

# Chapter 5

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PLANNING EFFORTS



Photograph Courtesy of: Dr. Steven Bach

The Wilderness Road

Cumberland Gap National Historical Park  
Draft General Management Plan/  
Environmental Impact Statement

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## CHAPTER 5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PLANNING EFFORTS

Upon completion of this general management plan, other more detailed studies and plans would be needed for implementation of specific actions. These more detailed studies and plans will describe how the NPS will achieve the desired conditions outlined in the general management plan. As required, additional environmental compliance (National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act), and other actions necessary to comply with relevant laws and policies would be conducted. Opportunities for public input would be provided during development of these studies and plans. Those additional studies and plans include, but would not be limited to, these listed in this chapter.

### CULTURAL RESOURCES

Unmanaged visitor use at archeological or historic sites may impact the integrity and scientific and cultural value of these sites. The nature and extent of these impacts are difficult to assess because baseline data on site conditions in the park are sometimes unavailable or incomplete. Long-term protective strategies are needed for significant sites to avoid impact by visitors and/or park management activities. Park managers must maintain historic buildings on an ongoing basis (i.e., periodic maintenance and rehabilitation) to ensure that conditions are suitable for National Register eligibility. A resource stewardship strategy outlined in a planning document would address these issues. The following is a summary of future planning efforts for cultural resources:

- **Resource Stewardship Strategy:** Protection, research, and management of the park's cultural resources are essential for achieving the park's purpose and mission. A park-wide Resource Stewardship Strategy would address these issues and other scientific and legal requirements to promote understanding and management of park resources. This planning document would provide comprehensive recommendations about specific actions needed to achieve and maintain the desired resource conditions and visitor experiences for the park's cultural resources. This will include activities necessary to identify, evaluate, manage, monitor, protect, preserve, and treat the park's cultural resources, and to provide for enjoyment and understanding of the resources by the public.
- **Cultural Landscape Inventory:** A Cultural Landscape Inventory, the official inventory of NPS-managed historic landscapes, is an evaluated inventory containing information on the location, size, historical development, significance, and management of cultural landscapes throughout the National Park System. The framework for the inventory contains a hierarchy for looking at the landscape as a whole and also subdividing into smaller, more identifiable, components and features. Cultural Landscape Inventories are needed for the Hensley Settlement, Cumberland Gap Historic District, and any other identified cultural landscapes located within the park.
- **Cultural Landscape Reports:** A Cultural Landscape Report is a treatment document and presents recommendations on how to preserve, restore, or rehabilitate the significant landscape and its contributing features based on historical documentation, analysis of existing conditions, and the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines as they apply to the treatment of historic landscapes. Cultural Landscape Reports should be completed for all identified cultural landscapes to provide detailed guidance for treatment and management of these resources.
- **Historic Structure Reports:** Historic Structure Reports are needed to determine treatment and use of historic buildings.
- **Historic Structures Preservation Guides for Hensley Settlement:** Historic Structures Preservation Guides for Hensley Settlement are needed to identify preservation methods to be used as guidance for future actions.

- **Cultural Resource Surveys:** There is a potential for significant, previously unidentified archeological resources to occur within the park. Large Civil war campsites and stores occur in the Gap and immediate areas.
- **Baseline Inventory of Cultural Resources in Gap Cave:** Gap Cave has a history of use that requires inventory and documentation.
- **Archeological Overview and Assessment:** An Archeological Overview and Assessment is needed for the park.
- **Collections Management Plan:** The Park's museum collections are maintained at the Southeast Archeological Center. In addition, some collections are held at the park. A regional Museum Storage Plan, approved by the Regional Director in May 2006, recommends that all long-term collections be moved from the park. A Collections Management Plan is needed to address collections for the park in a comprehensive manner. In addition, a **Scope of Collections Statement** and **Museum Collection Management and Emergency Plan** are needed to address collections.
- **The Farm Management and Interpretive Plan for the Hensley Settlement** (NPS 1972; updated in 1982): The revised plan created a new objective of making the settlement as productive as possible to help defray operating costs. The majority of these costs are related to maintaining the historic landscape and structures. This plan needs to be updated.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

The following is a summary of recommended future planning efforts for natural resources projects:

- **Cave Management Plan for Gap (Cudjo) Cavern** (NPS 1998a): This plan concluded that an inventory of the natural and cultural resources in Gap Cave was lacking. The priorities for research included cavern microclimate, migration of sand in Sand Cave, terrestrial and aquatic biology and effects on protected species, paleontology, mineralogy, water quality (physical and chemical), and radon monitoring. The park also needs to complete a separate list of priorities for inventorying cultural resources in the cave. A Cave Management Plan for all caves in the park is needed.
- **Resource Stewardship Strategy:** The most recent Natural Resource Management Plan (NPS 2002a) included a description of the status of resources in the park, a summary of the natural and cultural resource management programs that were in place at the time, a summary of the accountability and tracking required for resource management, and a set of resource management project statements and funding information. The Resources Management Plan includes a plan for the long range management of park 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 the park. A Resource Stewardship Strategy would be prepared that incorporates the management directions presented in this general management plan and the prior Resource Management Plan recommendations to meet park goals and objectives.
- **Geographic Information System:** Baseline information on natural resources will continue to be computerized.
- **Natural Resource Surveys:** Reduction in the numbers of native brook trout in Martin's Fork and Shillalah Creek is an important natural resource issue. As of 2002, this species had not been recorded from the lower 1 mile of Martin's Fork. More research will be needed to address this issue. Baseline studies on natural resources have focused mainly on water quality. Inventorying and monitoring of backcountry areas, the recommended wilderness zone, threatened and endangered species, and invasive species are needed. Additional and expanded baseline survey

information is also required for other resources, including water quality of backcountry streams, air quality, caves (including radon), and flora and fauna.

