

**Sleeping Bear Dunes
National Lakeshore**

General Management Plan/Wilderness Study

**Summary of Public Comments
In Response to Newsletter #3**

This page left intentionally blank.

Table of Contents

	Page No.
Summary of Comments Received	1
Draft Management Zones	3
Alternative Management Concepts.....	4
No Action Concept	5
Resource Enjoyment Concept.....	5
Recreation Enjoyment Concept	6
Concentrated Use Concept.....	7
New Alternative Management Concepts Suggested.....	8
Comments on Elements Provided in Concept Descriptions	9
Wilderness Study	9
Desired Conditions.....	10
Ecosystem Management	11
Natural Resources (General) and Diversity	11
Historic Structures, Cultural Landscapes, and Archeological Resources.....	11
Visitor Use and Experience	12
Wildlife Management	12
Factors for Developing or Selecting the Preferred Alternative	12
Other Comments Regarding the Planning Process and Lakeshore Management.....	14
Detailed Comments for Consideration in Subsequent Planning Steps	14
Comments Regarding the Planning Process	15
Comments that are Outside of the Scope of the GMP/Wilderness Study.....	16
Appendix A: Newsletter #3 Comment Form	17

This page left intentionally blank.

Summary of Public Comments In Response to Newsletter #3

This report summarizes the public comments made regarding the alternative concepts and desired conditions presented in Newsletter #3 for the General Management Plan (GMP)/Wilderness Study for Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore (Lakeshore). In October 2006 the National Park Service (NPS) released Newsletter #3 and distributed it to approximately 2,300 individuals and organizations. This report consolidates and summarizes the public's responses to that information.

We received nearly two hundred comments on Newsletter #3 by both conventional and electronic mail. These comments will be instrumental to the NPS planning team as they refine the alternative management concepts from Newsletter #3 and develop the preliminary management alternatives that will be presented in the upcoming Newsletter #4. Continued public participation is essential in developing the long-term management alternatives for Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

In October 2006, the NPS mailed 2,308 copies of Newsletter #3, informing the public of the next phase of the GMP planning process. The newsletter presented draft management zones, alternative management concepts, and desired conditions which were developed using public comments received earlier. The five management zones proposed were carefully crafted to achieve resource protection, provide recreational access and use, and serve various operational purposes. They consisted of a High Use Visitor Zone, an Experience History Zone, a Recreation Zone, a Natural Zone, and an Administrative Zone. The four alternative management concepts proposed were developed to represent four distinctly different ways to manage the Lakeshore. They consisted of the No Action, Resource Enjoyment, Recreation Enjoyment, and Concentrated Use concepts. Each of the management concepts included an overall vision, description of the concepts, relative proportions of the proposed management zones, and a description of how much wilderness, if any, would be proposed for designation. The newsletter also presented 21 different categories of desired conditions that represent the ideal future conditions for the Lakeshore and will provide direction for its future management.

A total of 195 public comments on Newsletter #3 were received by the comment deadline from individuals and organizations via the NPS planning website, the Lakeshore website, and standard and electronic mail. The majority of the public comments received were submitted to the Lakeshore using the newsletter comment form or by personal letter. The majority of comment letters were received from individuals (188), three comment letters were received from organizations, two letters came from a local township, one letter was

received from a state agency outside of Michigan, and one letter was from a local business owner.

NPS planners encouraged the public to focus on the materials presented in the newsletter by providing four questions related to the draft management zones, alternative management concepts, desired conditions, and other factors instrumental in developing and selecting a preferred alternative. Most of the public comments received had responses to more than one of the four questions asked on the response form and many offered their preference among the four alternative concepts. Most comments supported the draft management zones as written, but some offered suggestions for improvement. Many suggestions were received for modification of the draft alternative management concepts. Support or opposition for the draft alternative management concepts was relatively evenly distributed among all four of the concepts. Of the comments received expressing an opinion about the alternative management concepts, 24 percent supported the Resource Enjoyment Concept, 19 percent supported the No Action Concept, and the Recreation Enjoyment and the Concentrated Use Concepts both received 16 percent support. The majority of comments supported the desired conditions as written. The comments provided NPS planners with a wide range of valuable public input on the management concepts and zones, and desired conditions for the Lakeshore. These comments will assist the NPS in developing the draft concepts into more detailed preliminary management alternatives in the next phase of planning.

