness preservation system. An assessment of wilderness suitability was done as part of the planning process. The outcome was that there were no lands suitable for wilderness designation due to size and the existing and planned land use of areas within the Chickasaw National Recreation Area boundary.



TABLE 1: SERVICEWIDE MANDATES AND POLICIES PERTAINING TO CHICKASAW NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Relations with Private and Public Organizations, Owners of Adjacent Land, and Governmental Agencies	<p>Desired Conditions: Chickasaw National Recreation Area is managed as part of a greater ecological, social, economic, and cultural system.</p> <p>Good relations are maintained with adjacent landowners, surrounding communities, and private and public groups that affect, and are affected by, Chickasaw National Recreation Area. The area is managed proactively to resolve external issues and concerns and ensure that area values are not compromised.</p> <p>Because Chickasaw National Recreation Area is a part of a larger regional environment, the National Park Service works cooperatively with others to anticipate, avoid, and resolve potential conflicts; protect the national recreational area's resources; and address mutual interests in the quality of life for community residents. Regional cooperation involves federal, state, and local agencies, Indian tribes, neighboring landowners, and all other concerned parties.</p> <p>Strategies: NPS staff will continue to establish and foster partnerships with public and private organizations to achieve the purposes of Chickasaw National Recreation Area. Partnerships will continue to be sought for resource protection, research, education, and visitor enjoyment purposes.</p> <p>To foster a spirit of cooperation with neighbors and encourage compatible adjacent land uses, NPS staff will continue to keep landowners, land managers, local governments, and the public informed about Chickasaw National Recreation Area management activities. Periodic consultations will continue with landowners who might be affected by visitors and management actions. NPS staff will continue to respond promptly to conflicts that arise over NPS activities, visitor access, and proposed activities and developments on adjacent lands that could affect Chickasaw National Recreation Area. NPS staff may provide technical and management assistance to landowners to address issues of mutual interest.</p> <p>NPS staff will continue to work closely with local, state, and federal agencies; and tribal governments whose programs affect, or are affected by, activities in Chickasaw National Recreation Area. NPS managers will continue to pursue cooperative regional planning whenever possible to integrate Chickasaw National Recreation Area into issues of regional concern.</p>
Relations with the Cities of Sulphur and Davis	<p>Desired Conditions: NPS staff continues its close working relationships with the cities of Sulphur and Davis. NPS staff and city officials maintain a high level of trust and goodwill. Officials from the two cities feel they have an important stake in Chickasaw National Recreation Area, and NPS staff feel they have an important stake in Sulphur and Davis. NPS managers are familiar with local issues and concerns.</p> <p>Strategies: NPS staff will continue to regularly communicate and meet with city officials to identify problems and concerns facing the cities and Chickasaw National Recreation Area, and actions that can be taken to address these problems and concerns.</p> <p>NPS staff will continue to work with the cities in developing and updating their master plans.</p> <p>City officials will continue to be kept informed of planning and other actions in Chickasaw National Recreation Area that could affect the cities. NPS staff will continue to work with city law enforcement, emergency services, and community education programs.</p> <p>When appropriate, the NPS staff will provide technical and management assistance to the cities, including sharing information and resources, to address problems and issues of mutual interest; such as the spread of nonnative, invasive species. NPS staff will continue to be involved in community-based efforts.</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Government-to-Government Relations between American Indian Tribes and Chickasaw National Recreation Area	<p>Desired Conditions: NPS staff and tribes culturally affiliated with Chickasaw National Recreation Area maintain positive and productive government-to-government relationships. National recreation area managers and staff respect the viewpoints and needs of the tribes, continue to promptly address conflicts that occur, and consider American Indian values in area management and operation.</p> <p>Chickasaw National Recreation Area is a good neighbor to the Chickasaw Nation, and to other traditionally associated American Indian tribes, by helping when asked in situations when joint cooperation might be appropriate about sharing research and knowledge on the resources, and about interpreting the resources of Chickasaw National Recreation Area.</p> <p>Strategies: NPS staff will continue to regularly meet and communicate with tribal officials to identify problems and issues of mutual concern and interest, and work together to take actions to address these concerns.</p> <p>Tribal officials will continue to be kept informed of planning and other actions in Chickasaw National Recreation Area that could affect the tribes.</p> <p>When appropriate, NPS staff will provide technical assistance to the tribes, including sharing information and resources, to address problems and issues of mutual concern.</p> <p>NPS staff will continue to recognize the past and present existence of native peoples in the region and the traces of their land use and occupation as an important part of the cultural environment to be researched, preserved, and, if appropriate, interpreted.</p> <p>NPS staff will consult with the Chickasaw Nation and other traditionally associated American Indian tribes to develop and accomplish the programs of Chickasaw National Recreation Area in a way that respects the beliefs, traditions, and other cultural values of the tribes with ties to national recreation area lands.</p> <p>NPS staff will accommodate access to traditional-use areas, once identified through further consultation and research, in ways consistent with national recreation area purposes and American Indian values and that avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sites and resources.</p> <p>NPS staff will conduct appropriate ethnographic, ethnohistorical, or cultural anthropological research in conjunction with, and in cooperation with, American Indian tribes traditionally associated with Chickasaw National Recreation Area.</p>
Natural Resources	
Ecosystem Management	<p>NPS <i>Management Policies 2001</i> (§§ 1.5, 4, 4.1, 4.1.4, and 4.4.1) provides general direction for managing park units from an ecosystem perspective.</p> <p>Desired Conditions: Chickasaw National Recreation Area is managed holistically, as part of a greater ecological, social, economic, and cultural system. The National Park Service demonstrates leadership in resource stewardship and conservation of ecosystem values within and outside the recreation area. Chickasaw National Recreation Area is managed from an ecosystem perspective, where internal and external factors affecting visitor use, environmental quality, and resource stewardship goals are considered at a scale appropriate to their impact on affected resources. Natural processes, ecosystem dynamics, and population fluctuations occur with as little human intervention as possible, with the exception of hunting of game animals, stocking of fish, and integrated pest management. Recreation area resources and visitors are managed considering the ecological and social conditions of Chickasaw National Recreation Area and the surrounding area. NPS managers adapt to changing ecological and social conditions within and outside the recreation area and continue as partners in regional planning and land and water management. Chickasaw National Recreation Area is managed proactively to resolve external issues and concerns to ensure that the recreation area's values are not compromised.</p> <p>Strategies: NPS staff will continue to participate in and encourage ongoing partnerships with local, state, and federal agencies; educational institutions; and other organizations in programs that have importance within and beyond national recreation area boundaries. Cooperative agreements, partnerships, and other arrangements can be used to set an example in resource conservation and innovation, and to facilitate research related to recreation area resources and their management. Partnerships important to the long-term viability of natural and cultural resources include, but are not limited to, the following:</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Ecosystem Management (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inventorying, monitoring, and managing terrestrial resources with the Oklahoma Biological Survey, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Oklahoma State University, University of Oklahoma, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Goddard Youth Camp, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Noble Foundation • monitoring, enforcing regulations, and managing aquatic resources with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Oklahoma Conservation Commission, Oklahoma Water Resources Board, USGS, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service • monitoring and managing federally threatened and endangered species with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oklahoma Biological Survey, and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife • supporting scientific research and ecological monitoring to guide recovery/conservation efforts in collaboration with professionals from federal, tribal, and state agencies, academic institutions, museums, and research organizations • approaching all resource management questions from an ecosystem standpoint, taking into account all biological interrelationships • continuing long-term monitoring of the change in condition of natural resources and related human influences (see "Natural Resources Strategies" below)
Natural Resources (General)	<p>Chickasaw National Recreation Area's natural resources are a key element in the use and management of the recreation area. Protection, study, and management of natural resources and processes are essential for achieving Chickasaw National Recreation Area's purposes. <i>NPS Management Policies 2001</i> (§ 4) and "NPS-77 Natural Resources Management Guideline" provide general direction on natural resources management for the recreation area.</p> <p>Desired Conditions: Chickasaw National Recreation Area retains its ecological integrity, including its natural resources and processes. The recreation area continues to be a dynamic, bio-diverse environment. The natural features of the recreation area remain unimpaired. The recreation area maintains a mosaic of native vegetation and wildlife. Native soils and the processes of soil genesis are preserved in a condition undisturbed by people to the extent possible. Soils are maintained in a condition to sustain plant and animal productivity, maintain or enhance water and air quality, support human health and habitation, and protect and preserve cultural resources and landscapes. Soils consistent with maintenance of associated historic practices are conserved. Sources of air, water, and noise pollution affecting Chickasaw National Recreation Area's resources are limited to the greatest degree possible. Potential threats to the recreation area's resources are identified early and proactively addressed. Visitors and staff recognize and understand the value of the recreation area's natural resources. NPS staff uses the best available scientific information and technology to manage the recreation area's natural resources. Chickasaw National Recreation Area is recognized and valued as an outstanding example of resource stewardship, conservation, education, and public use.</p> <p>General Strategies: Science-based, adaptive, decision making will continue to be followed, with the results of resource monitoring and research incorporated into all aspects of recreation area operations. NPS staff will continue to apply ecological principles to ensure that natural resources are maintained and not impaired. Integrated pest management procedures will continue to be used when necessary to control nonnative organisms or other pests.</p> <p>NPS staff and other scientists will continue to inventory recreation area resources to quantify, locate, and document biotic and abiotic resources in Chickasaw National Recreation Area and to assess their status and trends.</p> <p>NPS staff and other scientists will conduct long-term, systematic monitoring of resources and processes to discern natural and anthropogenically induced trends, document changes in species or communities, evaluate the effectiveness of management actions taken to protect and restore resources, and mitigate impacts on resources.</p> <p>NPS staff will expand monitoring programs to include geographic areas and resources that are not currently monitored. Partnerships with institutions, agencies, and scientists will be an important component of this endeavor.</p> <p>Future facilities will be built in previously disturbed areas with as small of a construction footprint as possible. NPS staff will also apply mitigation techniques to minimize the impacts of construction and other activities on recreation area resources.</p> <p>Actions that have the potential to result in significant soil disturbance will include appropriate mitigation to control erosion and allow revegetation of disturbed areas.</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Natural Resources (General) (cont.)	<p>Scientific research will be encouraged. Cooperative basic and applied research will be encouraged through various partnerships and agreements to increase the understanding of Chickasaw National Recreation Area's resources, natural processes, and human interactions with the environment, or to answer specific management questions.</p> <p>NPS staff will continue to expand the data management system, including a geographic information system (GIS) and a research/literature database for analyzing, modeling, predicting, and testing trends in resource conditions.</p> <p>NPS managers will prepare and periodically update a "Resource Stewardship Strategy" that includes a comprehensive list of prioritized actions to achieve the desired resource conditions identified in the GMP.</p>
