

BICY OFF ROAD VEHICLE RECREATION AND ITS BENEFITS

**A Report About the Off Road Vehicle Recreation Experience
in the Big Cypress National Preserve**

**Final Report
1998**

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**Study Conducted as part of the 1997 Big Cypress Off Road Vehicle
Planning Effort**

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BICY Off Road Vehicle Recreation and Its Benefits

INTRODUCTION

Big Cypress National Preserve (BICY) receives intense use by several thousand dedicated and motivated Off Road Vehicle (ORV) recreationists. The ORV is a dominant part of the recreation activity and is the focus of a current NPS planning effort for the Preserve. Because of a relatively transient staff and because of little social science research on the topic there exists little documentation about how and why a typical ORV trip into the swamp unfolds.

BICY ORV users differ from typical visitors to other NPS installations. Staff expectations about visitor behavior and experiences formed in other NPS installations may be misleading when applied to BICY visitors. Hence the lack of documented work on the BICY ORV user makes difficult the tasks of management, planning, and visitor contact.

The study described here is one small part of a large project to understand and plan for ORV use at BICY. Concurrent studies are using other methods to examine related issues. The result of this information will inform the Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan being drafted for the BICY.

The purpose of the study reported here was to provide an in-depth description of ORV trips into BICY. More specifically, the purpose was to describe a "typical" visit to BICY by describing, from the visitor's perspective, how the on-site trip unfolds and the benefits and experiences associated with the trip.

There are three specific objectives of this report:

1. To describe recreation activities in the Preserve and how those activities depend on the ORV. This description should help inform ORV planning by highlighting how the vehicle is used and how potential changes in use might influence current recreational use patterns in the Preserve.
2. To describe and explain the experiences and benefits associated with ORV recreation in the Preserve. Planning and management efforts should be better able to minimize loss to these benefits resulting from potential management actions by better understand how visitors perceive these benefits.
3. To provide law enforcement, interpretive, and other NPS staff with a detailed understanding of their clients. How do ORV visitors use the Preserve? What do they seek during their visits? How do they benefit from their relationship with the preserve?

This report only address ORV use of the preserve. Other legitimate and important uses and users are not reviewed in this document.

METHOD

In order to achieve the objectives, informed BICY recreators participated in in-depth, structured interviews. The interviews sought to describe and to script the on-site recreation experience. A recreation "script," like its theatrical name-sake, describes a sequence of behaviors (activities), where they occur, and with whom. A script is made up of acts or stages. Each stage is characterized by the following attributes: the activities or behaviors which occur; the setting where activities occur; the duration of these activities; the role of props such as vehicles, trails, and camps; the intensity and quality of interaction among the "cast"; and the feelings and thoughts experienced by the "actors". The script is a conceptual device common to sociology and anthropology (Goffman, 1959) and has been applied in such diverse situations as scripting criminal activity (Comish, 1993; Michael, 1997) and recreation events such as skydiving (Celsi, Rose & Leigh, 1993).

Informants

Several leaders of BICY ORV user groups and other persons active in the ORV planning effort were contacted by phone and asked to participate in the study. These participants are not representative of BICY users but were informed, motivated, and articulate. They were the opinion leaders of their communities, and as such thought likely to represent and shape values in the ORV community.

Separate focus groups were formed for each of the following themes: wheeled vehicle visits to the area of the preserve with designated trails; wheeled vehicle visits to permanent, exempt camps; wheeled vehicle visits to temporary camps in areas without designated trails; air boat visits to temporary and to permanent camps. Informants were selected because they represented these different types of users and because they had extensive experience with ORV use in BICY: averaging 15 years of use (several with well over 20 years), and all had over 25 visits to the site last year. In total there were 17 informants.

Data collection procedures:

Typically, informants received a phone call and a letter explaining the general purpose and timing of the meeting at least 2 weeks prior to the interview. All meetings were small: two meetings had only one informant and five meetings had between 2 to 4 informants. Meetings lasted from 1 to 3 hours (averaging just over 2 hours).

The interview followed the following sequence:

1. Introductions and explanation of the study took a few minutes. Informants were asked to sign an "informed consent" form in which they were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality
2. Informants were asked to complete a brief closed ended question in which they could describe how often and how long they used BICY.
3. A videotape recorder was turned on.