The comments provided by the public have been organized according to the four questions asked on the Newsletter #3 response form, and in some cases are broken down further and organized into major themes. The four topics the public was asked to respond to include the following:

- Draft management zones,
- Alternative management concepts,
- Desired conditions, and
- Factors for developing or selecting a preferred alternative.

In addition, the public provided other comments regarding the planning process and Lakeshore management. These comments were categorized as follows:

- Detailed comments or suggestions on the GMP/Wilderness Study planning process that may be considered as part of the next phase of alternative development.
- Comments that were too specific for the broad scope of the GMP/Wilderness Study and are more appropriate for a separate planning process in the future.

General management planning is the broadest level of decision making for national parks and is intended to set management direction for 20 or more years. The general management plan will not include specific facility designs, resolve all Lakeshore issues, or guarantee funding for actions that may be proposed. A number of comments were received expressing concern about resources or the management of the Lakeshore that are beyond the broad scope of the GMP process. These comments will continue to be taken into account by the NPS and may be addressed in the future under a specific resource plan or other management plans; however, they will not be addressed by the GMP/Wilderness Study.

Some examples of public comments by category are included below. Some are direct quotes, and others are paraphrased.

DRAFT MANAGEMENT ZONES

The NPS proposed five draft management zones that could be used to prescribe conditions in various areas within the Lakeshore. Over half of those who responded supported the draft management zones as written. A few comments expressed concern that the zone descriptions were too general, while others suggested the zones be renamed for various reasons. Some respondents seemed confused about the zones altogether, and questioned why one zone would be called “Recreation” while it is possible to recreate in other areas and zones within the Lakeshore as well. Others questioned why boating on Lake Michigan was not addressed in the zones. The following are some respondents’ specific comments or suggestions regarding the zones.

High Visitor Use Zone

“In general I support these zones, with the provision that in the High Visitor Use Zone and the Recreation Zone, existing facilities should be maintained but no new roads or parking lots are constructed.” SLBE -128

“The sentence beginning "Natural landscapes may be altered" seems oddly worded with respect to "preserve and maintain cultural resources".” SLBE - 181

Experience History Zone

Historic zone should range from rustic walks to old farmsteads. SLBE – 115

“...put less emphasis on the History Zone which is adequately covered through Glen Haven, [Port] Oneida, and the Life Stations. Old barns, orchards, and cemeteries are repetitious of those found all over the USA.” SLBE – 059

“Historic zone and recreation zone should address creation of a boat ramp.” SLBE – 123

“Under the “Experience History Zone”, it appears that maritime resources such as the light stations, lifesaving stations, Glen Haven, etc. should be included in this zone.” SLBE - 181

Recreation Zone

“Concerning the Recreational Zone, the term "recreation" must apply park-wide and not to a particular zone to the exclusion of others. I think this must be called the Multiple Activities, Wide-ranging Activities, or Multiple-Use Zone.” SLBE - 003

“...the name “Range of Experiences” zone better characterizes the actual NPS narrative describing the “recreation” zone.” SLBE - 009

“I only question the inclusion of “scenic driving” in the recreation zone. I enjoy Pierce Stocking Drive but I see no reason to expand that concept into other areas of the park.” SLBE – 067

Natural Zone

“All five zones names are classified on that zone’s usage level except for “Natural”, so that name is not in context with the others.” ...the second sentence in the narrative for the “Natural” zone describes it succinctly. “*Visitors enjoy primitive recreation on foot or in human-powered watercraft.*” This zone would be named Primitive in any other NPS document. Primitive speaks to its usage while “Natural” implies that only in this zone would things be left “natural”, which, of course, is untrue.” SLBE – 009

“...no bikes for the natural zone.” “Bikes can ruin a hiking trail with overuse...” SLBE – 023

“I would like to see mountain biking in the natural zone. Such use can be managed to avoid resource impacts and limit encounters.” SLBE – 031

“The park has adequate acres of “natural zone”. On the other hand we need more emphasis on the recreation zone...” SLBE - 059

“I would prefer that wilderness not occur in [the management zones] with an exception being a small part of the natural zone.” SLBE - 083

Some responders made specific suggestions as to what should or should not be included in the management zones. Comments such as this are helpful in developing details of the management alternatives in subsequent planning stages.