Natural Resources Restoration	<p>NPS <i>Management Policies 2001</i> (§ 4.4) call for the National Park Service to maintain natural ecosystems in parks and to restore native plant and animal populations. "NPS-77 Natural Resources Management Guideline" also provides general direction on the restoration of natural resources for the recreation area."</p> <p>Many of Chickasaw National Recreation Area's natural ecosystems have been altered by the activities of people and the introduction of nonnative species. More specifically, the condition of natural vegetation communities has declined in Chickasaw National Recreation Area due to the spread of red cedar, the expansion of other woody plants, and the spread of nonnative plant species. Fires have also been suppressed, which has led to the decline of prairies in the recreation area. In recent years efforts have begun to restore Chickasaw National Recreation Area's prairie ecosystems with the application of prescribed burns and the clearing of red cedar.</p> <p>Desired Conditions: With the exception of culturally significant areas, Chickasaw National Recreation Area's prairies and forests are restored as nearly as possible to the conditions they would be in today had natural ecological processes not been altered. Vegetation is in a condition reminiscent of the period before Europeans began altering the recreation area. All federally and state threatened and endangered species are no longer in danger of extinction and are at least stable. The natural fire regime has been restored.</p> <p>Strategies: Active restoration efforts will continue throughout Chickasaw National Recreation Area, primarily focusing on eradication of nonnative (weed) species, red cedar control, revegetation of native plants, and restoration of native plants and animals, particularly prairie species.</p> <p>Red cedar will continue to be controlled in prairie restoration sites, hardwood forest areas, hazardous road intersections, and developed areas where the tree has become invasive. These areas include the Buffalo Pasture, Platt District, Rock Creek Corridor, South Lake, and Lower and Upper Guy Sandy areas. Mechanical equipment and prescribed burns will be used to remove or eliminate red cedar.</p> <p>Prairie restoration efforts will continue in old fields, such as the Upper Guy Sandy area. Herbicide and cultivation treatments will be required to eliminate dense stands of Johnson grass in some areas. Native prairie grass and forb seeding will then be done, followed by appropriate natural disturbance regimes (e.g., prescribed burns and buffalo grazing) to support and maintain native plant and animal species.</p> <p>Inventories and monitoring of invasive nonnative plant species will continue. Efforts will continue to control or eradicate nonnative plants that are particularly invasive and destructive pests, or have the potential to rapidly spread and dominate plant communities, such as Johnson grass and Chinese bush clover. Efforts will continue to remove feral mammals such as pigs, cats, dogs, and fallow deer from Chickasaw National Recreation Area, and exotic species such as red imported fire ants.</p> <p>Restoration of previously or newly disturbed areas will be done using native genetic materials (when available) from the local region to regain maximum habitat value. Should facilities be removed, the disturbed lands will be rehabilitated to restore natural topography and soils, and the areas will be revegetated with native species. Only plants that are not invasive and will remain within developed areas will be used.</p> <p>Historically, fire periodically occurred in Chickasaw National Recreation Area. However, in more recent times, fires have been suppressed, resulting in a build up of fuel. The current fire management plan (NPS 2003c) discusses and deals with these issues and will continue to be followed.</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Paleontological Resources	<p>The Arbuckle Mountains region, where Chickasaw National Recreation Area is located, is well known for its fossil resources. The recreation area is known to contain paleontological resources, particularly the southern part of Chickasaw National Recreation Area, which has formations that potentially contain fossils. However, there has not been a detailed paleontological inventory and assessment of Chickasaw National Recreation Area.</p> <p>NPS <i>Management Policies 2001</i> (§ 4.8.2) and “NPS Natural Resource Management Reference Manual #77” provide direction for the protection and management of paleontological resources in park units.</p> <p>Desired Conditions: Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s paleontological resources, including both organic and mineralized remains in body or trace form, are protected and preserved in situ, with opportunities for public education, interpretation, and scientific research. Impacts to paleontological resources from human activities, including construction of facilities and illegal collecting, are minimized.</p> <p>General Strategies: A paleontological research plan that directs future research efforts will be prepared and updated as needed.</p> <p>A paleontological resource inventory and assessment will be conducted in Chickasaw National Recreation Area to determine their extent and scientific significance, and to ensure that these nonrenewable resources are not lost. Fossil localities and associated geologic data will be documented when specimens are collected. Paleontological resource stability indicators, covering such elements as rates of erosion and human activity, will be developed and monitored to establish vital signs and assess the conditions for fossil resources.</p> <p>A variety of methods will be followed to protect resources, such as data recording; stabilization in the field; collection, preparation, and placement of specimens in a museum collection; or construction of shelters over specimens.</p> <p>Paleontological resources will be managed and studied in their geologic context, which provides information about the ancient environment.</p> <p>NPS staff will be a partner with other federal, state, and local agencies, and academic institutions to conduct paleontological research. The NPS staff will continue to expand opportunities for researchers to use Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s fossil collection to further paleontological knowledge.</p> <p>If destructive and preventable erosion occurs or ground-disturbing activities, such as construction of new trails, are proposed in areas with potential paleontological resources, a qualified paleontologist will survey the areas for paleontological resources, evaluate their significance, and specify whether data recording, stabilization, or specimen collection is necessary. New facilities will be avoided on areas that may yield fossils, or if necessary, the resource may be collected prior to the initiation of construction.</p> <p>Management actions will be taken to prevent illegal collecting and may be taken to prevent damage from natural processes such as erosion. If important sites or areas are discovered, they will be patrolled to prevent theft and vandalism. Paleontological resources along high use trails and/or roads will be monitored, and actions taken to reduce impacts.</p> <p>The NPS staff will exchange fossils only with other qualified museums and public institutions dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of natural heritage.</p> <p>Interpretive and educational programs will continue to be developed to educate visitors and the public about paleontology. Fossils will be prepared, exhibited, and stored according to NPS museum standards.</p> <p>NPS staff will work with the Goddard Youth Camp staff, teachers, and students to conduct programs on paleontological resources and ensure that their activities are consistent with NPS management policies and standards and the Goddard Youth Camp’s general agreement with the National Park Service. Goddard staff may also assist the NPS staff in monitoring the area for potential impacts. Combining a resource protection and stewardship message with resource monitoring will help limit potential adverse impacts to paleontological resources.</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Air Quality	<p>The Clean Air Act (42 USC 7401 et seq.) gives federal land managers the responsibility for protecting air quality and related values, including visibility, plants, animals, soils, water quality, cultural resources, and public health, from adverse air pollution impacts. NPS <i>Management Policies 2001</i> (§ 4.7), and “NPS Natural Resource Management Reference Manual #77” provide further direction on the protection of air quality and related values for park units.</p> <p>Chickasaw National Recreation Area is classified as a Class II area under the Clean Air Act. This air quality classification is the second most stringent and is designed to protect the majority of the country from air quality degradation. Although air quality monitoring has not been done, air quality is thought to be good because of the rural character of the surrounding area.</p> <p>Some air quality impacts probably occur due to pollution from metropolitan areas in the region, including Ardmore (30 miles south), Oklahoma City (90 miles north), and Dallas/Fort Worth (130 miles south). Air pollution sources in Chickasaw National Recreation Area include stationary sources such as campfires and generators. Motor vehicles and motorboats are mobile sources, and emissions primarily include carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, and hydrocarbons (or volatile organic compounds).</p> <p>The basin that includes Chickasaw National Recreation Area is classified as being in attainment for ozone and particulate matter.</p> <p>Desired Conditions: Good to excellent air quality is maintained. Scenic views, both day and night, are protected and unimpaired for the enjoyment of current and future recreation area visitors.</p> <p>Strategies: NPS staff will continue to work with appropriate federal and state government agencies and nearby communities to maintain and improve recreation area regional air quality. NPS staff will participate in regional air quality planning, research, and the implementation of air quality standards.</p> <p>Air quality in Chickasaw National Recreation Area will continue to be periodically monitored to gain baseline information and to measure any significant changes (improvement or deterioration) to Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s airshed.</p> <p>To minimize smoke impacts, controlled burns will occur only when favorable meteorological conditions are present. The vegetation to be burned shall be in a condition that will facilitate combustion and minimize the amount of smoke emitted during combustion.</p>
Water Quality	<p>Water is a key resource in Chickasaw National Recreation Area, shaping the landscape and affecting plants, animals, and visitor use. The Clean Water Act strives to restore and maintain the integrity of U.S. waters, which includes waters found in Chickasaw National Recreation Area. NPS <i>Management Policies 2001</i> (§ 4.6.3) and “NPS Natural Resource Management Reference Manual #77” provide direction on the protection and management of surface and groundwater in Chickasaw National Recreation Area. The state of Oklahoma also has designated the waters within Chickasaw National Recreation Area as “Sensitive Public and Private Water Supplies.” These waters are “prohibited from having any new point source discharge(s) for any pollutant or increased load of specified pollutants from existing point source discharge(s).”</p> <p>Desired Conditions: Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s water quality reflects natural conditions and supports native plant and animal communities, and administrative and recreational uses. All water in Chickasaw National Recreation Area meets applicable state standards. All human sources of water pollution, both within and outside the recreation area, that are adversely affecting Chickasaw National Recreation Area are eliminated, mitigated, or minimized.</p> <p>Strategies: Surface water quality will continue to be monitored on a regular basis throughout Chickasaw National Recreation Area, focusing on bacterial and other organic contamination. Chemical contaminants, such as pesticides, will be periodically monitored. Groundwater monitoring should also be conducted to ensure the safety and quality of groundwater.</p> <p>NPS staff will work with the city of Sulphur, adjacent landowners, and the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality to identify pollution sources outside Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s boundaries that are affecting Chickasaw National Recreation Area, such as ranch lands and residential developments along Rock, Buckhorn, and Guy Sandy creeks.</p> <p>A hazardous substance and spill contingency plan will be prepared to address contamination from hazardous materials (e.g., petroleum products, raw sewage, and agricultural chemicals).</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Water Quantity	<p>NPS <i>Management Policies 2001</i> (§§ 4.6.1 and 4.6.2) calls for the National Park Service to perpetuate surface and groundwater as integral components of park aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. “NPS Natural Resource Management Reference Manual #77” provides further direction on the management of water quantity on parks, stating the National Park Service will manage and use water to protect resources, accommodate visitors, and administer park units within legal mandates.</p> <p>Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s water resources, including its well-known springs, are derived from a delicately balanced, complex hydrologic system. Although there is little information on the storage and flow characteristics of the Arbuckle-Simpson Aquifer that underlies Chickasaw National Recreation Area, it is known that water from this aquifer discharges into and supports Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s streams and springs. It is also known that flows from the recreation area’s springs have been significantly reduced since the recreation area was originally established in 1906, and that only 5 of 33 springs identified at that time continue to flow.</p> <p>Desired Conditions: All documented springs and streams continue to flow and the flows are natural to the extent possible. Chickasaw National Recreation Area exhibits water quantity characteristics consistent with those that first attracted people to the area. The groundwater and quantity of water that underlies and shapes all of Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s natural and cultural features, and which is vital to ensuring the continuing flow of the springs, is maintained and protected.</p> <p>Strategies: Additional information is needed to understand this complex hydrologic system. Specifically, additional information is needed regarding the Arbuckle-Simpson Aquifer, groundwater and surface water interactions, recharge areas, flow paths of groundwater, and potential impacts of groundwater withdrawals, among other topics. The NPS will support research and studies to collect this information, such as a five-year hydrologic study of the aquifer being undertaken by the Bureau of Reclamation and Oklahoma Water Resources Board, and geologic mapping being undertaken by the USGS.</p> <p>The relationship between precipitation, water levels, and spring discharge will be studied to provide more information on water levels in the aquifer and on aquifer recharge, and to improve understanding of the forces that influence spring flow levels, especially within Antelope and Buffalo springs.</p> <p>NPS staff will continue to educate the public about the importance of groundwater for Chickasaw National Recreation Area and important groundwater management issues.</p> <p>Flows of selected springs and water levels within Chickasaw National Recreation Area will continue to be monitored.</p> <p>The “Water Resources Management Plan” (NPS 1998) will be periodically updated to address new water issues as they arise. The project statements previously developed will be reviewed, and funding will be sought for the completion of the pending projects. An example of one project is the evaluation of flow regulation on Vendome Well for improved conservation of the aquifer.</p> <p>NPS staff will work with federal and local government agencies and civic organizations to encourage the city of Sulphur to seek alternative water supplies.</p> <p>To protect water resources within Chickasaw National Recreation Area, NPS staff will work with the city, state, landowners, Arbuckle Master Conservancy District, and other entities to monitor water use within and adjacent to the recreation area’s boundaries. NPS staff will continue to monitor water rights applications, attend hearings, and protest applications if necessary.</p> <p>NPS staff will continue to work with the state of Oklahoma to develop a comprehensive, unified approach to managing groundwater. The National Park Service will work within the state administrative process to provide protection to surface and groundwater resources in Chickasaw National Recreation Area.</p> <p>NPS staff will encourage neighbors of Chickasaw National Recreation Area to prevent waste by voluntarily plugging private wells. The state also will be requested to encourage landowners to cap abandoned artesian wells within the aquifer.</p> <p>NPS staff will strive to conserve water in all recreation area operations. Examples of actions that could be taken include installing low-flow fixtures such as toilets and showers, or installing self-contained, evaporative toilets.</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Floodplains	<p>Floodplains exist along Guy Sandy, Buckhorn Rock, and Travertine creeks. Floods can occur due to thunderstorms, posing a risk to structures, visitors, and employees. Floodplains are protected and managed in accordance with Executive Order 11988 ("Floodplain Management"), NPS Director's Order 77-2 and its accompanying procedural manual, and NPS <i>Management Policies 2001</i> (§ 4.6.4).</p> <p>Desired Conditions: Natural floodplain values are preserved or restored. Long- and short-term impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains are avoided. Hazardous conditions associated with flooding that could affect visitor safety are minimized.</p> <p>Strategies: Whenever possible, new developments will be located on sites outside floodplains. If it is not possible to avoid locating a new development on a floodplain or to avoid a management action that would affect a floodplain, the National Park Service will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare and approve a statement of findings in accordance with Director's Order 77-2 • use nonstructural measures as much as practicable to reduce hazards to human life and property while minimizing impacts on the natural resources of floodplains • ensure that structures and facilities are designed to be consistent with the intent of the standards and criteria of the National Flood Insurance Program (44 CFR 60) <p>Mitigation measures will be required as part of construction to avoid any potential indirect effects on floodplains. Before initiating any ground-disturbing projects, further investigation will be conducted to determine if floodplain resources would be affected. Floodplains will be addressed at the project level to ensure that projects are consistent with NPS policy and Executive Order 11988.</p> <p>Visitor interpretive and education efforts will emphasize the hazards that exist when flash flooding occurs in Chickasaw National Recreation Area, and appropriate responses.</p>
