

CHAPTER 6 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION



(THIS PAGE INTENALLY LEFT BLANK)

CHAPTER 6 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The general management planning process involves many steps including: identification and confirmation of the park purpose, significance and mission goals; acknowledgement of special mandates, laws, and policies; involvement of the public and identification of issues; development of alternatives; and impact analysis. Agencies and the public were invited to participate at various steps throughout the planning process, and this coordination and involvement is described in this chapter.

The intent of the scoping process is to provide for early identification of concerns, issues, expectations, and values of existing and potential visitors, neighbors, cooperating associations, partners, scientists, scholars, and other government agencies. Public input gathered during the scoping process is used to assess and compare the effects of each available management alternative.

Scoping letters were mailed in the Spring of 2002 to local, state and federal agency representatives, tribal representatives and the public that contained information on the function of a general management plan, statements of the park purpose and significance, information on the planning team and the process for planning, and methods available to the public for communicating with the team and participating in the planning effort. A newsletter was published announcing the initiation of the planning process, and the public was invited to voice issues and suggest ideas for the future of the park at six public scoping meetings held in October 2000 and over a 60 day comment period. Over 200 written comments were received. A majority of the comments expressed concerns about access, facility needs throughout the park, habitat preservation, environmental impacts, different types of use, trails, education, boundaries, fisheries and fishing, and enforcement. In addition, over 20 meetings were also held with more than 50 area Planning and Greenspace Directors and local, State, and Federal agency representatives.

Information from the scoping meetings was used to develop a range of desired future conditions, or prescriptions for the park. Based on the results of the planning process, three management alternatives were developed: Alternatives B, C and D. In addition, Alternative A, the No Action alternative was also included for analysis.

Information regarding the preliminary alternatives was posted on the park's website, and a newsletter was also distributed to announce the availability of the Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement in June, 2004. The Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement was released in May, 2004, and there was a 60 day comment period. Public meetings were conducted on June 14, 15 and 16, 2004. The distribution list for the document is provided in Appendix H. Copies of the May, 2004 Draft Plan were also made available at 10 local libraries and at Island Ford, Park Headquarters. The Draft was made available for review in a variety of means: electronic format on the park's website, and approximately 40 CDs were mailed out, as well as a limited number of hard copies from the park or regional office. In addition, approximately 300 copies of the executive summary were distributed to the mailing list and emailed where possible.

Many criticisms were voiced during the public comment period regarding prescriptions for boating and fishing within the park, off-road bicycle use and other types of recreational use and access. In

response to the input received, additional meetings were conducted with stakeholders in the community. The park has on-going stakeholder meetings on a quarterly basis to provide information regarding the general management planning status, other projects in the park, and general information sharing.

Based upon the input received, two additional alternatives were developed, Alternatives E and F to address the concerns raised. A newsletter was published in November of 2005 to update the public on the status of the plan, describe the new Alternatives E and F, and invite the public to attend meetings to discuss the new alternatives. Public meetings were announced and conducted on December 12, 13 and 20, 2005, with comments requested by January 31, 2006. Coordination letters were also sent to reviewing agencies to update them on the status of the plan in the spring of 2006.

This general management plan incorporates these comments and describes and analyzes each of the six alternatives. Each of the alternatives was the result of mapping management prescriptions, or kinds and levels of management and use. Each of the alternatives for the park consists of multiple zones with different management prescriptions.

Public service announcements were distributed, newspaper notices were published, flyers were distributed and signs were posted prior to each of the series of public meetings. In addition, newsletters were distributed prior to each set of public meetings. The public had many avenues by which it participated during the development of the plan: participation at public meetings, responses to newsletters, written letters, comment cards, and comments on the park's planning website.

The general management planning information is available on the project website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>.

CONSULTATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES / OFFICIALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to the consultation described above, additional consultation with agencies was conducted prior to completing the 2004 Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement and again during the development of the Supplemental Draft document. Agency coordination letters are included in Appendix F.

In accordance with 36 CFR 800 and the Programmatic Agreement between the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers and the National Park Service, a letter was sent to the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office and to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to initiate consultation (see Appendix F). The letters invited them to participate in the planning process and informed them that the National Park Service plans to use this environmental impact statement to fulfill the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act as well as comply with provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act.

In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), the National Park Service contacted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by letter to initiate consultation (see Appendix F) and to provide a list of threatened and endangered species, critical habitats, and species of concern. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Program was also contacted to provide a list of threatened and endangered species.

Consultation letters were also sent to the Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4 and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division. In addition, letters were sent in January 2001 to Federally-recognized American Indian Tribes with ancestral lands in Georgia requesting feedback concerning the general management plan. These letters were followed up with individual phone calls and a subsequent letter identifying the purpose and need of the project and requesting input. A copy of this letter request and the list of American Indian Tribes contacted are included in Appendix F.

LIST OF PREPARERS

<p><u>Draft</u> Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Kevin Cheri, Superintendent Bill Carroll, Assistant Superintendent David Ek, Chief of Science and Resource Management</p> <p>National Park Service Southeast Regional Office David Libman, Park Planner David Hasty, Park Planner</p> <p>National Park Service Denver Service Center Bill Koning, Park Planner</p> <p>Parsons Alyse Getty, Project Manager Steve Bach, Biological Resources Specialist Kevin Johns, Senior Planner Susan Goodfellow, Cultural Resources Specialist John Martin, Transportation Planning Specialist Meredith Kirby, Environmental Scientist Shannon Graham, GIS Jan Snyder, Editor John Hoesterey, Technical Director</p>	<p><u>Supplemental Draft</u> Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Kevin Cheri, Superintendent Chris Hughes, Acting Chief of Science and Resource Management Richard Lutz, Chief of Facility Maintenance Nancy Poe, Chief of Interpretation Scott Pfeninger, Chief Ranger Robyn Podany, Administrative Assistant Alexander Reynolds, Biological Science Technician</p> <p>National Park Service Southeast Regional Office David Libman, Park Planner Rich Sussman, Chief of Planning</p> <p>Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division Bubba Mauldin, Regional Supervisor Chris Martin, Senior Fisheries Biologist Bill Couch, Buford Trout Hatchery Manager</p> <p>Parsons Alyse Getty, Project Manager Steve Bach, Biological Resources Specialist Angie Cook, Environmental Scientist / Geologist John Martin, Senior Transportation Planner Diane Rhodes, Cultural Resource Specialist Bai Tian, GIS Specialist Judy Shumake, Graphic Artist / Admin. John Hoesterey, Technical Director</p>
--	---

LIST OF RECIPIENTS

A summary table of the list of recipients is provided in Appendix H

(THIS PAGE INTINALLY LEFT BLANK)