

APPENDIX I
LIST OF PROJECTS AND ACTIONS THAT COULD
POTENTIALLY AFFECT THE PARK

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**LIST OF PROJECTS AND ACTIONS THAT COULD
POTENTIALLY AFFECT THE PARK**

PAST

- Little Yellow Creek dammed in the 1880's to become Fern Lake, Middlesboro water supply
- Fern Lake watershed declared unsuitable for coal mining (Federal Register: September 23, 1996)
- Wilderness Road preservation project
- Construction of Daniel Boone Visitor Contact Center in October 2004
- Hensley Settlement restoration
- Civic Park
- Rehabilitation of main visitor center
- Campground improvements
- Restoration of Gap Cave
- Bearproof facilities for backcountry campsites
- Other area parks (Wilderness Road State Park, Pine Mountain State Park, Natural Tunnel State Park)
- Middlesboro – Bell County Airport

PRESENT (ONGOING)

- Glacier Girl relocated from Middlesboro Airport
- Multi-laning of U.S. 25E between I-81 and I-75.

FUTURE

- Bartlett Park improvement (new picnic shelters, etc)
- T.J. Asher Industrial Park and airport
- Whitmer Industrial Park
- Bell County Technology and Training Park
- Lee County Industrial Park
- Pine Mountain Historical Trail

PAST ACTIONS

Little Yellow Creek dammed in the 1880's to become Fern Lake

Alexander Alan Arthur, the Scottish born Canadian who founded the community of Middlesboro, constructed the dam on Little Yellow Creek in the early 1890's to create Fern Lake. The purpose of the lake was to provide water for the city of Middlesboro. Middlesboro was a planned industrial center that

was intended to serve as a leading steel manufacturing city using the coal and raw materials of the area. However, this effort failed in the early 1890's due to economic problems and low quality raw materials.

Fern Lake watershed declared unsuitable for coal mining (Federal Register: September 23, 1996)

The Director of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement reached a decision that 3,780 acres of land in the Fern Lake watershed was unsuitable for coal mining operations, for the following reasons: (1) Surface coal mining operations would affect fragile lands and could result in significant damage to important scientific or esthetic values or natural systems; (2) surface coal mining operations would affect land in which the surface coal mining operations could result in a substantial loss or reduction in the long-range availability of water supplies; (3) surface coal mining operations would be incompatible with the local land use plans of the Cumberland Gap National Historic Park; and (4) surface coal mining operations should not be allowed because the area constitutes a natural hazard land.

Wilderness Road preservation project

This project includes the U.S. 25E tunnel under Cumberland Gap, as well as the restoration of the gap to historic conditions. The 4,600 foot long twin-bore tunnel opened to traffic in 1996. The tunnel performed two functions. First, it replaced a section of U.S. 25E that followed the historic Wilderness Road through Cumberland Gap. This narrow, winding 2.3 mile section of roadway was known as "Massacre Mountain" due to the relatively high number of fatal accidents that occurred in this area. Second, the tunnel allowed the section of U.S. 25E through the gap to be removed and the gap restored to historic conditions.

Construction of Daniel Boone Visitor Information Center in 2004.

The Daniel Boone Visitor Information Center is located just off Highway 58 near the town of Cumberland Gap, Tennessee. This information center contains restrooms, a ranger station, and exhibits. An outdoor pavilion features the sights and sounds of early travelers and pioneers. Tickets for Gap Cave tours can be purchased at this location and information regarding features of the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park is also available. It is the location of the trailhead for the Wilderness Road and the meeting place for Gap Cave tours. This center is not manned, but park personnel meet with visitors at the center to initiate the Gap Cave tours.

Hensley Settlement restoration

The Hensley Settlement is pioneer community that was populated until the 1950's. Two families, the Hensleys and the Givens, originated this settlement in 1904 on an isolated plateau of the Cumberland Mountains. Within 40 years, the settlement had grown to 12 families with a population of 120 persons living on 500 acres. By 1951, the last settler had left Hensley Settlement. The National Park Service took possession of the settlement in 1955. The Job Corp program began restoration of the facilities at the settlement in the early 1960's. The park has maintained the facilities and the property since the restoration was completed. While additional staff have been requested to assist in providing interpretive tours at the settlement, existing staff are currently utilized to provide the tours.