Wetlands	<p>Chickasaw National Recreation Area does not have extensive wetlands. Although there is not a detailed wetlands inventory for the recreation area, small wetlands are located in the vicinity of seeps and springs, along the streams, and near Lake of the Arbuckles. Wetlands are protected and managed in accordance with Executive Order 11990 "Protection of Wetlands," NPS Director's Order 77-1 and its accompanying procedural manual, and NPS <i>Management Policies 2001</i> (§ 4.6.5).</p> <p>Desired Conditions: The natural values of wetlands are maintained and protected. When practicable, natural wetland cultural values are enhanced by using them for educational, recreational, scientific, and similar purposes that do not disrupt natural wetland functions.</p> <p>Strategies: A recreation-area-wide wetland inventory, condition assessment, and functional evaluation will be done to help ensure proper management and protection of wetland resources. More detailed wetland mapping will be done in areas that are proposed for development or are otherwise susceptible to degradation or loss due to human activities.</p> <p>NPS staff will be trained on identifying wetlands to ensure that operational activities do not inadvertently drain or alter wetlands, including ephemeral (seasonal) wetlands.</p> <p>The construction of new developments in wetlands will be avoided. If it is not possible to avoid locating a new development in a wetland or to avoid a management action that would adversely affect a wetland, the National Park Service will comply with the provisions of Executive Order 11990, the Clean Water Act, and Director's Order 77-1. All practicable measures (including the Best Management Practices described in appendix 2 of the "NPS Procedural Manual #77-1: Wetland Protection") will be included in the proposed action to minimize harm to wetlands. The loss of any wetlands will be compensated.</p> <p>A statement of findings for wetlands will be prepared (according to the guidelines defined in the NPS Procedural Manual #77-1) if the action would result in an adverse impact on a wetland. The statement of findings includes an analysis of the alternatives, delineation of the wetland, a wetland restoration plan to identify mitigation, and a wetland functional analysis of the impact site and restoration site.</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Threatened and Endangered Species	<p>Under the Endangered Species Act, the National Park Service is mandated to promote the conservation of all federal threatened and endangered species and their critical habitats within park unit boundaries. <i>NPS Management Policies 2001</i> (§ 4.4.2.3) also call for the agency to survey for, protect, and strive to recover all species native to park units that are listed under the Endangered Species Act. In addition, the National Park Service is directed to inventory, monitor, and manage state-listed species in a manner similar to the treatment of federally listed species, to the greatest extent possible.</p> <p>Only a few threatened and endangered species have been recorded at Chickasaw National Recreation Area, and other than bald eagles, none are known to regularly use the recreation area. However, there is the possibility that threatened and endangered species, such as the endangered American burying beetle, whooping crane, and interior whooping crane occur in the recreation area but have not yet been documented as being present.</p> <p>Desired Conditions: Chickasaw National Recreation Area contributes to the overall recovery and eventual delisting of all listed species and species proposed for listing. Essential habitats that support these species are all protected.</p> <p>General Strategies: The NPS staff will continue to work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oklahoma Biological Survey, and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to ensure that National Park Service actions help state and federally listed species recover. If any state or federally listed, or proposed threatened or endangered species, were found in areas that would be affected by construction, visitor use, or restoration activities approved under this plan, Chickasaw National Recreation Area staff would first consult informally with the above agencies. The NPS staff will then take action to address any potential adverse impacts on state or federally listed species. Should it be determined through informal consultation that an action might adversely affect a federally listed or proposed species, NPS staff would initiate formal consultation under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.</p> <p>NPS staff will cooperate with the above agencies in inventorying, monitoring, protecting, and perpetuating the natural distribution and abundance of all state and federally listed species and their essential habitats. These species and their required habitats will be specifically considered in ongoing planning and management activities. If appropriate, surveys for threatened and endangered species will be undertaken before permitting ground-disturbing activities or developments.</p>
Hunting	<p>Hunting is a permitted use under the enabling legislation for Chickasaw National Recreation Area (P.L. 94-235, §3). The legislation also provides for the designation of zones and periods when no hunting is permitted for reasons of public safety, administration, wildlife management, or public use and enjoyment. <i>NPS Management Policies 2001</i> (§ 4.4.3), and "NPS-77 Natural Resources Management Guideline" provide further guidance on hunting in park units.</p> <p>Desired Conditions: High quality public opportunities continue to be available to hunt native species in natural habitats and in natural concentrations.</p> <p>Strategies: NPS staff will work with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, monitoring wildlife populations and enforcing state and federal regulations, to ensure that harvest levels are on a sustained yield basis and do not adversely affect Chickasaw National Recreation Area's wildlife populations, and to ensure that visitors have a safe, quality experience.</p> <p>Wildlife surveys specific to game species will be continued, and population trends will be analyzed.</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Fishing	<p>Fishing is a permitted use under the enabling legislation for Chickasaw National Recreation Area (P.L. 94-235, §3). The legislation also provides for the designation of zones and periods when no fishing is permitted for reasons of public safety, administration, fish management, or public use and enjoyment. NPS <i>Management Policies 2001</i> (§ 4.4.3), “NPS-77 Natural Resources Management Guideline,” and 36 Code of Federal Regulations 2.3 provide further guidance on fishing in park units.</p> <p>Desired Conditions: High quality public opportunities continue to be available for fishing in Chickasaw National Recreation Area.</p> <p>Strategies: NPS staff will continue to work with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation in Lake of the Arbuckles, monitoring fish populations and enforcing state regulations, to ensure that harvest levels do not adversely affect Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s fish populations.</p> <p>To ensure that a quality recreational fishery is maintained in Chickasaw National Recreation Area, the NPS staff will develop a fisheries management plan, in cooperation with the state, to identify long-range goals, management objectives, information needs, and staffing and budgetary requirements.</p> <p>The NPS staff will work with the state to determine if fishing tournaments should be limited. The state will be encouraged to provide an opportunity for NPS staff to participate in decisions regarding stocking Lake of the Arbuckles and to notify NPS staff when the state is stocking the lake.</p> <p>Populations of nonnative fish and other animals will be managed whenever such species threaten recreation area resources or public health and when control is prudent and feasible.</p>
Lightscape Management/ Night Sky	<p>NPS policy recognizes that Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s night sky is a feature that contributes to the visitor experience. The policy further states that the NPS staff will seek to minimize the intrusion of artificial light into the night scene. In natural areas, artificial outdoor lighting will be limited to meet basic safety requirements and will be shielded when possible.</p> <p>Desired Conditions: Opportunities to view the night sky are available. Artificial light sources within Chickasaw National Recreation Area do not impair night sky viewing opportunities or adversely affect wildlife populations.</p> <p>Strategies: Impacts on the night sky caused by facilities such as campgrounds within Chickasaw National Recreation Area will be evaluated. To the extent possible, the staff will work within a regional context to protect night sky quality. Chickasaw National Recreation Area will also work with the Bureau of Reclamation to reduce the impact of the security lights on the dam.</p> <p>If it is determined that light sources within Chickasaw National Recreation Area affect views of the night sky, alternatives to existing lighting sources will be studied, such as shielding lights, changing lamp types, or eliminating unnecessary sources.</p>
Natural Soundscape	<p>NPS <i>Management Policies 2001</i> (§ 4.9) and NPS Director’s Order 47, “Sound Preservation and Noise Management” requires park managers to strive to preserve the natural soundscape (natural quiet) associated with the physical and biological resources (i.e., the sounds of the wind in the trees). The concept of natural quiet was further defined in the <i>Report on Effects of Aircraft Overflights on the National Park System</i> (NPS 1995):</p> <p>What is <i>natural quiet</i>? Parks and wildernesses offer a variety of unique, pristine sounds <i>not</i> found in most urban or suburban environments. They also offer a complete absence of sounds that <i>are</i> found in such environments. Together, these two conditions provide a very special dimension to a park experience — quiet itself. In the absence of any discernible source of sound (especially man-made), quiet is an important element of the feeling of solitude. Quiet also affords visitors an opportunity to hear faint or very distant sounds, such as animal activity and waterfalls. Such an experience provides an important perspective on the vastness of the environment in which the visitor is located, often beyond the visual boundaries determined by trees, terrain, and the like. In considering natural quiet as a resource, the ability to hear clearly the delicate and quieter intermittent sounds of nature, the ability to experience interludes of extreme quiet for their own sake, and the opportunity to do so for extended periods, is what natural quiet is all about.</p> <p>The primary sources of noise in Chickasaw National Recreation Area are due to watercraft on Lake of the Arbuckles and land-based sources such as motor vehicles.</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Natural Soundscape (cont.)	<p>Desired Conditions: Visitors have opportunities in Chickasaw National Recreation Area to experience natural sounds in an unimpaired condition. The sounds of civilization are generally confined to developed areas and specific hours of the day.</p> <p>Strategies: The existing quiet hours in campgrounds will be maintained.</p> <p>Enforcement of the decibel regulations for boats will be improved.</p> <p>NPS managers will minimize noise generated by management activities by strictly regulating NPS administrative use of noise-producing machinery such as motorized equipment. Noise will be a consideration when procuring and using NPS equipment.</p> <p>NPS staff will work with the Department of Defense to develop a process to address the occasional problems that arise from military flights over Chickasaw National Recreation Area.</p>
Cultural Resources	
Archeological Resources	<p>Desired Conditions: Archeological sites are protected in an undisturbed condition unless it is determined through formal processes that disturbance or natural deterioration is unavoidable. Archeological sites are identified and inventoried, and their significance is determined and documented.</p> <p>Strategies: When disturbance or deterioration is unavoidable, the site will be professionally documented and excavated and the resulting artifacts, materials, and records will be curated and conserved in consultation with the Oklahoma state historic preservation office and, if necessary, American Indian tribes. Some archeological sites that can be adequately protected might be interpreted to the visitor.</p> <p>Archeological surveys will be sponsored so that the whole national recreation area is eventually covered systematically. That includes the Platt Historic District and the Arbuckle District.</p>
Historic Structures	<p>Desired Conditions: Structures individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), or identified as contributing to the National Historic Landmark significance of the Platt Historic District's cultural landscape, are managed to ensure their long-term preservation and protection of character-defining features.</p> <p>Strategies: Appropriate preservation treatments for historic structures will be carried out in accordance with the <i>Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties</i>. As required, historic structures requiring more intensive rehabilitation or restoration treatments will receive further investigation and documentation (e.g., historic structure reports) to inform management of decisions and ensure protection of historic fabric and architecturally significant features. Preservation of historic structures will be emphasized as a critical component of Chickasaw National Recreation Area's ongoing maintenance and resource protection programs. There would be consideration given for acquisition of historic structures, springs, or wells adjacent to or nearby the recreation area if they become available.</p>
Ethnographic Resources	<p>Desired Conditions: Appropriate cultural anthropological research is conducted in cooperation with groups associated with Chickasaw National Recreation Area.</p> <p>NPS staff accommodates access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners and avoids adversely affecting the physical integrity of these sacred sites.</p> <p>NPS general regulations on access to and use of natural and cultural resources in the area are applied in an informed and balanced manner that is consistent with recreation area purposes, and does not unreasonably interfere with American Indian use of traditional areas or sacred resources, and does not result in the degradation of area resources.</p> <p>American Indians and other individuals and groups linked by ties of kinship or culture to ethnically identifiable human remains, sacred objects, objects of cultural patrimony, and associated funerary objects are consulted when such items may be disturbed or are encountered on area lands.</p> <p>All ethnographic resources determined eligible as traditional cultural properties for listing or listed in the NRHP are protected. If disturbance of such resources is unavoidable, consultation is conducted as appropriate with the relevant American Indian tribes, tribal historic preservation officers, European American families or groups, and the Oklahoma state historic preservation officer. This consultation is in accordance with NHPA, as amended, and the implementation of regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Ethnographic Resources (cont.)	<p>Strategies: All agencies are required to consult with tribal governments before taking actions that could affect federally recognized tribal governments. These consultations are to be open and candid so that all interested parties may evaluate for themselves the potential impact of relevant proposals.</p> <p>The identities of community consultants and information about sacred and other culturally sensitive places and practices will be kept confidential when research agreements or other circumstances warrant.</p> <p>NPS staff will conduct appropriate ethnographic, ethnohistorical, or cultural anthropological research in conjunction with, and in cooperation with, American Indian tribes traditionally associated with Chickasaw National Recreation Area.</p> <p>NPS staff will strive to involve the Chickasaw Nation and other American Indian tribes traditionally associated with Chickasaw National Recreation Area in the interpretation program to promote the accuracy of information presenting Chickasaw Indian cultural history and other American Indian cultural values, and to enhance public appreciation of those values.</p> <p>NPS staff will seek to participate as possible partners, and certainly as good neighbors, with the Chickasaw Nation and any other interested traditionally associated American Indian tribes. Seek to participate in planning for and conducting projects and initiatives that enhance the quality of the experiences of visitors to Chickasaw National Recreation Area and that enhance the levels of public appreciation of Chickasaw National Recreation Area's resources and values.</p>