“The Sand Bowl offers a great wonder of nature and I hope that you once again would make this available in your recreation zone.” SLBE - 019

Increase recreation zone with a boat ramp on Platte Bay should be a high priority. SLBE – 059

“Have you thought about bicycle paths or marked routes leading to the recreation areas? Have you discussed bike paths with Michigan Department of Transportation?” SLBE – 101

“The Pierce Stocking Drive is perhaps an opportunity where both high visitor usage, and wilderness study area are jointly combined into one area, with more than one compatible designation.” SLBE - 002

ALTERNATIVE MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS

Most respondents were able to express an opinion about the alternative management concepts presented in the newsletter. Out of the nearly 200 comment letters received, there was surprisingly a fairly even distribution of support for the alternative management concepts with about 16 to 24 percent of the respondents supporting each. From the range of alternative concepts provided, the Resource Enjoyment Concept received the most support at 24 percent, followed by the No Action Concept with 19 percent support, and 16 percent of respondents supported either the Recreation or the Concentrated Use Concepts. Some respondents supplied a rationale for their opinions and/or made suggestions on how an alternative management concept should be modified. For the most part, respondents understood that what was being presented were just initial concepts and

that details would be refined and explained during later planning steps. However a number of respondents wanted to know more detail and wanted to know how and where specific zones would be applied to the Lakeshore and what activities would be determined to be appropriate. The following provides a synopsis of the comments generated for each alternative management concept.

No Action Concept

Approximately 19 percent of the comments received were in favor of the No Action Concept as they felt that the Lakeshore provided an appropriate level of recreation and resource protection and that management should continue as it has been conducted in the past. A number of respondents questioned why detail was not provided as to how county roads could be managed under the No Action Concept similar to the description provided in the other management concepts.

“I strongly favor and am biased for the “No Action Concept.” “I think the current balance is as close to being appropriate as may be possible.” SLBE – 094

“Prefer #1, No Action Concept. Residents and visitors seem happy with the park the way it is being managed so why change?” SLBE - 116

“I prefer the “No Action Concept.” By this I mean to keep the current mix of park areas and activities as they currently are and have been. There is currently something for everyone to do.” SLBE – 129

Approximately three percent of respondents were opposed to the No Action Concept or expressed concern over the elements in this concept.

“The No Action Concept gets us nowhere.” SLBE – 016

[Regarding the No Action Concept], “I question the need to “restore disturbed lands. I agree with purchasing lands, but not do not agree with development of a scenic roadway.” SLBE – 139

“No Action – I don’t think it’s right to let things go on as they are. Sadly, I believe that visitors to the park many times take advantage of the landscape in ways that aren’t respectful.” SLBE – 148

Resource Enjoyment Concept

A number of respondents expressed strong opinions about this concept. Approximately 24 percent of the comments supported this concept, the most support received for an alternative concept. Those in favor of the concept said they supported preserving the Lakeshore’s resources and allowing low-impact, non-intrusive recreational activities, and they also supported the designation of large amounts of wilderness.

“I prefer the “Resource Enjoyment Concept”. There are many opportunities for recreation concepts in our region. “Wild” places are rare and should be expanded but made available for people as well.” SLBE – 115

“[Resource Enjoyment Concept] preferred because activities permitted are largely non-intrusive.” SLBE – 069

“I most like the Resource Enjoyment Concept because it acknowledges the fact that wilderness is a resource that can shrink but not increase and this alternative acts to protect the most wilderness possible.” SLBE - 044

Many respondents who opposed the concept (6 percent) did so because of access related issues such as the potential closing of roads. Others did not support allowing cultural or historical resources to molder, or they disagreed with the amount of wilderness proposed. A number of respondents expressed that they feel the Lakeshore does not have any areas appropriate for wilderness, and some suggested that this alternative concept was contrary to the Lakeshore’s enabling legislation.