4. Informants discussed amongst themselves and agreed on a typical trip length to be the focus of discussion. In most cases everyone had ample experience with a two night trip into the Preserve and that became the trip they described.

5. Informants were asked to describe in detail, step by step, how the trip unfolded, from arriving and, for example, taking the vehicle off the trailer to departing the Preserve.

6. During this description, the interviewer repeatedly asked and recorded answers to six specific questions.

a) What were you doing? Why was this important? (i.e., activity);

b) How long did it take? (i.e., duration);

c) Describe where it was occurring? Why was this important? (i.e., setting);

d) Who were you with? Why was this important? (i.e., social)

e) What was the vehicle's role? How important was the vehicle? (i.e., the vehicle was the primary prop of interest)

f) What were you experiencing? Why was it special? What were the benefits? (i.e., experience/benefits)

7. Notes were taken by the interviewer on a large sheet of paper divided into 6 columns following from the 6 questions listed above

8. After the trip was completely described, informants were asked to describe the "high points" or most important parts of the trip. Informants had great difficulty with this question. For reasons developed in the Discussion section, this question was dropped to allow more discussion of the following, more managerially relevant, question.

9. Informants were asked to describe how current regulations influenced their use of the Preserve and how future regulations (i.e., designated trails) might influence how they used the Preserve. These topics, which were the focus of the Preserver's pending ORV management plan, often came up during description of the scripts.

10. Informants were given an opportunity to bring up points or issues they thought explained their use and experience of the Preserve but were not captured by the preceding discussions. Rarely was this opportunity taken. As suggested below, informants seemed satisfied that they had accurately presented the situation.

11. At the conclusion of the meeting, informants were asked whether the information they just provided "did a good job" describing and explaining how and why they used BICY, or whether the information was "trivial and superficial". In all instances, informants were very satisfied that they had described accurately and in detail how and why they used the preserve.

Data analysis

Based upon the interview notes, a preliminary list was made of the various stages of the script (i.e., arrival, trip in, set up camp,...) for the wheeled vehicle permit holders with permanent camps. This process was repeated for each of the other user types (i.e., airboaters). Comparisons across user types informed the stages of scripts being developed. Additionally, a separate list was developed for the "benefits" or experiences associated with each stage of the trip. Recall that informants were asked to describe how they felt or what was special about each event they described. These questions generated voluminous responses and data for subsequent analysis.

The next step of the method was to view each video tape with two purposes in mind: first to look for confirmation and refutation of the stages being proposed and second to

record verbatim quotes describing the activities, duration, setting attributes, group dynamics, role of vehicle, and experience/benefits associated with each stage of each script. A report was prepared detailing these scripts, their stages, and associated activities and experience/benefits using quotes from informants and explanations by the interviewer.

Two members of the research team read this report. They then reviewed the video tapes with the same tasks described above: first to confirm or refute the stages of each script and second to verify and extend quotations. The team members had previously read the interviewer's analysis and were looking for confirmation or refutation of the conclusions presented rather than developing their conclusions independently. Discussion among the research team resulted in clarification and re-conceptualization of several findings.

Finally, a "member check" was made by mailing informants a preliminary draft of the scripts and asking them to correct and/or comment on its summary and interpretation. Other than the lack of independent review, we followed procedures recommended by Yin (1999) and described by Spiggle (1994).

Informants were randomly assigned a letter of the alphabet to honor our promise of anonymity. Quotations contained in our analysis are associated with such a letter.

The results are divided into three sections:

- 1) a description of benefits and experiences associated with ORV use of BICY,
- 2) a description of a typical visit for each of the user groups, and
- 3) a summary of management issues which arose from our discussions.

WHERE, WHEN AND HOW ORV ACTIVITIES OCCUR

A recreation "script," like its theatrical name-sake, describes a sequence of activities, where they occur, and with whom. A script is made up of acts or stages. Each stage is described according to its main activities, duration, setting, role of the vehicles, intensity and quality of social interaction, and the associated benefits and experiences. The script is a conceptual device used to describe and understand recreation experiences and how management might affect these experiences. Despite this intent, it is critical to note that there probably is no such thing as a "typical" visit to BICY, just as there is not such thing as an "average camper" (Shaffer, 1969). However, informants were very consistent in their descriptions of what, where, and why activities occur. Informants' descriptions did evidence variations in the duration and setting of activities. These variations seemed caused by where one camped and/or hunted.