Cultural Landscapes	<p>Desired Conditions: Character-defining features and attributes contributing to the NRHP or National Historic Landmark significance of the Platt Historic District as a designated cultural landscape are appropriately preserved and restored. Additional inventories on other park areas are used to identify other cultural landscape resources potentially eligible for the NRHP.</p> <p>Strategies: Treatment recommendations identified in the <i>Cultural Landscape Report</i> (Hohmann and Grala 2004) for the Platt Historic District will serve as guidance in accordance with the <i>Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes)</i> to ensure long-term preservation objectives. Cultural landscape preservation will be emphasized as a critical component of Chickasaw National Recreation Area's ongoing maintenance and resource protection programs.</p>
Museum Collections	<p>Desired Conditions: All museum collections and archives and their component artifacts, objects, specimens, documents, photographs, maps, plans, and manuscripts are properly inventoried, accessioned, catalogued, curated, documented, protected, and preserved; and adequate provision is made for their access by national recreation area staffers and other researchers and for their use in exhibits, interpretation, and research.</p> <p>Strategies: Chickasaw National Recreation Area will prepare a museum collection plan that will examine all opportunities and options to house the collection. Some items to be considered include the retrieval of some museum artifacts and specimens that are on loan to other institutions; accommodation of donated historic artifacts, photographs, and papers being sought from public; and to provide secure and comfortable work and storage space that meets museum standards. The plan would be consistent with <i>Museum Collection Facilities Strategy, Intermountain Region</i> (NPS 2005).</p> <p>The qualities that contribute to the significance of collections will be protected in accordance with established standards.</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Visitor Use And Experience	
Visitor Use and Experience	<p>Desired Conditions: Area resources are conserved “unimpaired” for the enjoyment of future generations. Visitors have opportunities for forms of enjoyment that are uniquely suited and appropriate to the superlative natural and cultural resources found in Chickasaw National Recreation Area; opportunities continue to be provided for visitors to understand, appreciate, and enjoy Chickasaw National Recreation Area. The types and levels of visitor use in all of Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s management areas are consistent with the desired resource and visitor experience conditions prescribed for those areas. No activities occur that would cause derogation of the values and purposes for which the recreation area has been established.</p> <p>Opportunities for high quality hunting and fishing experiences continue to be provided in Chickasaw National Recreation Area.</p> <p>Area visitors have opportunities to understand and appreciate the significance of Chickasaw National Recreation Area and its resources, and to develop a personal stewardship ethic.</p> <p>To the extent feasible, programs, services, and facilities in Chickasaw National Recreation Area are accessible to and usable by all people, including those with disabilities.</p> <p>Strategies: NPS staff will continue to enforce the regulations governing visitor use and behavior in Title 36 of the <i>Code of Federal Regulations</i> (36 CFR) and in Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s Superintendent’s Compendium.</p> <p>All of Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s programs and facilities will be evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that they are accessible to the extent feasible.</p> <p>Visitor surveys will be periodically conducted to determine visitor satisfaction with Chickasaw National Recreation Area facilities, NPS management, and the experiences they are having.</p> <p>NPS staff will periodically meet with managers from other recreation areas in the region, such as Turner Falls, to improve visitor trip planning, information and orientation; and enrich interpretation and education opportunities for Chickasaw National Recreation Area visitors.</p> <p>To meet the requirements of the 1978 National Parks and Recreation Act and NPS management policies, NPS staff will identify implementation commitments for visitor-carrying capacities for all areas of Chickasaw National Recreation Area. Facility capacities (e.g., parking, picnicking, and campsite availability) have been the primary factor in determining Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s carrying capacity. NPS staff will continue to monitor visitor comments on issues such as crowding and availability of parking spaces and campsites at busy times of the year, and will monitor for resource impacts caused by visitors. Should any of the trends increase to levels unacceptable to managers, the NPS staff will consider what actions to take, such as undertaking detailed planning to establish visitor-carrying capacity strategies and monitoring programs. Studies will determine what levels of visitation will be consistent with the preservation of Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s resources and the experiences that visitors desire. Also see the User Capacity section at the beginning of chapter 2.</p>
Backcountry	<p>Desired Conditions: Visitors in the backcountry (e.g., Upper Guy Sandy and the Rock Creek corridor areas) have high-quality experiences and have minimal impacts on resources.</p> <p>Strategies: Backcountry use will be managed in accordance with a backcountry management plan (or other plan addressing backcountry uses) that is designed to avoid unacceptable impacts on recreation area resources or adverse affects on visitor enjoyment of appropriate recreational experiences.</p> <p>NPS staff will seek to identify acceptable limits of impacts, monitor backcountry use levels and resource conditions, and take prompt, corrective action when unacceptable impacts occur.</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Commercial Services	<p>A commercial activity is defined as any activity for which compensation is exchanged. It includes activities by for-profit and nonprofit operators. Commercial services are more than just concessions. They include concession contracts, commercial use authorizations, leases, cooperative agreements, rights-of-way, and special use permits. Levels of commercial use are consistent with resource protection and visitor experience goals for Chickasaw National Recreation Area and do not unduly interfere with the independent visitor's ability to participate in the same activity. They are also safe and sustainable.</p> <p>Desired Conditions: If commercial services are identified as being necessary and appropriate in Chickasaw National Recreation Area, the operators provide high-quality visitor experiences while protecting important resources. They add to visitor enjoyment of Chickasaw National Recreation Area, and mesh well as partners with NPS staff and programs. The commercial services comply with the provisions of the NPS Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998.</p> <p>Strategies: All commercial services must be authorized, must be necessary and/or appropriate, and must be economically feasible. Appropriate planning will be done to support commercial services authorization, and appropriate commercial permits may or will be granted.</p> <p>If commercial services are offered in Chickasaw National Recreation Area, they will be periodically evaluated to ensure that they are providing satisfactory services in an efficient and effective manner, and that they are safe, sustainable, and compatible with recreation area resources.</p>
Other Topics	
Sustainable Design/ Development	<p>Sustainability can be described as doing things in ways that do not compromise the environment or its capacity to provide for present and future generations. Sustainable practices consider local and global consequences to minimize the short- and long-term environmental impacts of human actions and developments through resource conservation, recycling, waste minimization, and the use of energy-efficient and ecologically responsible materials and techniques.</p> <p>Over the past several years, the federal government has been emphasizing the adoption of sustainable practices. In particular, Executive Order 12873 mandates federal agency recycling and waste prevention; and Executive Order 12902 mandates energy efficiency and water conservation at federal facilities.</p> <p>Desired Conditions: Chickasaw National Recreation Area is a leader in sustainable practices. All decisions regarding operations, facilities management, and development in the recreation area — from the initial concept through design and construction — reflect principles of resource preservation. Thus, all recreation area developments and operations are sustainable to the maximum degree possible and practical. New developments and existing facilities are located, built, and modified according to the <i>Guiding Principles of Sustainable Design</i> (NPS 1993) or other similar guidelines. Chickasaw National Recreation Area has state-of-the-art water systems for conserving water, and energy conservation technologies and renewable energy sources whenever possible. Biodegradable, nontoxic, and durable materials are used in the recreation area whenever possible. The reduction, use, and recycling of materials is promoted, while materials that are nondurable, environmentally detrimental, or that require transportation from great distances are avoided as much as possible.</p> <p>Strategies: NPS staff will work with experts both inside and outside the National Park Service to make Chickasaw National Recreation Area's facilities and programs sustainable. Partnerships will be sought to implement sustainable practices in the recreation area. NPS staff also will work with stakeholders and business partners to augment NPS environmental leadership and sustainability efforts.</p> <p>NPS managers will perform value analysis and value engineering, including life cycle analysis, to examine the energy, environmental, and economic implications of proposed developments.</p> <p>NPS staff will support and encourage the service of suppliers and contractors that follow sustainable practices.</p> <p>Energy-efficient practices and renewable energy sources will be promoted wherever possible.</p> <p>Chickasaw National Recreation Area's interpretive programs will mention sustainable and nonsustainable practices. Visitors will be educated on the principles of environmental leadership and sustainability through exhibits, media, and printed material.</p> <p>NPS employees will be educated to have a comprehensive understanding of their relationship to environmental leadership and sustainability.</p> <p>NPS managers will measure and track environmental compliance and performance. Audits will ensure environmental compliance, emphasize best management practices, and educate employees at all levels about environmental management responsibilities.</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Transportation to and within Chickasaw National Recreation Area	<p>Desired Conditions: Visitors have reasonable access to Chickasaw National Recreation Area, and there are connections from the recreation area to regional transportation systems as appropriate. Transportation facilities in the recreation area provide access for the protection, use, and enjoyment of recreation area resources. They preserve the integrity of the surroundings, respect ecological processes, and provide the highest visual quality and a rewarding visitor experience.</p> <p>Strategies: NPS staff will participate in all transportation planning forums that may result in links to areas or impact recreation area resources. Working with federal, tribal, state, and local agencies on transportation issues, NPS staff will seek reasonable access to areas in Chickasaw National Recreation Area and connections to external transportation systems.</p>
Utilities and Communication Facilities	<p>The Telecommunications Act of 1996 directs all federal agencies to assist in the national goal of achieving a seamless telecommunications system throughout the United States by accommodating requests by telecommunication companies for the use of property, rights-of-way, and easements to the extent allowable under each agency's mission. The National Park Service is legally obligated to permit telecommunication infrastructure in the park units if such facilities can be structured to avoid interference with park unit purposes.</p> <p>Desired Conditions: Recreation area resources or public enjoyment of Chickasaw National Recreation Area are not denigrated by nonconforming uses. Telecommunication structures are permitted in the recreation area to the extent that they do not jeopardize the recreation area's resources. No new nonconforming use or rights-of-way are permitted through the recreation area without specific statutory authority and approval by the director of the National Park Service or his/her representative, and are permitted only if there is no practicable alternative to such use of NPS lands.</p> <p>Strategies: New or reconstructed utilities and communications utilities, and communications infrastructures will be located in association with existing structures and along roadways or other established corridors in developed areas. For reconstruction or extension into undisturbed areas, routes will be selected that would minimize impacts on Chickasaw National Recreation Area's natural, cultural, and visual resources.</p> <p>Utility lines will be placed underground to the maximum extent possible.</p> <p>NPS staff will work with service companies, local communities, and the public to locate new utility lines so that there is minimal effect on recreation area resources.</p> <p>NPS policies will be followed in processing applications for commercial telecommunications applications.</p>
Dam and Streamflow Control Structures	<p>Desired Conditions: All dams and streamflow control structures in Chickasaw National Recreation Area are adequately maintained and managed according to NPS policy, and do not present hazards to visitors, NPS staff, nearby residents, businesses, or properties. The operation and maintenance of all dams and control structures satisfy the standards and requirements in Director's Order 40 (<i>Dams and Appurtenant Works</i>), NPS Special Directive 87-4 ("Dams and Appurtenant Works — Desk Reference Manual for Maintenance, Operation and Safety" 1987), and "Standing Operating Procedures Guide for Dams, Reservoirs, and Power Facilities" (BuRec, Denver 1996). Dams and control structures outside of Chickasaw National Recreation Area also do not pose hazards to the recreation area.</p> <p>Strategies: All dams and streamflow control structures in Chickasaw National Recreation Area are regularly monitored and annual safety inspections are conducted. NPS staff work with the Bureau of Reclamation and other agencies to ensure that all dams in the recreation area are adequately maintained.</p> <p>An emergency action plan (which describes procedures to reduce the loss of life or property should a dam failure become likely) is regularly reviewed and updated for dams in Chickasaw National Recreation Area that pose high or significant downstream hazard potential. Potential hazards posed by dams outside the recreation area also are identified.</p>