“Resource Enjoyment Concept: Closing county roads and two-tracks would prevent access to a lot of beaches. These seasonal roads should be available to all.” SLBE – 020

“Resource Enjoyment Concept! Don’t like closing roads or leaving things to molder as was so disastrous with Cottage Row.” SLBE – 088

“Alternative #2 calls for ...a resource reserve. This is contrary to the purpose of the enabling legislation.” SLBE – 003

A few respondents in support of the alternative concept also offered suggestions to modify it by continuing to acquire lands within the Benzie Corridor but for a bicycle or hiking trail rather than a roadway. Another suggested the concept be modified by reducing the extent of wilderness designated in the Lakeshore.

“I support the Resource Enjoyment Concept with large amounts of wilderness.” ...One exception to this concept: acquire the Benzie Corridor, but create a hiking trail, but no road.” SLBE – 128

“I would prefer the Resource Enjoyment Concept with a small to moderate amount of wilderness, keeping a relatively large amount of Natural Area. Almost all of the Lakeshore has been logged and/or developed in its history. As such, the impacts of man are very apparent and do not fit the original “wilderness” definition...” SLBE – 071

Recreation Enjoyment Concept

Respondents also expressed strong opinions about the Recreation Enjoyment Concept. Approximately 16 percent of those who responded expressed support for this concept. Reasons for support included increased infrastructure that would enhance visitor use and in turn would support economic growth. Some suggested that the concept be renamed to perhaps “Multi-Use” as the term “recreation” is being used, in their opinion, to attempt to distinguish between user types.

“The “Recreation Enjoyment Concept” is perfect. It recognizes the need for active tourism.” “This state with its declining manufacturing base needs tourism as a viable industry. The opening of a southern access, “the Benzie Corridor”, is critical and should be pursued vigorously.” SLBE - 124

“I like the recreation because while still preserving the land, you allow people to experience the joy and beauty of the area.” SLBE – 019

“Recreation Enjoyment – I like the following: emphasis on developing biking, more backcountry camping, and Benzie Corridor for a hiking trail. I do not like the lack of emphasis on preserving natural resources.” SLBE - 008

Those expressing opposition to this management concept, 11 percent, raised concern about the protection of Lakeshore resources, expanding recreational activities, and the small amount of wilderness that would be proposed.

“I don’t like any part of the Recreation Enjoyment Concept. This seems to be a consumptive use of a park that has been preserved for all generations. Leave dense, active recreation to the private sector, outside the park.” SLBE – 050

“Particularly dislike the Recreation Concept. To offer little or no wilderness in the proposed is to offer little or no wilderness to the future generations to come. The Natural Zone should not be small, it is vital to the identity of Sleeping Bear and the economy of tourism because of its beauty.” SLBE – 012

“Under the “Recreation Enjoyment” option you include under “Concept Description” the development of more backpacking opportunities yet under “Wilderness”, indicate “Little or no wilderness proposed.” This is contradictory. Across the US backpacking opportunities rely upon wilderness quality lands, whether designated or not.” SLBE - 007

A few respondents also provided suggestions on modifying the Recreation Enjoyment Concept to reduce development or enhance protection of resources.

“[I] like the expansion of track (bike, hike), but don’t want trailheads paved or enlarged. Do not expand access to inland waters. I like the preservation of historic resources.” SLBE – 130

“As my initial preference of the “Recreational Enjoyment Concept”...the only objection is that the Lakeshore should be managed for natural conditions, especially those areas that were never timbered off, or became farmlands.” SLBE - 001

Concentrated Use Concept

As with the other concepts presented, this concept generated both support (16 percent) and opposition (5 percent). The concept appealed to some respondents because it provided a balance between preservation and recreation.