Three scripts are described below:

- 1) Wheeled buggy ORVs camping at permanent or temporary camps (pp. 9-24).
- 2) Air boats camping at permanent or temporary camps (pp. 25-39).
- 3) Wheeled buggy and ATV ORV using the designated routes of Bear Island (40-47).

Each stage of the script is characterized by:

- activity (what people were doing)
- duration (how long they were doing it)
- physical setting (characteristics of setting where they were doing it),
- role of vehicle (in the activity and experiences),
- social setting (who was involved and why)
- associated experiences/ benefits (what people felt)

Quotes illustrative of select experiences and benefits are included to add depth and color to the scripts. These benefits and experiences are described in more detail in the following section of this report.

Special Note: How much should you trust these results?

Extensive discussion about study strengths and weakness is presented in the final section under the topic of limitations. On balance, the author is confident and comfortable with the validity of the data because there is agreement among independent sources of information and because the findings are consistent with current understanding of recreation behavior and benefits. However, the small number of informants (17) on which these findings are based will likely concern those expecting extensive and representative samples. I feel these concerns are misplaced because these results do not attempt to predict what % of ORV users will be doing activity X at moment T. Rather the intent of this report is to describe the type of activities and benefits/experiences associated with ORVing. We all agree there is no such thing as "typical" or "average" trip: people differ from one another and the same people differ from themselves from visit to visit. Despite such variability we can still learn a great deal relevant to management by understanding what most people do and feel most of the time. Those results are reported here in detail much greater than would have been possible with a survey and representative sampling. Additionally, two representative surveys are part of the larger Va. Tech study and are discussed in another document. In general, there are overlap and agreement between the findings of those two surveys and the results reported here.

Script For Wheeled Buggy: Permanent And Temporary Camps. No Designated Routes

This section describes the script for a typical trip to a temporary or permanent camp in parts of the Preserve where designated routes do not exist (i.e., use patterns are not constrained by predetermined routes).

The information summarized in this section comes from extended, video-taped interviews with seven informants who have considerable experience in BICY: from 10 to 44 years of first-hand recreation experience in what is now called BICY, and averaging more than 25 BICY trips and 40 overnights last year. Informants were articulate and sincere in the descriptions they provided.

Considerable similarity exists between the scripts of people with permanent camps and those without these camps. The two major exceptions to these similarities are (1) that visitors to permanent camps focused more energy and activity around the camp and (2) that permanent camp visitors seemed to experience to a greater degree the numerous and substantial benefits associated with BICY recreation.

Several major differences exist between hunting and nonhunting trips (although there are more similarities than differences). Fundamentally, the difference is that during a hunting trip people "work hard" and the dominant activity is hunting. In contrast, during nonhunting trips, which also were numerous, people were more likely to spend time maintaining camp and making short outings for nature study and active recreation (walk, swim, scout).

A detailed descriptions of these stages follows this brief, tabular outline of a typical trip sequence for hunting and nonhunting trips.

Hunting	Non-Hunting
Arrive at entry point	Arrive at entry point
Entry trip to camp	Entry trip to camp
Open Camp	Open Camp
Brief outing for firewood	Brief outing for firewood
Hunt	Numerous brief or one extended outing
Camp Evening	Camp Activities (evening)
Camp Morning	Camp Activities (morning)
Hunt	Camp Maintenance
Camp Rest	Outing
Hunt or Visit Neighbors	Visit Neighbors
Camp Evening	More outings
Evening Outing or Visit Neighbors	Camp Evening
Camp Morning	Evening Outing or Visit Neighbors
Hunt	Camp Morning
Departure	Outing or camp maintenance
	Departure

Arrival

Overview: Spirits are heightened by anticipation of the upcoming adventure. Friends and family engage in intense interaction as trip preparation duties are carried out, expectations shared, jokes told, and memories relived. The vehicle provides a focal point, around which this activity swirls.

Activity:

- Buggies arrive on trailer or are stored near the entry point.
- Stored vehicles may require maintenance and fueling in preparation for the trip. Trailered vehicles usually were serviced prior to leaving home.
- Supplies are loaded and secured.
- Plans are discussed

Duration: 30 to 60 minutes

Setting

- Developed roadside

Role of vehicle: It is the primary focus of attention, followed closely by the social setting.