TOPIC	Desired Conditions and Strategies for Chickasaw National Recreation Area
Dam and Streamflow Control Structures (cont.)	<p>Official inspection reports are prepared for all NPS dams, and obtained for non-NPS dams, such as the Lake of the Arbuckles Dam, operated by the Bureau of Reclamation. These reports are submitted to the NPS Maintenance, Operation, and Safety of Dams (MOSD) program coordinator.</p> <p>Prompt corrective actions are taken to address deficient dams within Chickasaw National Recreation Area that pose significant hazards. The National Park Service will also alert the owners of dams outside the recreation area that are seriously deficient and pose high hazards to the recreation area, such as the Lacy Lake Dam; and work with the owners and other appropriate parties to correct these deficiencies.</p> <p>All of the existing dams and streamflow control structures in Chickasaw National Recreation Area contribute to the cultural, natural, and recreational resource bases of the area. However, if in the future a structure(s) is determined to not positively contribute to the recreation area's resources and uses, and/or poses unacceptable maintenance costs, once appropriate environmental compliance documentation has been completed, it will be removed.</p>



Special Mandates and Administrative Commitments

In addition to the general law and policies previously discussed, there are several specific mandates and administrative commitments that refer to Chickasaw National Recreation Area. The legal requirements and formal administrative agreements listed below apply to the *Chickasaw National Recreation Area General Management Plan*.

- The legislation establishing Chickasaw National Recreation Area (Public Law 94-235) mandates that the total acreage of Chickasaw National Recreation Area cannot exceed 10,000 acres.
- Section 3 of Public Law 94-235 mandates that the National Park Service work with the Oklahoma Department of Fish and Wildlife on management of hunting and fishing in Chickasaw.
- Under a 2001 memorandum of understanding, the state of Oklahoma maintains U.S. Highway 177, including the roadway, signs, and guardrails.
- The Arbuckle Master Conservancy and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers manage the water level of Lake of the Arbuckles, while the Bureau of Reclamation maintains the reservoir dam.
- A series of rights-of-way, easements, and memoranda of understanding provide for the city of Sulphur to access and operate its wastewater treatment plant on city-owned land within Chickasaw National Recreation Area, as well as maintain underground pipes that pass through the recreation area.
- The National Park Service has a May 2006 memorandum of understanding with the Goddard Youth Camp giving the camp permission to operate its facility within Chickasaw National Recreation Area's boundary. The camp was established as an environmental education facility for the use of nonprofit youth organizations.
- A series of rights-of-ways, easements, and memoranda of agreement provide for a

variety of utility lines to cross through Chickasaw National Recreation Area, including city waterlines and sewerlines; phone and gas lines that go through the Platt District; and phone, gas, and powerlines that pass through the Guy Sandy, the Point, and Buckhorn areas.

- There are some agreements (special use permits) for road access across federal lands to private houses and lots. The National Park Service also has an agreement to maintain a segment of this road to provide access to the landowners.

Relationship of Other Planning Efforts to this General Management Plan

Chickasaw National Recreation Area is in Murray County, Oklahoma. Properties surrounding Chickasaw National Recreation Area are mostly privately owned residential and agricultural lands. There are also commercial-, city-, and state-owned parcels adjacent to the recreation area.

Several plans have influenced, or would be influenced by, the approved *General Management Plan* for Chickasaw National Recreation Area. These plans have been prepared, or are being prepared, by NPS staff. Some of these plans are described briefly herein, along with their relationship to this GMP.

Business Plan (2005)

The Business Plan's purpose is to improve the abilities of parks to more clearly communicate their financial status with principal stakeholders. Chickasaw National Recreation Area's Business Plan was completed in 2004 for the Fiscal Year of 2003. The Management Team conducted analysis of the financial historical data, along with defining operational standards; developed priorities; determined strategies for reducing costs; developed strategies for increasing nonappropriated

funding; and allocated resources differently using “Core Operations” criteria. The completed Business Plan for Chickasaw National Recreation Area has provided a “Poster Child” example to other parks for finding immediate sustainable solutions within their own budgets through the process of “Core Operations.” Chickasaw National Recreation Area is confident that it can meet its priorities and needs through implementing strategies and continued evaluation of its internal procedures and resource allocations. The lessons learned from the business plan process will guide Chickasaw National Recreation Area toward sustainable operations and improve the protection of park resources.

Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (2005)

NPS policy states that each park shall have a *Comprehensive Interpretive Plan* that includes a long-range vision of the interpretive program, an annual component to implement the vision, and a reference database. Completion of all three sections is critical to ensuring that interpretive resources are coordinated and focused on achieving management’s vision for Chickasaw National Recreation Area. The three principle sections of the *Comprehensive Interpretive Plan* are titled:

- Long-Range Interpretive Plan
- Annual Implementation Plan
- Interpretive Database

The three-part *Comprehensive Interpretive Plan* is intended to define and guide the parkwide interpretive program consistent with the achievement of Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s goal for interpretation, as described in Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s Strategic Plan: Increasing People’s Understanding and Appreciation of the Significances of Chickasaw National Recreation Area. The *Comprehensive Interpretive Plan* (CIP) is the implementation plan that defines the parkwide interpretive program. All interpretive activities are based on and coordinated by the CIP. The resulting parkwide interpretive program communicates — in the most effective and efficient way —

Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s significances and meanings while promoting the protection and preservation of Chickasaw National Recreation Area resources.