“I like the Concentrated Use Concept – it seems to be the most balanced with the potential for benefit for all visitors as well as maintenance of natural conditions.” SLBE – 029

“I particularly like the idea of concentrated use; this allows a good experience both to enjoy the historical sites and recreational trails, but also preserves good geographical areas for more natural hiking, backpacking, etc.” SLBE – 067

“I like the Concentrated Use Concept. There are two basic types of visitors to the park. This concept enhances opportunities for both groups.” SLBE - 138

There was some opposition to the concept and there were also those that generally agreed with the concept, but did not agree with the levels of development for infrastructure, wilderness or recreation that were proposed as written.

“Concentrated Use Concept – Not a large enough area to consider all of these improvements and facilities. This would ruin why most people come to the Lakeshore. Peace and quiet.” SLBE – 136

“Concentrated Use Concept will result in loss of wilderness or historic value simply by claiming a certain amount of land for high levels of visitor use. Virtually all lands within the park are either historic or wilderness.” SLBE – 060

“The Concentrated Use Concept is flawed in that there should be more recreational zone and less high use visitor zone.” SLBE – 119

The Concentrated Use Concept received more suggestions for modification than the other concepts. The respondents offered general suggestions on changing the amount of recreational activity or wilderness, and specific suggestions on changing the level or type of development. The following provides a consolidated list of modifications suggested for the Concentrated Use Concept.

- All current roads in the Lakeshore must remain open. SLBE - 087
- Moderate level of recreation zone rather than a small amount. SLBE - 031
- More recreation and more wilderness. SLBE – 030
- Too much wilderness proposed. SLBE - 157
- Increase emphasis on protecting natural resources, including changing moderate to substantial amount of wilderness proposed. SLBE - 082
- Increase recreation zone and decrease amount of high use visitor zone. SLBE - 119
- Add vehicle accessibility to parking areas in second set of conditions. SLBE - 001
- Do not increase cultural resources. SLBE - 029
- Increase emphasis on developing more back country camping, bike trails, and historical and cultural interpretation. SLBE - 008

New Alternative Management Concepts Suggested

A number of respondents suggested ideas for new concepts to be considered by the GMP/Wilderness Study planning team.

“I would prefer to see moderate amounts of the high use visitor and history zones and a large amount of the natural zone and wilderness areas.” SLBE – 053

I would prefer small amounts of high use/visitor zone; moderate amounts of experience history and recreational zones; and large amount of natural zone. Same as Resource Enjoyment Concept except increasing experience history zone to moderate. SLBE – 107

One respondent proposed and submitted a new alternative management concept, a small portion of which is excerpted here.

“Wherever possible without impeding visitor safety or resource protection, natural conditions and ecological processes shall remain unfettered. ...access throughout the Park will remain for unfettered public enjoyment wherever the resource would not be compromised.... Moderate amounts of the High Use visitor zone and Experience History zone, large amount of a Range of Experience zone, small amount of Primitive zone.” SLBE - 009

Comments on Elements Provided in Concept Descriptions

A number of respondents provided comments applicable to more than one of the alternative concepts. These included comments on land acquisition, development of additional infrastructure, and the access and closing of seasonal roads.

Access

There were a number of access related comments submitted for consideration. Some respondents did not support any closing of roads in the Lakeshore. There was opposition to the development of additional scenic drives and improvement of access to inland waters. One respondent also requested that the NPS consider fallow or seasonal roads before considering the creation of new roads in the Lakeshore. Others supported improved access to inland lakes. Some respondents commented that the concepts lacked provisions for boater access to and from Lake Michigan, and suggested development of a boat launch, perhaps at the mouth of the Platte River.

Land Acquisition

Comments were received in opposition to the acquisition of the Benzie Corridor, concerned it would result in more vehicle traffic and create a strain on Lakeshore resources for continued upkeep and maintenance. One respondent suggested that the NPS should not acquire more lands unless large contiguous tracts were available, while another urged more acquisition of lands along the Crystal River to promote protection of that resource.