Social Setting :

- There exists spirited social interaction. Some trips involve multiple (2 or 3) buggies, and there is typically more than one person per buggy.
- Friends reunite, jokes and stories are told.
- Responsibility is shared, roles are known.
- Children are involved and given responsibility.
- Cooperation is high, one feels good about being part of the group.

Experience/benefit :

- Anticipation and excitement for the imminent trip
- Activity Identity: Pride in vehicle
- Social Identity: Pride in family/group responsibility
- Sense of community within group, group identity
- Children learn about their culture and how to deal with responsibility

"I built that buggy myself, I know it inside and out.. so I have a certain amount of pride in what I built...knowing it is reliable ..."

"it takes an incredible amount of planning to be prepared for everything you might encounter"

Entry Trip

Overview: A direct trip into camp with minimal stops or detours. The driver expends considerable energy cautiously and deliberately negotiating hazards which can damage vehicle. All are alert to environmental conditions and nature is studied and discussed. Small group interaction among persons on the vehicle enhance camaraderie.

Activity:

- Drive loaded vehicle with caution. Little or no exploring.
- Select and navigate trail based upon vehicle weight and conditions of swamp
- Direct route to camp with an occasional stop for picnic, toilet, nature study
- Socialize with people on buggy
- Occasionally stop at other's camps for mutual aid (if on the way)
- Stop at a few predetermined locations along way to stretch or eat

Duration varies with location of camp (2 to 4 hours)

Setting

- One of several, familiar, frequented routes (which one depends upon time available, vehicle load, swamp conditions). There may be multiple paths along the same route and which one is used depends upon its condition.
- Backcountry

Role of vehicle

- Transport
- Facilitates social interaction by keeping people together

Social Setting

- People on buggy
- Can be communication among vehicles

Experience/benefit

- Cautious, deliberate action to avoid vehicle damage, not in a hurry
- Activity Identity: skill of knowing swamp and matching vehicle abilities
- Nature study: knowledge of swamp, answering frequent questions posed by children about what they see
- Family/group bonding
- Self confidence: practice and testing of planning skills (ready for every emergency, "no doctors or auto repair shops out there")
- Deliberate and sustained attention to vehicle and route (exercising, testing, strengthening mental and attentive abilities)
- Land ethic strengthened by attention to environmental conditions

quotes on next page

Entry Trip Quotes:

"We have changed what we look for... it used to be just hunting.... that is what our fathers did... but now we look for more than just hunting and are more sensitive to nature.... I try to pass that sensitivity on to my children.

"There is nothing more disappointing than to be out there, looking at an orchid or something and then look down to see a Coke can...and destroy the natural beauty you are out there to enjoy"

"I get the 483 questions [about nature] from the kids... so I do a lot of stopping and showing what a bird is or a [specific species] is... that's what I am getting, I am getting this educational experience for my kids"

" there is a certain amount of tension... leaving the road and relying on the vehicle... when you get to camp... it's very satisfying...Sometimes I feel like I want to kick the ground when I get there"

"I consider it a challenge... every time you go you are fighting or working with the elements.. the water...it's a strain on the running gear.. it's a challenge.... you want your equipment in as good a shape as you can..."

"Going to a hotel, going to Disney World... all that is (BS).. there is nothing like going out into God's creation... man can't duplicate it"

"The simplicity of it moves you closer to everything you hold holy. Sitting out there you can't get any closer to God... it is just you and him"

"To a lot of people, their idea of religion is that to go to a big cathedral or a big church, ...a fancy ceiling... and that puts you into a frame of mind that you are communicating with the higher being because you are in a grandiose, man-made... box, no matter how big it's still a four walled box.

"We go out and we see nature and God on a one to one basis. When you're sitting on a buggy watching the sun drop into the western sky and its highlighting the plants, and the colors all change... you are seeing nature and God on a one-to-one basis. It is not something that is being interpreted by another human being, telling you what God should be. You don't need to go to church after you've been to the woods. You see it all. You can't just sit there and look at something that is as inspiring as that and not walk away with a different feeling about yourself. It's a humbling experience..."