“Superintendent’s Compendium” (2006)

This is a list of designations, closures, permit requirements, and other restrictions on uses in Chickasaw National Recreation Area promulgated under the discretionary authority of the superintendent. The compendium covers visitor hours, public use limits, closures and area designations for specific uses or activities, a list of activities that require a NPS permit; and general regulations regarding preservation of natural and cultural resources, wildlife protection, hunting and fishing, camping, boating, pets, and use of bicycles, among other topics. The compendium will be modified as necessary to reflect any changes resulting from implementation of the *General Management Plan*.

Resource Management Plan (1999)

The *Resources Management Plan* is Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s plan for the long-range management of its resources and a tactical plan identifying short-term projects. The plan identifies and describes specific inventory, monitoring, research, restoration, and mitigation actions that are currently active or that are needed to perpetuate natural processes and resources and preserve cultural resources in Chickasaw National Recreation Area. The *Resource Management Plan* will be replaced with a “Resource Stewardship Strategy” as needed to incorporate the management directions presented in this plan.

Strategic Plan for Chickasaw National Recreation Area (2005 – 2008)

The strategic plan describes the long-term goals for Chickasaw National Recreation Area and how it contributes to nationwide NPS goals. The plan includes objective, quantified, measurable, long-term goals. Also included in

the document are a description of strategies and operational processes and resources required to meet the goals, an identification of key factors external to the recreation area that could significantly affect the achievement of general goals, and a discussion of measuring results. The desired conditions, goals, and strategies included in the strategic plan will be updated to reflect the management directions presented in the approved *General Management Plan*.

Annual Performance Plan (2006)

This annual plan identifies goals for the recreation area in the context of its parent mission and long-term goals for fiscal year 2003 (October 1, 2002 — September 30, 2003). Each annual goal is outcome-oriented, objective, quantified, and measurable, with performance measures built into each goal statement. Each goal has a brief background explanation, an overview of how the goal will be accomplished, and a statement of how accomplishment will be measured. Future annual performance plans will tier off the management directions presented in this *General Management Plan*.

Statement for Management (June 1995)

The “Statement for Management” discusses different influences that affect management of Chickasaw National Recreation Area, including legislative and administrative requirements, resource conditions, land uses and trends, visitor uses and trends, and facilities. Major issues facing the recreation area were identified, including land protection, alien species, restoration of native ecosystems, external threats, and access. General management objectives were identified for natural ecosystems, cultural resources, visitor use, and facility development and staffing. Although no longer being prepared by the National Park Service, the “Statement for Management” was used as a foundation document in preparing this plan.

Amendment to the General Management Plan (1994)

This amendment focuses on the development of the new visitor center near Vendome Well and Chickasaw Nation Cultural Center. It proposed development of the visitor center near Vendome Well and the Chickasaw Nation



Foundation for the Plan

Cultural Center near the Rock Creek area. These projects were being developed at the time of preparation of this *General Management Plan*. This amendment also provided guidance for the administrative offices and maintenance facilities.

Water Resources Management Plan (1998)

This plan serves as a tool to manage water resources-related planning activities at Chickasaw National Recreation Area for 5–10 years. The plan includes an overview of Chickasaw National Recreation Area’s resources, resource management objectives, and critical water resource issues. A recommended management program is outlined that includes a set of project statements prepared following guidelines established by the National Park Service.

Cultural Landscape Report (Hohmann and Grala 2004)

This report documents the physical evolution and existing conditions of the Platt District’s cultural landscape, describes character-defining features, and analyzes landscape significance and integrity. It further presents recommended treatment guidelines and strategies appropriate for the preservation and rehabilitation of the district’s cultural landscape resources.

Regional Plans

Currently Chickasaw National Recreation Area continues to participate with two ongoing regional planning organizations. They are the Arbuckle Mountain Area Tourism Association and the Murray County Long Range Planning Commission.



Planning Issues/Concerns

During the scoping (early information gathering) period for this GMP, NPS staff; representatives from county, state, and other federal agencies and organizations; and members of the public identified various issues and concerns. An issue is defined as an opportunity, conflict, or problem regarding the use or management of public lands. Comments were solicited at public meetings, through planning newsletters, and on Chickasaw National Recreation Area's website (see the "Consultation and Coordination" chapter).

Comments received during scoping demonstrated that there is much that the public likes about Chickasaw National Recreation Area — its management, use, and facilities. The issues and concerns generally involve determining the appropriate visitor use, types and levels of facilities, services, and activities while remaining compatible with desired resource conditions. The GMP provides strategies for addressing the issues within the context of Chickasaw National Recreation Area's purpose, significance, and special mandates.

Issues

Water Rights, Water Withdrawals, and Groundwater Management

The use and management of the Arbuckle-Simpson aquifer that underlies Chickasaw National Recreation Area is a major concern to the National Park Service and other agencies, groups, businesses, and individuals in the region. Concerns have been raised that overuse of the aquifer that sustains the recreation area's springs and streams may be responsible for the disappearance of some of the springs. Recent applications have been filed to appropriate groundwater outside Chickasaw National Recreation Area, which could have significant effects on the recreation area.

The GMP generally addresses water quantity and groundwater issues, providing desired conditions and general strategies. However,

the plan does not go into detail on these issues. In 2003, the state of Oklahoma, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and USGS began a five-year study of the aquifer. This study will determine how the aquifer is managed and how much water can be pumped out of the aquifer on an annual basis. Once the study is finished, NPS staff will work with the state of Oklahoma to ensure that Chickasaw National Recreation Area's springs and streams are maintained and protected.

Surface Water Quality

Water quality is an important issue for Chickasaw National Recreation Area, both for visitors and NPS staff. Although the recreation area's water quality is generally considered to be good, swimming waters often test above allowable limits for contaminants, although the source of these contaminants is not known. Rock Creek and Lake of the Arbuckles are included on the Oklahoma 303(d) list of impaired waters because of elevated nutrients, siltation, and salinity. Beginning in the summer 2003, the National Park Service posted advisory notices along Travertine Creek because bacterial levels had exceeded NPS standards.

The 1998 *Water Resources Management Plan* (NPS 1998) focuses on water quality issues and identifies specific actions that will be taken. The GMP generally addresses surface water quality, sets desired conditions, and describes strategies for obtaining them.

Spread of Nonnative (Exotic) Species and Red Cedar

Many species of invasive nonnative plants have become established throughout much of Chickasaw National Recreation Area and threaten native species. This is principally because of past use of the area. In time, these aggressive exotic plants can greatly expand their populations; alter forest, prairie, and

wildlife habitats; and change scenery by smothering and displacing native species. These effects, which are already occurring in some areas of the recreation area, will worsen substantially if left untreated. A sustained effort is needed to control these internal threats to the native species and their natural habitats.

Eastern red cedar is a native species, but due largely to the suppression of fire, it is rapidly spreading throughout most of Chickasaw National Recreation Area and has become a pest, affecting many other plants and animals. It also poses a potential public safety threat to the recreation area and surrounding area due to the potential for wildfires.

The GMP provides general guidance for natural resources restoration by setting desired conditions (see table 1). These issues are addressed in depth in Chickasaw National Recreation Area's "Vegetation Management Plan" (Hoagland and Johnson 2000) and "Fire Management Plan" (NPS 2003c).

Use and Types of Visitor Use Facilities

About 1.6 million visitors recreate in Chickasaw National Recreation Area each year. Most times of the year recreation area facilities can handle visitor use levels. But during the peak summer season, particularly weekends and holidays, facilities are full. Parking also is not available. Questions have been raised about whether additional facilities, such as parking areas, trails, picnic shelters, and campgrounds, should be provided in the recreation area.

Although several of Chickasaw National Recreation Area's campground facilities were recently upgraded, people have advocated expanding the facilities, including increasing parking and campsite spaces; upgrading electrical power for recreational vehicles; providing showers in the Platt District; increasing equine trails; and providing camping opportunities for horseback riders. Decisions need to be made on what, if any, new facilities and/or facility improvements are

needed, or what management actions should be made in the recreation area to manage visitor use

Maintenance and Administrative Facilities

Chickasaw National Recreation Area has outdated maintenance facilities. The site is too small to meet recreation area needs, it does not meet modern safety and health standards, and it is not energy efficient. In addition, other administrative facilities are lacking or may be inadequate in the future. Although the administrative offices are now in a leased space in the city of Sulphur, there is no room for additional offices if the staff was to expand, and there are limited facilities for natural resource management needs. The GMP needs to determine what the future for the maintenance facility is and what administrative facilities are needed.

User Capacity

In recent years there has been an increased pressure on visitor facilities within Chickasaw National Recreation Area. Campground sites and parking, as well as boat launches and their associated parking lots, can become congested during the summer weekends, particularly over holidays. In chapter 2, the GMP describes a brief strategy by suggesting potential indicators that can be monitored to help guide management actions to protect desired resource conditions and visitor experiences.

Issues Not Addressed in this General Management Plan

One issue that is not being addressed in this GMP is the use of personal watercraft on Lake of the Arbuckles. Personal watercraft use was banned at Chickasaw National Recreation Area after November 6, 2002, in compliance with a NPS regulation prohibiting personal watercraft use in most park units and a subsequent court settlement. On March 10, 2003, the National Park Service released an

environmental assessment that analyzed the impacts associated with personal watercraft use on Lake of the Arbuckles (NPS 2003a). The plan allows personal watercraft use on the lake with some user restrictions (e.g., launch, areas of use, wake, equipment, emission, and safety/operating restrictions). A 30-day public comment period on the draft environmental assessment concluded on April 8, 2003. The National Park Service prepared a special regulation allowing personal watercraft use, which was approved on September 2, 2004. Most of Lake of the Arbuckles is now open to personal watercraft use.

Decision Points

Decision points identify the key decisions that remain to be made after consideration of all the laws, policies, and mandates. As with any decision-making process, there are key decisions that, once made, will dictate the direction of subsequent decisions. Based on public comments and issues and NPS concerns, five decision points were identified. This GMP focuses on alternative ways of addressing these decision points. The decision points listed below are not listed in any order of priority or importance.

1. What outdoor recreation and visitor enjoyment opportunities should be provided at Chickasaw National Recreation Area, given that people, water resources, and other natural and cultural resources must be protected?
2. How can the National Park Service balance the needs of competing and/or complementary uses?
3. What facilities and lands are needed to meet the National Park Service and recreation area goals (recreation, resource protection, education/interpretation, safety, maintenance, and administration, etc.)?
4. What are the appropriate cultural and natural landscapes throughout Chickasaw National Recreation Area and how should they be managed?
5. What partnerships and other cooperative actions are needed with national recreation area neighbors, agencies, and others to resolve issues facing Chickasaw National Recreation Area over the next 20 years?





Introduction

Many aspects of the desired future condition of Chickasaw National Recreation Area are defined in the establishing legislation, Chickasaw National Recreation Area's purpose and significance statements, and the servicewide mandates and policies that were described earlier. Within these parameters, the National Park Service solicited input from the public, NPS staff, governmental agencies, tribal officials, and other organizations regarding issues and desired conditions for Chickasaw National Recreation Area. Planning team members gathered information about existing visitor use and the condition of Chickasaw National Recreation Area's facilities and resources. They considered which areas of the recreation area attract visitors, and which areas have sensitive resources.

This chapter describes the management prescriptions (see table 2) for managing Chickasaw National Recreation Area for the next 15–20 years.