Development

A few respondents expressed their support for development under the concepts such as new trails and backcountry camping sites. There were also comments supporting the continued maintenance of existing facilities but not the expansion of new facilities.

WILDERNESS STUDY

A few comments expressed opinions on which areas met or did not meet the requirements for wilderness. There were comments suggesting that Miller Hill, Crystal River and Bow Lakes in particular should be considered wilderness to provide further protection of those areas. Other respondents suggested that wilderness designations be limited to the areas between existing roads so as not to modify access to the Lakeshore. Other comments suggested that Newsletter #3 did not make clear to the public that the 1981 Wilderness Recommendation’s boundaries will remain in effect until Congress passes a new law that would change the boundaries based on a new proposal.

Respondents to the newsletter also expressed support or opposition to proposing wilderness within the Lakeshore. Those respondents in support of wilderness thought that wilderness should be a goal for the Lakeshore as areas surrounding the Lakeshore are being rapidly developed, therefore, more areas within the Lakeshore should be considered for designation.

“In the alternate management concepts I like the alternatives that are focused on preserving large amounts of wilderness in the Lakeshore. There are many places on the coastlines of the Great Lakes that are highly developed for recreation. On the other hand, there are very few areas on the coast of the Great Lakes... that have been preserved as large natural areas.” SLBE - 174

“I feel that preservation of wilderness should be a major goal for park management. I’m concerned about over development of recreational activities within the park.” SLBE – 167

“...from a recreation standpoint, wilderness based recreation seems all too rare in Michigan despite its substantial public land base... This argues strongly for identifying opportunities for wilderness designation.” SLBE - 007

Some respondents expressed their opposition to a wilderness designation or to expanding wilderness in the Lakeshore because the lands have been previously disturbed by activities such as logging and development of infrastructure. Others oppose the wilderness designation because there is a perception that it will restrict access and that it goes against what some believe to be the purpose of the Lakeshore.

“I have little objection to [the No Action Concept] except for the large amount of wilderness proposed. Attempting to label old farm fields and wood lots as wilderness mocks the wilderness idea, creates contempt for it, does no justice to cultural resources and deflates any credibility the park service has in managing our natural and cultural resources for what they are.” SLBE – 157

“It makes more sense for the National Park Service to employ its limited resources and budget dollars to preserve wilderness that already exists in the park, instead of spending time, money and energy to create wilderness where it doesn’t exist.” SLBE – 178

“The closest that the Lakeshore comes to wilderness is on North Manitou Island. But even there the land is heavily impacted with old roads, clearings, logging scars, and other remnants of man. It’s time to recognize what is actually found on these lands and not identify wilderness where it is actually “natural areas.”” SLBE – 071

DESIRED CONDITIONS

The majority of respondents who provided comments on this category were in support of the desired conditions as they were presented in the newsletter. Some respondents expressed concern over the description of the desired conditions. Others suggested that the desired conditions should be prioritized in order for them to be useful. Another respondent was concerned over the use of the word “integrity” used in the description of

the desired conditions, and suggested that the word is subjective and can be interpreted many ways. Another respondent wanted to know the specifics of action thresholds at which to determine if desired conditions are being met. Specific comments regarding suggested changes to desired conditions are provided below.

Ecosystem Management

“Ecosystem Management is a concern as you say you “manage in consideration ...and surrounding area”. Would we expect that the NPS might pressure/coerce county and regional planning units if even through “friends groups”? We believe this is inappropriate outside of park boundaries.” SLBE – 003

“Ecosystem management and cultural resources management should include experienced and respected local experts as well as PhDs and NPS people.” SLBE – 088

“I disagree with “social conditions,” “park managers adapt to changing ecological and social conditions of the National Lakeshore and surrounding area... You would allow special interest to rule.” SLBE - 131

Natural Resources (General) and Diversity

“The Natural Resources (General) and Diversity condition seems very broad, far reaching and could easily be used later to limit access and recreation. This is too vague...” SLBE – 003