"It is a big part of my life...It is a spiritual thing...I'm not saying I am a pantheist, but I find God out there"

Open Camp

Overview: Weary from a jarring ride, spirits are lifted as one approaches the familiar camp. For both permanent and temporary campers, this is home and the feeling of arrival is similar to that many people experience upon arriving home after an extended absence. The place is full of memories of past events and of previous guests. There is a great deal of pride in having created and/or maintained the camp in the wilderness. Even people who tent camp typically return time after time to the same location and hence feel a fond familiarity for the setting.

Activity:

- Unload vehicle, open up and air out buildings
- Inspect grounds for snakes, damage, signs of wildlife
- Clean up debris, mow grass, repair damage
- or -set up tent if not a permanent or temporary camp

then

- Plan future outings (hunt, nature study, explore)
- Joke and jive with one another about days events and about vehicle performance
- Maintain vehicle (inspect, clean, grease)
- Feed kids

Duration: 1 to 3 hours (less in hunting season)

Setting

- Special, familiar location
- Developed "island" within backcountry

Role of vehicle: None

Social Setting

- Responsibility is shared, roles are known. Everybody participates. People's role in the group is reinforced by responsibilities: (e.g., younger men move heavy items, older men supervise and inspect site, cooks set up kitchen...)
- Children are involved and given responsibility.
- Cooperation is high, one feels good about being part of the group.

Experience/benefit

- Arrival is greeted with relief and pride that vehicle performed well
- Place identity: deep and intense feelings of home. Memories of past events and friends relived.
- Sense of community within group, group identity
- Stronger relationships among group members

quotes on next page

Opening Camp Quotes:

"We have had so many good times there, hung a lot of game there, and.... an old, old friend of ours who built the camp...his last wish was for us take him to camp... and we did, we had a ceremony around the fire, a few bourbons in his memory, we had a little ceremony in [his honor].....its a special spot because what remains of him went to the camp, in that ground"

"I love the place like I love a child"

"...one of the guys who [had a trespass camp that was destroyed by the NPS]. He is a man with a professional career. He has fathered five children. He is the type of guy that if you talked to for a while you would say, somewhere in your subconscious you would say that, 'yee this guy is a man', in the sense of the word that [differentiates] the type of people who truly are a man from those who only try. He is the type of guy who could handle high water and lots of Hell and be fine... A man you would respect.... [we were at the 'trespass' camp] for the last time before we had to leave [before it was to be destroyed]... I walked around the corner [of a building] and he was crying like a baby. I said ..."what's the problem?" He says, ' You know how much of my life is tied up in this ranch? How many birthdays? How many Christmases?How many good times? How many times when there were good and bad times back home and [I] would come out here?' He was bawling like a baby, because he had lost that portion, it was like somebody had come over and cut a chunk out of his heart and run off with it"

"We don't call it a camp,... we call it a house... I mean you go into ours and see pictures of the family... to us it is a home away from home.....when you get there everything is comfortable for you"

"I've got a camp out there and it is the same as my house, and that is how I feel about it."

"When you go with people you have gone with before... kind of like a family, everyone has kind of a duty... so and so makes a fire because he makes a good fire....not everyone has an assigned role... they just do it"

"When you get to camp, everyone has a job...generally we get the younger ones ...youthful assistance.. to carry the heavier things... into camp... while the ... older fellows are examining camp, looking for bear tracks,.... (laughter)... It is really a great experience when you have reached that point of life, are getting a little long in the tooth, and you can get the younger [folks to do the heavy work]"

Hunt (during hunting season, otherwise see "outing" below)

Overview: Hunting is more an excuse to be at BICY than it is the primary reason for visiting BICY. The hunter is serious and engrossed in the activity. And the hunt is deadly, but as Ortega describes, killing is not the goal: "To the sportsman the death of the game is not what interests him; that is not his purpose. What interests him is everything he had to do to achieve that death -- that is, the hunt ... To sum up, one does not hunt in order to kill; on the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted."

The hunt, and especially the kill is thrilling and captivating, but the process and time spent hunting also afford the BICY hunter his principal time for solitude and personal reflection. Hunting also requires and motivates nature study; animal habitat and habits which are known can be used to the hunter's advantage.