A new visitor center near Vendome Well was approved in the 1994 Amendment to the GMP and is planned for construction in the near future, dependent upon funding.

User Capacity

GMPs are required to include identification of and implementation commitments for visitor user capacities for areas of the unit. Visitor user capacity is the type and level of visitor use that can be accommodated while sustaining the desired resource conditions and social conditions and visitor experience that complement the purposes of Chickasaw National Recreation Area. It is not necessarily a set of numbers or limits, but rather a process involving monitoring, evaluation, actions (managing visitor use), and adjustments to ensure park values are protected. At the GMP level of decision making, management zones include a qualitative description of desired resource conditions and visitor opportunities.

The strategy of addressing user capacity at Chickasaw National Recreation Area is a tiered approach that would keep a general eye on broad trends while focusing more specific monitoring and management on areas where action is most likely needed to achieve desired conditions.

General information would continue to be collected such as trail counts, numbers of incidental business permits, and trailhead parking numbers. This information would be systematically analyzed to watch for trends. If trends raise some concerns, specific indicators would be established to monitor the condition of natural and cultural resources and visitor experiences in areas of concern. Indicators might include the condition of some key resources (e.g., soils, vegetation cover, historic resources, archeological sites, water quality, and natural soundscape) visible impacts (i.e., density of social trails), or visitor experiences (i.e., perceived solitude). Standards would be developed which would serve as trigger points that define when conditions become unacceptable for a zone or area. If conditions are unacceptable or conditions are approaching the standards, management actions may be needed to address deteriorating conditions. These management actions could include expanding education (especially "leave no trace" ethics), restoring disturbed sites,

The Plan

improving trail delineation, establishing a permit system, and establishing use limits.

As identified above, there are a number of potential indicators and standards and a range of management actions that may be needed to achieve or retain desired conditions. Additional visitor surveys will determine social indicators and standards that would achieve desired conditions for visitor experiences in the various zones. Staff and other experts will be needed to establish indicators and standards for natural and cultural resources. More detailed planning for visitor experience and resource management would be needed to guide management actions. Some additional user needs would be met with the facility improvements proposed in this GMP.

Potential for Boundary Adjustments

The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 requires GMPs to address whether boundary modifications should be made to park units. The enabling legislation of Chickasaw National Recreation Area limits its size to 10,000 acres (see appendix C). The current area of 9,889 acres allows for small additions of lands that surround Chickasaw National Recreation Area. The recreation area staff actively looks for land parcels adjacent to the boundary that enhance Chickasaw National Recreation Area's natural, cultural, and scenic resource values as they become available. Thus, this Plan does not propose any specific land additions to Chickasaw National Recreation Area. Although there are no immediate needs to consider boundary adjustments, this plan does not prohibit small additions that may be identified in the future by other land planning processes such as land for administrative use.

Implementation of the Plan

The Plan will be implemented over 15–20 years in phases. Chickasaw National Recreation Area's business plan was completed in the fall of 2004. The business plan, as well as annual work plans and Chickasaw National Recreation Area's strategic plan, will help develop priorities on how best to implement the Plan.

The implementation of the facility development proposed within the GMP is dependent upon funding available at the time of need. The approval of the GMP does not guarantee that the funding and staffing needed to implement the plan will be forthcoming. Implementation of facility development would be phased as needed and as funds are available over a 20-year period.

In addition to funding, the implementation of any proposed action also could be affected by other factors. Additional feasibility studies and more detailed planning and environmental documentation would be completed, as appropriate, before any proposed actions can be carried out.

Personnel needs are expressed as “full-time equivalents” (FTE). One FTE equals one person year of work. FTEs are typically filled by a federal employee. However, they may be filled by volunteers and contracted services.

Management Prescriptions

Management prescriptions are descriptions of desired conditions for resources and visitor experiences in different areas of the park unit. All are developed within the scope of the park unit's purpose, significance, mandates, and legislation. Management prescriptions are determined for each park unit; however, the management prescriptions for one unit will likely not be the same for any other park unit (although some might be similar). The management prescriptions identify the widest range of potentially appropriate resource conditions, visitor experiences, and facilities for the park unit that fall within the scope of the unit's purpose, significance, and special mandates. Four management prescriptions have been identified for Chickasaw National Recreation Area. It may help to think of the management prescriptions as the colors an artist has in front of him with which to paint a picture.

Management prescriptions define specific resource conditions and visitor experiences to be achieved and maintained in each particular area of Chickasaw National Recreation Area. Each prescription includes the types of activities and facilities that are appropriate in that management prescription.

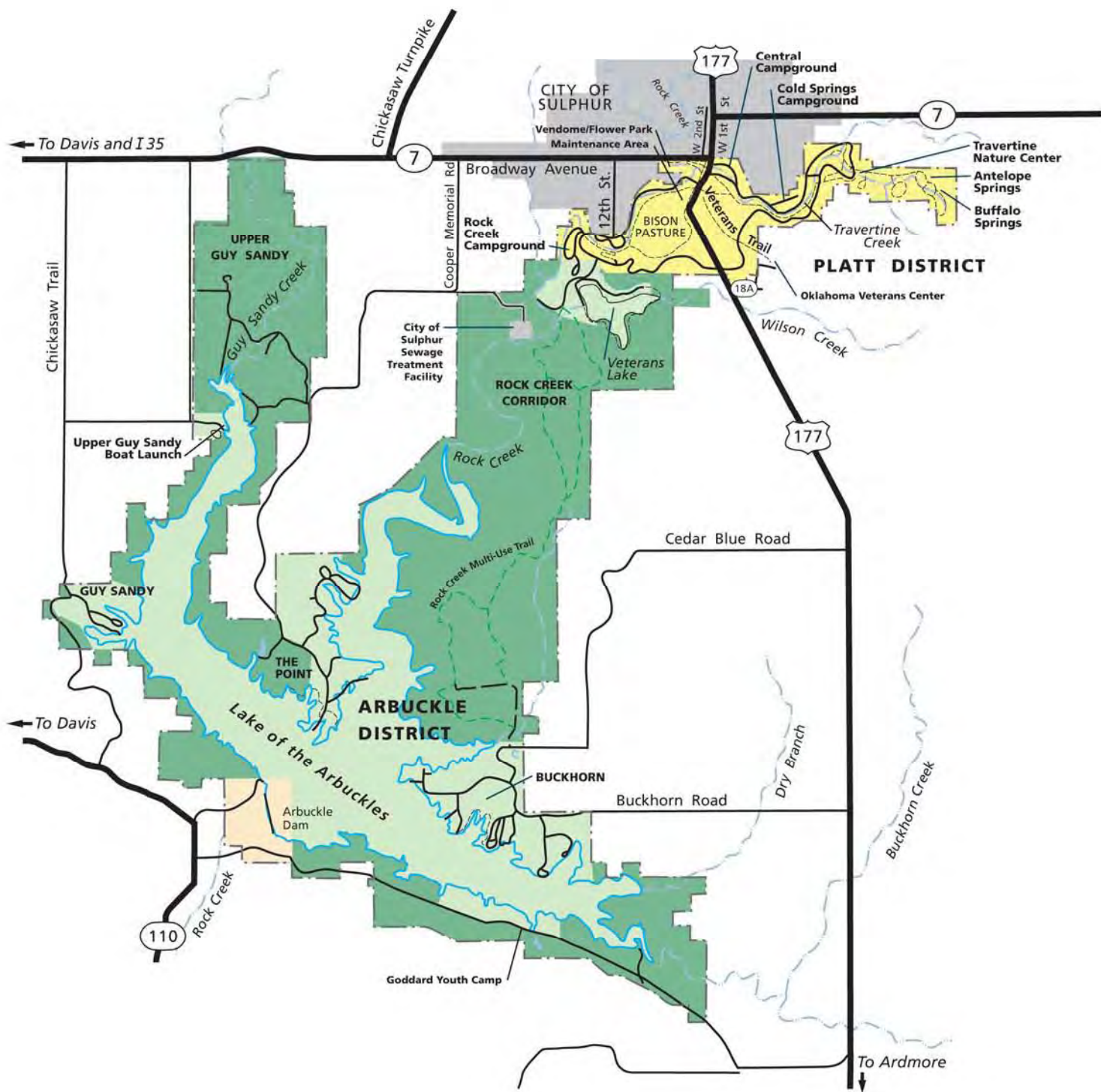
The management prescriptions for Chickasaw National Recreation Area are presented in table 2. Visitor experiences, resource conditions, and appropriate activities and facilities are described for each management prescription.



TABLE 2: MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS

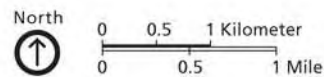
Management Prescription	Resource Conditions	Visitor Experience	Facilities
Recreation <i>The purpose of the recreation prescription is to provide concentrated recreation, education, orientation, and other structural activities.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural resources are managed and modified to support visitor activities, with minimum impacts on resources. Sensitive natural resources occurring in Chickasaw National Recreation Area are protected. Human-caused habitat fragmentation is mitigated to the extent possible. Cultural resources are preserved, rehabilitated, and adaptively reused as feasible for visitor support or operational purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher levels of visitor recreational activity are accommodated in this prescription. Recreational activities may include hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, tournaments, boating, picnicking, camping, swimming, auto touring, nature study, and special events such as family reunions, school functions, and weddings, in designated areas as appropriate. Experiences may range from quiet, personal activities to large group events. Occurrences of human interactions may be high. Educational and orientation opportunities may include guided tours, media presentations, nonpersonal interpretive media, interpretive programs, and special events. (Special events include living history, special interpretive programs, and public celebrations.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development may include a range of campgrounds from primitive, partially developed, to full-service campgrounds that accommodate recreational vehicles and trailers and provide water, toilets, showers, and campground host sites. Swimming facilities, picnic areas, amphitheaters, or campfire circles for interpretive presentations, and other facilities deemed appropriate also may be provided. Commercial visitor services may be offered, subject to further study and justification. Resources are protected with site-hardening devices, such as boardwalks, fencing, and paved pathways.
Preservation/Conservation <i>Within this management prescription, the natural landscape would be undergoing long-term (up to 75 years) restoration and/or conservation plans for natural resource needs.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus is on preserving and conserving natural resources, and rehabilitating and restoring specific landscapes toward prairie or woodland conditions to before European American settlement times. Efforts would also be made to restore springs, streams, wetlands, and riparian areas. Cultural resources would continue to be protected, although the treatment of specific cultural resources would be determined on a case-by-case basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitors could be allowed in this prescription but access would not be encouraged. Appropriate activities may include hiking, hunting, fishing, nature observation, and visitor participation in restoration activities in designated locations. There would be opportunities for solitude, natural quiet, and undirected discovery; the areas in this prescription would provide for a contemplative experience. Visitors could experience presettlement vegetation patterns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enclosures (repair and/or rehabilitate structures) may be built. Minimal facilities provided for resource protection.