Civic Park renovation (new picnic facilities and restrooms -2005)

Civic Park, located at the southeast corner of the park near Ewing, Virginia, is a picnic area and parking facility for the Ewing Trail, the shortest trail accessing the White Rocks area. After a new long term lease agreement was signed, Civic Park was renovated in 2005 with a reconstructed entrance road, new picnic facilities, grills, and new restroom facilities. The pavilion is currently being repaired (2007).

Rehabilitation of main visitor center

The Cumberland Gap National Historical Park Visitor Center is located on U.S. 25E on the south side of Middlesboro, Kentucky. Approximately 65 percent of this visitor center was renovated in 2002, including the main lobby, the exhibit area, the theater, and the craft shop. A new roof was installed, along with a new heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system. No additional staff were required as a result of the renovation. The visitor center houses a museum with interactive exhibits, book sales outlet, auditorium with 2 high definition films, and Cumberland Crafts which showcases handmade crafts from the region. The visitor center is fully accessible with designated parking and an elevator.

Wilderness Road Campground improvements (new restroom)

The Wilderness Road Campground is located approximately 3 miles from the park visitor center near Highway 58 in Virginia. It has 160 sites in a beautiful wooded setting. Electrical hookups (30 and 50 amp) are available at 41 of the sites. Hot showers and potable water are located in the comfort stations. A dump station is located near the campground entrance. Since 2004, the recreational vehicle sites have been re-wired, two of the restrooms were renovated, and the amphitheater was renovated. Volunteer campground hosts assist with interpretation and light maintenance at the campground.

Restoration of Gap Cave

Gap Cave was first documented by Dr. Thomas Walker in 1750. The cave was a source of fresh water in Dr. Walker's days and continues to supply water to various entities today. The cave has had various owners. The cave was fitted with electrical lights in 1934 and was ultimately subject to graffiti and vandalism until the National Park Service took ownership of the cave in 1992. In conjunction with restoration of the gap, park staff and members of the Pine Mountain Grotto rehabilitated the cave. Old handrails, rock monuments, some of the asphalt trail, and the electric lighting system were all removed. The cave now closely resembles its original condition with only lanterns lighting the way. Gap Cave was reopened to the public for tours in 2000. Cave tours are conducted by part time students or existing seasonal staff.

Bearproof facilities for backcountry campsites

Cable and pulley systems have recently been installed in backcountry campsites to keep black bears away from campers' food. The system allows campers to store their food about 10 feet off the ground and 4 feet from the tree. The five backcountry campsites are along Ridge Trail near Hensley Settlement, Gibson Gap, and White Rocks. The park has a small, but growing black bear population. Two female and two male bears are known to populate the park, as well as about a dozen bears that are believed to migrate through the park on occasion. The purpose of the bearproofing is for the bears to not associate food with people. There were 2 incidents with black bears during 2006 near Hensley Settlement (Knoxville News Sentinel, 2007).

Other area parks

There are several other parks near Cumberland Gap National Historical Park that may help to attract visitors to the area. Wilderness Road State Park is one of Virginia's newest state parks and is located on U.S. 58 west of Ewing, Virginia, just 2 miles south of the eastern portion of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. The park contains approximately 200 acres for picnicking, hiking and living history programs. Visitors can enjoy the reconstructed Martin's Station, an outdoor living history museum depicting life on Virginia's 1775 frontier. The late 1870s mansion is available for weddings, meetings and other special functions. The Wilderness Road Trail links the park with Cumberland Gap National

Historical Park. Pine Mountain State Park is Kentucky's first state park. It is located near Pineville, approximately 15 miles north of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. Pine Mountain State Park offers lodging, dining, camping, group meeting facilities, an 18 hole championship golf course, hiking, boating and swimming, and other activities. Natural Tunnel State Park is located in southwestern Virginia, approximately 50 miles east of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. Sometimes called the "Eighth Wonder of the World," the natural bridge has been attracting sightseers to the area for over 100 years. The park also offers swimming, camping, picnicking, hiking, a visitor center, an amphitheater, and interpretive programs.