With regards to the Natural Resources (General) and Diversity desired condition, “...some of its language is inconsistent with the language of the different condition called “*Ecosystem Management*”, which rightly states that the Park Service will see to it that “*The resources and processes of the Lakeshore (will) retain a significant degree of ecological integrity...*In contrast, the “Natural Resources and Diversity” condition predicates...that attempts will be made to interfere with naturally occurring biological and botanical processes in order to “restore” various species..” SLBE - 009

“We disagree with the many weasel words in the Natural Resources section - "as possible", "when possible", "when conditions allow", etc. These objectives deserve to be stated unequivocally, so the goals are clear, even if the NPS is not able to achieve them immediately.” SLBE – 028

“Natural preservation seems impossible due to the forces of nature that change things...” SLBE – 060

Suggest expanding natural sound from some of the Lakeshore to most of the Lakeshore. SLBE – 008

Historic Structures, Cultural Landscapes, and Archeological Resources

“I feel this category is lacking, especially in the area of historic structures and archeological resources. Preservation of structures seems a bit arbitrary, much more historical edification is needed.” SLBE – 60

“I think this document should have more emphasis on “interpreting or describing” cultural and historic resources rather than “managing and protecting”. SLBE - 008

Visitor Use and Experience

A respondent expressed concern over the phrase “minimizing conflict between user groups” and suggested promoting commonality among groups rather than separating them. SLBE – 031

“There is only one passing comment regarding accessibility under "visitor use and experience". Wheelchair access for visitors with other disabilities is important. Suggest a stand alone consideration for this issue.” SLBE - 100

Wildlife Management

Disagree with mimicking natural influences if that means allowing natural fire regime or reintroducing species. SLBE - 111

FACTORS FOR DEVELOPING OR SELECTING THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Factors that the public suggested the NPS consider when developing or selecting the preferred alternative included access, land acquisition, balance between use and preservation, costs, development, the Lakeshore’s enabling legislation, resource preservation, recreation, visitor use, and wilderness. In addition, a number of respondents suggested that the most important factor in determining the preferred alternative should be public opinion whether that is at a local or national level. Table 1 below provides a list of factors suggested by the public according to categories.

TABLE 1: SUGGESTED FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OR SELECTION OF A PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

CATEGORY	FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION
Access	Maintaining or increasing access Access for physically challenged Consider whether access will be restricted from what it has been for over 50 years Increase access to lake
Balance	Consider the balance between recreation and natural resource preservation
Cost	Consider the costs of the alternative Consider costs for maintenance when proposing new development
Development	Less development and noise, maintain Lakeshore feel Less road development Development for elderly, physically challenged Increase camp sites No development
Education and Interpretation	Improved public education Increased opportunities for interpretation such as guided hikes
Land Acquisition	No more land acquisition
Natural Resources	Ecosystem management Wildlife management
Preservation	Protection of natural and historic values should come first Historic structures preserved Emphasize history and wilderness over visitor uses Preserving artifacts and buildings Preserving natural state and natural resources Preservation of wildlife and wild places Reduction of human influence
Lakeshore Legislation	Meeting the intent of Congress and Lakeshore’s enabling legislation Integrity of Lakeshore and it's mission
Public Health & Safety	Visitor safety

TABLE 1: SUGGESTED FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OR SELECTION OF A PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE (Continued)

CATEGORY	FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION
Public Input	Weigh heavily the views of those who use the Lakeshore, local versus national groups National interest should take precedence over local political meddling and development pressures
Recreation	Consider recreational activities outside the Lakeshore offered on other private and public lands Increased hiking opportunities The needs of visitors A variety of appropriate uses Consider visitor use of areas and overcrowding Increased recreational activities
Socioeconomics	Consider the business community in Leelanau and Benzie Counties.
Visitor Use	Compatibility of uses in designated areas Consider increase in visitors and growth of surrounding area and impacts on the Lakeshore Do not choose based on attracting more visitors Carrying capacities for rivers and lakes Consider use as a factor
Wilderness	Maintain or expand wilderness Consider wilderness preservation Recognize that the Lakeshore is not total wilderness

OTHER COMMENTS REGARDING THE PLANNING PROCESS AND LAKESHORE MANAGEMENT

Many comments suggested specific locations for development, resource protection measures, or provision of recreational activities even though some of these are already occurring. Some expressed confusion about the steps in the planning process. Several comments were received on topics whose detail is beyond the scope of this general level planning effort. Some of these comments are described below.

