

ABSTRACT  
*Final*  
General Management Plan  
Environmental Impact Statement  
*February 2005*

**BIG SOUTH FORK  
NATIONAL RIVER AND RECREATION AREA**

Kentucky and Tennessee

The National Park Service (NPS) uses general management planning to establish the resource conditions and visitor experiences that should be achieved and maintained by a specific unit of the National Park System over time. The purpose of the proposed federal action described in this *Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* is to provide a clearly-defined direction for resource protection and visitor use at Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area for a period of 15-20 years. Three alternative management approaches and a no-action alternative are analyzed in this document.

Alternatives A and B each present a general management framework using three different types of management zone (i.e., Primitive Recreation Unit, Backwoods Recreation Unit, and Enhanced Recreation Unit). Alternatives A and B differ principally in the way that they configure the zones across the landscape. Alternative C is the no-action alternative.

Alternative D is the NPS Preferred Alternative. Alternative D would use more zones in more areas in order to provide more strategic management direction for resources and visitor use. Overall, the scale and level of development would remain roughly the same under this alternative as currently exists, with additional facilities proposed primarily in the southwest portion of the National Area, where lands have been more recently acquired and designated facilities have not yet been built.

The three action alternatives identify development possibilities for numerous sites within the National Area. In addition, each of the alternatives contains information on the possible location of various roads and trails. Alternative D would constitute the official roads and trails system for the National Area.

The institutional framework of law and policy is discussed, and an environmental evaluation of the alternatives is provided. This document is a programmatic treatment of proposals, with additional more detailed planning and compliance documentation to be accomplished as needed at the time of implementation.

This is the first General Management Plan prepared under National Park Service policies and procedures for Big South Fork NRRRA.

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