Bartlett Park improvement

Visitors to Cumberland Gap National Historical Park utilize the Bartlett Park day use area for picnicking. School groups pursuing outdoor classroom opportunities and specialized study also use Bartlett Park. In addition to several picnic tables, there is currently one covered picnic shelter. Increased use of Bartlett Park has strained present resources and resulted in facilities that are frequently filled. Inclement weather results in difficult learning situations for school groups who must schedule their activities well in advance. The park proposes to expand and improve visitor accommodation in the Bartlett Park day use area by doubling the picnic shelter capacity, adding parking space, and by hardening paths to make them compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act standards for accessible design.

Middlesboro Bell County Airport

The Middlesboro Bell County Airport offers a variety of services including 24 hour, 7 days a week self service fuel, mechanics, aircraft hanger storage, aviation weather services, flight instruction, courtesy car, and a 3650 foot asphalt runway with taxiway and apron area (Commonwealth of Kentucky 2007).

PRESENT (ONGOING) ACTIONS

Glacier Girl relocated from Middlesboro Airport

Glacier Girl is a World War II P-38 Lightning aircraft that was left in Greenland during a failed mission to Great Britain in 1942. Over the years, Glacier Girl became buried under nearly 300 feet of ice. Fifty years later, Glacier Girl was recovered by Roy Shoffner, restored, and made available for public display at the Lost Squadron Museum located at the Middlesboro-Bell County Airport. The aircraft was sold to another interest in March 2007 which moved the plane to San Antonio, Texas temporarily. Glacier Girl returned to Middlesboro for several days in June 2007 on her way to the Great Britain, the location of her original mission.

Multi-laning of U.S. 25E between I-81 and I-75.

U.S. 25E between I-81 near Morristown, Tennessee and I-75 near Corbin, Kentucky has always attracted motorists looking for a "short cut" between those areas. This section of U.S. 25E is nearly 100 miles long, but saves truck drivers and other long distance travelers nearly 30 miles over using I-75 and I-81/I-40 between Corbin and Morristown. The grades are also less severe and allow heavy trucks to avoid the 5 percent grade on I-75 at Jellico Mountain, near the Tennessee – Kentucky state line. As the roadway has been constructed as a four lane divided facility in Kentucky and Tennessee (except for an eight mile section in southern Claiborne County that is under construction and projected to be completed by late 2007), the "short cut" may save time as well as mileage.

FUTURE ACTIONS

T.J. Asher Industrial Park and airport

The T.J. Asher Industrial Park is under construction in eastern Bell County near the Harlan County line. The 500 acre site, a reclaimed mountaintop removal coal mine, is designed to accommodate an airport on an adjacent 250 acres. Officials hope to attract a major distribution company to the industrial park. The industrial park is planned to bring new jobs into the region.

Whitmer Industrial Park

Whitmer Industrial Park is located in Middlesboro on South 17th Street approximately 1 mile from U.S. 25E. The park contains 7 tracts totaling 28 acres. A manufacturing firm constructed 2 buildings on the first site in 2006.

Bell County Technology and Training Park

The Bell County Technology and Training Park is located adjacent to the Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College near the Middlesboro-Bell County Airport in western Middlesboro. The 8.4 acre park is owned by the Bell County Industrial Foundation.

Lee County Industrial Park

The Lee County Industrial Park is located to the east of Jonesville on U.S. 58 at Virginia State Road 638. The 50 acre site has several businesses currently located on the property.

Pine Mountain Historical Trail

The Pine Mountain Historical Trail was envisioned as a way to showcase the geology, history, and scenery of the central Appalachian Mountains. Once complete, the trail will be 120 miles long and will link Breaks Interstate Park with Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. The trail will cross terrain containing pioneer homesteads, waterfalls, cliffs, caves, and scenic overlooks. Currently, 28 miles of the trail are open to hikers.

Composting toilet at Fern Lake

A composting toilet will be constructed and operated at Fern Lake to accommodate visitors to this area.

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