Management Prescription	Resource Conditions	Visitor Experience	Facilities
Historic/Cultural <i>The recreation area's cultural resources and history are featured, with traditional activities and facilities being preserved.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In this prescription, historic buildings, structures, and other landscape elements and features are preserved or rehabilitated to document the evolution of the cultural landscape over time. Buildings and structures in the prescription may be rehabilitated for adaptive uses, which is preferable to new construction. Resources may be used for interpretive and/or compatible operational purposes by the NPS or their partners. Nonhistoric development and activities that are necessary for visitor and operational support may occur so long as the overall character of the cultural landscape is not compromised. Natural resources that have been identified as important to the cultural landscape are managed to perpetuate that landscape. The treatment of natural resources within the prescription is determined on a case-by-case basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary experience in this prescription is visiting and learning about cultural resources and their evolution over time. Appropriate activities may include automobile touring, bicycling, walking, hiking, hunting, fishing, and other activities in designated areas to the extent they are compatible with the cultural resources in the prescription. Visitation is maintained at moderate levels to allow some opportunities for discovery, occasional solitude, and enjoyment of the cultural setting with only moderate noise. Interpretation is important to the experience, but is unobtrusive and does not compromise the cultural landscape character. Additional information and orientation may be offered off-site. Camping could be permitted, but site design and usage will be compatible with the cultural landscape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modest development is permitted, if necessary, to support visitor and operational activities. Developments may include interpretive media, walkways, trails, small picnic areas, restrooms, and campgrounds. All developments are compatible with the cultural landscape. Facilities are fully accessible to the extent feasible without compromising the cultural character.
Administrative <i>The purpose of areas in this prescription is to provide for the recreation area's operational needs.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because these areas are highly used and developed, this prescription is only located in previously disturbed areas, areas of low resource potential, or areas with relatively resilient resources that can be modified, with acceptable impacts, for recreational area operational purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is generally no visitor use in this prescription, but these areas are managed to be congruent with visitor expectation. Areas are highly used by NPS staff, volunteers, partners, and others engaged in recreation area operations and administration. Efficiency, safety, and convenience are important components of the prescription. High noise may be expected at times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities that may be included in this prescription include administrative offices, maintenance facilities, employee housing, and other major facilities needed to support recreation area operations.



Management Prescriptions

	City of Sulphur		Administrative (Arbuckle Master Conservancy District)
	Park Boundary		Preservation/Conservation
	Road		Historic/Cultural
	Hiking Trail		Recreation



Management Prescriptions

Chickasaw National Recreation Area
U.S. Department of the Interior / National Park Service
DSC • December 2007 • 107 • 20052A

Concept of the Plan

The Plan would improve visitor opportunities with enhanced visitor facilities and provide additional interpretive opportunities.

It is important to stress that although opportunities for a diversity of experiences would be offered under the plan, the National Park Service would continue to maintain and protect natural and cultural resources in Chickasaw National Recreation Area and not permit new developments that would be inappropriate for a park unit.

The remainder of this section describes how different areas of Chickasaw National Recreation Area would be managed and what actions the National Park Service would take under the plan. These actions are believed most likely to take place over the next 15–20 years in Chickasaw National Recreation Area, given the plan concept, management prescriptions, the conditions that already exist in the area, and the area's environmental constraints. Under this plan, where possible, any new facilities would be constructed in already disturbed areas. Disturbance to sensitive areas such as threatened and endangered species habitat and archeological sites would also be avoided or mitigated whenever possible. (See the "Mitigation Measures" section in Appendix A: Finding of No Significant Impact.)

Detailed Description

Resource Management

Chickasaw National Recreation Area would actively encourage a partnership to identify approaches to manage the aquifer. This would include increased monitoring, additional studies, and protection of recharge areas. In addition, best land management practices would be utilized within the recreation area and encouraged outside the recreation area to protect the water quantity and quality.

Enhanced emphasis on preservation and protection of cultural resources (historic structures, cultural landscapes, archeological resources, ethnographic resources, and museum collections) would be provided. The *Cultural Landscape Report* would provide general guidance for the treatment of historic properties within the Platt Historic District.

The bison pasture would be restored to prairie and the bison herd maintained at an appropriate size. A study would be completed to determine the possibility of introducing bison from the Platt District to the Upper Guy Sandy.

The museum collections and archives that are currently housed at Chickasaw National Recreation Area in one of the maintenance area buildings would be moved to an appropriate site(s) in accordance with the *Museum Collection Facilities Strategy, Intermountain Region* (NPS 2005).

Platt District (Including the Travertine Nature Center)

The Travertine Nature Center would continue to focus on resource education, providing programs to school groups and the public, and there would be additional formal programs that more fully interpret Chickasaw National Recreation Area's primary interpretive themes. The nature center will technically become eligible for listing in the NRHP in 2019, 50 years after its construction. However, properties less than 50 years old can be listed in the National Register provided that a case for "exceptional significance" can be made. Management officials at Chickasaw National Recreation Area are committed to nominating the nature center to the NRHP before 2019. The final decision about whether the nature center possesses the exceptional significance necessary to be listed before turning 50 will be made by the Keeper of the National Register in the Washington, DC office of the National Park Service.

The Plan

The cultural landscape of the Platt District would continue to be rehabilitated. In addition, Chickasaw National Recreation Area will continue to seek the funding needed to conduct archeological work within the Platt District in order to better understand the early settlement era and the pre-European/American settlement period of this area.

Up to two additional day use picnic shelters and the addition of shower facilities would be added to the Platt District.

Under the plan the cultural landscape around the Antelope and Buffalo springs area would continue to be preserved and rehabilitated in accordance with recommendations in the *Cultural Landscape Report* (see appendix E). The *Cultural Landscape Report* would provide general guidance for improvements to the three campgrounds. The existing levels of interpretation would be maintained within the area.

The National Park Service would manage the Vendome Well to reduce the discharge of groundwater during times when it is not being used or enjoyed by the public. Two options would be to shut off the well at night or reduce the flow.

Cold Springs Campground. There would be restoration and improvements made to the Cold Springs campground, including adding vegetation to buffer campsites, making road repairs, improving drainage, and rehabilitating the restroom facilities.

Central Campground. There would be a reinstatement of the trail link to Flower Park and thinning of red cedar within the area, as well as rehabilitation of the campground's restroom facilities and limited utilities.

Vendome Well/Flower Park. The planned and approved visitor center would be constructed adjacent to Vendome Well. This center would serve as the primary facility for orientation and information on Chickasaw National Recreation Area.

Rock Creek Campground. Rock Creek campground would have some rehabilitation work and rehabilitation of the campground's restrooms.

Veterans Lake Area. The plan would provide for new restrooms and replacement of the fishing dock facilities at Veterans Lake. The universally accessible trail around Veterans Lake would be completed in addition to a trail link to the Rock Creek campground. The possibility of adding a recreational opportunity such as a horse camp, staging area, or group campsite would be considered after further study to determine where best to develop to limit impacts on resources in the area.

Maintenance Area

Under the plan, the maintenance operations would be relocated outside Chickasaw National Recreation Area or within the recreation area but outside the historic district. Additional evaluation, Section 106, and NEPA compliance would be prepared to determine where this facility would be located. Staff offices also would be added as needed. The historic structures in the existing maintenance area would be adaptively rehabilitated and reused. Some of the nonhistoric structures would be removed or replaced.

Rock Creek Corridor

The trail system in this area would be maintained and upgraded with improved signs, clearly delineating trails and eliminating drainage problems. Historic structures would be preserved and archeological sites protected within this area. There would be restoration of the areas along Rock Creek to address erosion problems.

Lake of the Arbuckles Area

The plan will provide an increase in visitor opportunities. Commercial operations such as boat tours, ecotours, boat rentals, bus tours,

and lakeside cabin rentals may be provided if there is sufficient interest and demand. A commercial service feasibility study would be prepared to examine the range of services. In addition, Section 106 and NEPA compliance would be prepared if the decision was made to add these opportunities.

Additional picnic shelters and new restrooms would be added in select picnic areas.

Increased efforts would be made to restore areas along the Lake of the Arbuckles that have been adversely affected by erosion.

Additional sustainable and accessible restrooms would be provided at the day use areas in the district.

There would be an increase in ranger-interpreter presence in the area and in the number of guided and self-guided interpretive opportunities using existing staff.

The Point and Buckhorn Campgrounds. These campground areas would be maintained and operated with the current number of campsites. However, some of the sites that do not currently have utilities (water, electrical, and sewer services) would be upgraded to include these utilities. There would be improvements to vegetative screening between campsites and trails in these areas. Parking within the campgrounds would be redesigned

to better limit impacts. New restrooms at picnic areas near the lake would be constructed. A new restroom with showers would be constructed and the entrance road to the campground would be upgraded at the Point campground. The Buckhorn campground amphitheater and electrical service would also be upgraded.

Guy Sandy Campground. The area would be improved with upgrades to the campground better delineating sites and improving restrooms. Dock area restrooms would also be improved. A picnic shelter with additional picnic sites would be provided for day users.

Goddard Youth Camp. There would be no changes in management of this area under the plan. The National Park Service would continue to manage this area under a special use permit that recognizes compliance with NPS standards.

Upper Guy Sandy

The Upper Guy Sandy area would continue to be restored to natural conditions, which are prairie and forest. In the future, a study would be prepared to determine the possibility of establishing an additional bison herd in this area.





Index

- air quality, 11, 14
- American Indians, 19
- Antelope Springs, 15, 40
- Buffalo Springs, 15, 40
- campgrounds, iv, 18, 19, 30, 36, 37, 40, 41
- camping, 4, 6, 26, 30, 36, 37
- carrying capacity, 21
- cultural landscape, iii, 6, 7, 19, 20, 28, 37, 39, 40
- cultural resources, iii, 7, 10, 11, 14, 19, 21, 26, 27, 31, 33, 34, 36, 37, 39
- Davis, 9
- endangered species (see *threatened and endangered species*), 7, 17
- erosion, iv, 4, 11, 13, 40, 41
- ethnographic resources, iii, 19, 39
- fire, 12, 30
- flooding, 16
- floodplains, 16
- floods, 16
- hiking, 4, 6, 36, 37
- interpretation, 13, 20, 21, 26, 31, 37, 40
- Lake of the Arbuckles, iv, 16, 18, 24, 25, 29, 30, 41
- Murray County, 25, 28
- National Environmental Policy Act, 40, 41
- National Historic Preservation Act, 7, 19
- National Register of Historic Places, 19, 20
- natural resources, 4, 11, 12, 16-18, 30, 36, 37
- orientation, 21, 36, 37, 40
- parking, iv, 21, 30, 33, 41
- red cedar, 12, 30, 40
- Rock Creek, iii, iv, 12, 21, 28, 29, 40
- Section 106, 40, 41
- soil, 11, 12, 14, 33
- Sulphur, 14, 15, 25, 30
- threatened and endangered species, iii, 5, 11, 12, 17, 39
- trails, iv, 13, 30, 33, 37, 40, 41
- Travertine Nature Center, iii, 39
- vegetation, iii, 11, 12, 14, 30, 33, 36, 40
- vehicles, 14, 18, 30, 36
- Veterans Lake, iii, iv, 4, 40
- visitor experience, iii, 2, 18, 21-23, 30, 33-35
- water quality, 14, 29, 33
- water quantity, 15, 29, 39
- wetlands, 5, 7, 16, 36
- wildlife, 4, 7, 11, 17, 18, 25, 26, 30



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has 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.