## **LONG RANGE INTERPRETIVE PLAN**

Long-Range Interpretive Plans provide a vision for the future (5-10 years) of interpretation, education, and visitor experience opportunities. They identify and analyze interpretation, education, and visitor experience goals and issues. They recommend the most effective, efficient, and practical ways to address those goals and issues. They address both non-personal services (interpretive media and facilities) and personal services (programs, personal contacts). Plans match interpretive media to messages to make sure they work well individually and collectively. The interpretive planning process is sensitive to which park resource experiences should be made accessible to visitors. Negative impacts on resources are minimized, and active stewardship is encouraged. This type of plan is a component of a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan. The park is in the process of updating its existing Long-Range Interpretive Plan.

## **LAND PROTECTION PLAN**

Management Policies 2006 (NPS 2006a) requires that planning for the protection of park lands is integrated into the planning process for park management. Land protection plans are required to be prepared to determine and publicly document what lands or interests in land need to be in public ownership and what means of protection are available to achieve the purposes for which the unit was created. These plans are required to be prepared for each unit of the national park system containing nonfederal land or interests in land within its authorized boundary. A thorough review of a park's authorizing statutes and complete legislative history is required as part of the land protection planning process. The park will be required to update its existing land protection plan in the next planning period.

## **PARK ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Department of the Interior is required, as part of Executive Order 13327: Federal Real Property Asset Management, to create a department asset management plan that includes lifecycle costs, prioritized operation and maintenance costs, established bureau performance measures related to asset management, and a single database for federal real property reporting. The approach outlined in the Department of the Interior Asset Management Plan is to have all bureaus, including the NPS, create site-specific asset business plans.

The NPS is addressing this requirement through creation of Park Asset Management Plans that meet all Federal Real Property Asset Management Requirements for a park unit. The Park Asset Management Plan provides a 10-year asset management strategy for the park, allowing for annual updates that coincide with the existing budget and planning processes. Plan development includes life cycle total cost of ownership, analysis, processing, and calculations to facilitate identification and management of the funding gap between what should be spent on facilities and what is actually being spent.

## **FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Fire management plans are fundamental strategic documents that guide the full range of fire management-related activities permitted by policy. They are required by the NPS Director's Order 18 (NPS 1998b), which says, "Every park area with burnable vegetation must have a fire management plan approved by the Superintendent." and the 2001 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (2001 Federal Fire Policy), which states, "Complete, or update, Fire Management Plans for all areas with burnable vegetation." According to Director's Order 12, each NPS unit is required to review and update its Fire Management Plan annually with major review and revisions every 5 years. The park

completed a plan in 2003 (NPS 2003c) that included the following elements: a description of the park, fire background information, fire presuppression, emergency fire presuppression, fire suppression mobilization, public relations, and legal responsibilities.

The objectives of the plan were to:

- Establish a fire organization and assign responsibility to park personnel;
- Outline procedures in the event of a wildfire;
- Provide for dissemination of information to the public on fire management actions at the park; and
- Identify legal responsibilities and develop actions for compliance.

The park is required to update the 2003 Fire Management Plan. Since the original plan, the park has been working as part of the NPS Fire Use Module to manage fires in the park. The Fire Use Module is a team of experienced and trained fire personnel committed to fire use operations and planning at the national level. Fire use is a combination of prescribed fires and wildland fire applications used to meet resources management objectives. Prescribed fires in parks manage landscapes, and reduce hazardous fuel loads near developed areas, and restore fire as a natural process in the ecosystem. Cumberland Gap successfully initiated its prescribed fire program in 2005 by completing two burns.

## PARTNERING

The park is uniquely tied to the surrounding communities, and as such is part of the greater social, political, ecological, and historical fabric. The NPS must continue to consider how its actions in the park affect the surrounding environment and communities. Partnering opportunities will be identified within all future planning and implementation projects. The park will be managed in a manner that proactively resolves external issues and concerns to ensure that park values are not compromised. To accomplish this, resources and strategies are needed to establish and foster partnerships with public and private organizations to achieve the purposes and mission of the park.

Partnerships will be sought for resource protection, research, education, and visitor enjoyment purposes. Partnerships are necessary with local, state, and federal agencies and organizations in programs that have importance within and beyond park boundaries. Park managers will be able to use these partnerships to better adapt to changing ecological and social conditions within and external to the park and coordinate regional planning and land management as it affects the park and its viewsheds. The combined effect of a unified strategy would be an effective public private partnership for increasing values and for preserving the park resources. Creating new economic, environmental and educational partnerships is integral to the successful implementation of the general management plan.