Detailed Comments for Consideration in Subsequent Planning Steps

A number of respondents supplied specific comments or suggestions for consideration. Although most of these are too detailed to be addressed individually in the GMP/Wilderness Study, they may be used in developing the management alternatives or taken into consideration when applying management zones to the Lakeshore.

- Provide small docks on Bass Lake for families.
- Developing interpretive experience of islands on mainland to entice visitors to go to the Islands.
- Establish carrying capacity for the Crystal and Platte Rivers.
- Like to see the mouth of the Platte River returned to its natural condition. No dredging. Develop a boat launch nearby.
- Preserve the Esch Farm house.
- Port Oneida and Glen Haven should have "harbor of refuge" transits for boaters.
- Develop a hostel.
- Improve the boat launch.
- Develop guided tours.
- Boat launch is needed at Glen Haven for safety purposes.
- Support more mountain bike trails and boater access on South Manitou Island.
- Increase protection of dune atop Pierce Stocking Scenic drive.
- Suggest restricting high access areas from wilderness designation on South Manitou Island.
- Old dune rides area should be combined use and wilderness area.

Comments Regarding the Planning Process

A number of comments were received that indicate some misunderstandings about the planning process and the stage we are at present. The management zones, alternative management concepts, and desired conditions presented in Newsletter #3 are the draft building blocks which could create how the Lakeshore would be managed and experienced in the future. They were presented in Newsletter #3 for public comment and further refinement. However, some respondents to the newsletter requested further detail on how the management zones would be applied and suggested that maps of the zones overlaid on the Lakeshore would be helpful. Others wanted more detailed information regarding the costs of implementing actions and funding sources as well as an impact assessment of actions such as acquiring lands within the Benzie Corridor. In particular, there was concern over the environmental impacts of road or trail building on surrounding lakes and watersheds and visual impacts to the ridgeline. There was also concern regarding the economic impacts of a new scenic trail and how development of the Benzie Corridor may affect tourism and tax base in the surrounding counties. Others simply wanted more detail on elements of the alternative management concepts such as what "increased access to inland waters" might mean. These sorts of comments are scheduled to be addressed in upcoming steps in the GMP/Wilderness Study process.

Comments that are Outside of the Scope of the GMP/Wilderness Study

A number of comments were received expressing concern about resources or the management of the Lakeshore that are beyond the broad scope of the GMP/Wilderness Study process. These comments included topics such as fees, pets, hunting, implementation plans (including deer management, fire management plan), invasive species management, enforcement of Lakeshore rules, Lakeshore maintenance of facilities, and leasing or selling farm lands within the Lakeshore. These comments will continue to be taken into account by the NPS and may be addressed in the future under a specific resource plan or other management plans; however, they will not be addressed by the GMP/Wilderness Study.

APPENDIX A: NEWSLETTER #3 COMMENT FORM

This page left intentionally blank.



Comment Form

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore
Michigan

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Your input is important to us. Comments are welcome any time, although comments received by November 10, 2006 will be most helpful. Feel free to attach additional pages if you need more space. Please see the reverse side of this form for the National Park Service's policy on making comments available for public review.

After reading over the draft management zones, do these zones cover the range of experiences and conditions you would hope to find at the National Lakeshore? If not, why not?

After reading over the four alternative management concepts, are there certain aspects or elements of the alternatives that you particularly like or dislike? Briefly explain why.

After reading over the desired conditions for Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, do you agree with them? If not, why not?

What factors do you think the National Park Service should consider when the time comes to select or develop a preferred alternative?