Activity

- If dry, they walk from camp, drive if wet
- Stand or stalk hunting
- Drive to planned locations, perhaps dropping off people on the way
- Hunt
- People may reunite at vehicle or walk back to camp alone

Duration until dark, several hours

Setting

- Special, familiar locations, perhaps with stands
- Backcountry

Role of vehicle

- Direct transport
- Scout
- Carry harvest

Social Setting

- Group on vehicle to individuals' destinations, but alone after that

Experience/benefit

- Primitive skills
- Mental and emotional control
- Environmental awareness
- Self reflection
- Place identity: familiar with area and users from years past

"Sometimes you're concentrating on the actual hunting, sometimes I'm thinking about things totally unrelated [to hunting] ... just thinking things through" "[it is] time to reflect on life's priorities"

"you get in the tree stand, and you start reminiscing, thinking about the wife and the kids... and all the sudden something will move... and instantly that thought is gone...and then you are taken back into the woods...your listening to the birds and your mind starts wandering off and all of the sudden you hear a grunt from a pig or something and you are instantly focused back on what you are there for"

Outing

Overview: After the novelty of being at camp wears off and the body recovers from the jarring entry ride, boredom and/or wanderlust motivate a buggy ride. Group dynamics and leadership determine the purpose or destination of the trip, typically destinations are natural or cultural artifacts, swimming holes, scouting signs of deer, or just wandering.

Activity

- Buggy ride to special cultural, natural or scenic location, to fish or frog,
- Buggy ride to obtain firewood
- Buggy ride to just explore and get out of camp

Duration

- 1 to 3 hours

Setting

- Some of the locations are special, familiar and meaningful for repeated visits
- Some sites are cultural or natural wonders
- Some trips have no destination, just exploration and nature study
- Routes may not be well developed, but are rarely new
- Occasionally new routes are cut during exploration
- Backcountry

Role of vehicle

- Typically in motion, source of fun
- Transport to location

Social Setting

- Group of several people, some may stay at camp
- Usually on one vehicle
- Social interaction facilitated by vehicle containment
- More in-depth conversation due to removing deadlines

Experience/benefit

- Nature study
- Group bonding
- Know others
- Self reflection
- Relaxation and/or excitement
- Land ethic

"This is not something you want to be in a hurry about. One of the reasons we wanted to get away from the big city is that you can slow down, that you can relax, just because you're on a buggy you are not in any hurry.... you are relaxed."

"It is relaxing to get some of the city poison out of you"

Camp Evening/Camp play

Overview: Pressure is off or quickly deflating. The vehicle survived the trip, the camp is functioning, escape from civilization is nearly complete. People, freed from the role constraints of work and civilization behave and are known to others as "who they really are". Relationships are strengthened by banter around the campfire. Nature is studied and people reflect on their lives.

Activity

- Dinner, stories, physical rest, hygiene
- Children explore and play near group but do not wander far
- Nap and sleep

Duration

Dark to sleep

Setting

- Camp

Role of vehicle

- Parked

Social Setting

- Group
- Some solitary activities

Experience/benefit

- Bonding
- Sense of community
- Self reflection and contemplation
- Place identity
- Lower stress and escape roles and civilization

"When you are at the camp is when you really get to know people, because there are no outside pressures... no phones ringing... conversation is about... your life"

"If I am with my buddies we are continuously harassing each other, and picking on each other, insulting each other, down-grading each other's buggy,...just having a good time....we tell lies, reminisce, and... have a good time"

"A lot of people I don't see all year... people I went to school with... that is the only time I see them"

Morning at camp

Overview: Escape from civilization is now complete. Pressure is completely off.

Dawn, sounds of nature, and morning calm heighten sensitivities and make people feel "alive". Nature is studied and people reflect on their lives. When not hunting, the morning unfolds leisurely and people linger around camp without hurry. During hunting season, people "work hard" and spend less time at camp.

Activity

- Breakfast (quickly if hunting, leisurely if not)
- Solitary walks
- Nature study
- Quiet contemplation of life
- Beginnings of socialization

Duration

- Hunting season: brief
- Otherwise: several hours

Setting

- Camp

Role of vehicle

- Parked

Social Setting

- More solitary activities
- Group dynamics and relationships

Experience/benefit

- Bonding and knowing others (get to really know someone when you see them in the morning)
- Group identity
- Self reflection and contemplation
- Nature study
- Relaxation and escape

"I wake up and listen to the noises... the birds... everything coming alive. It gives me goose bumps just to hear everything coming alive just as I am coming alive... I listen to everything unfolding in the morning, there is just so much life... it makes you feel young"

Day Hunt (during hunting season)

Overview: Same as evening hunt, only may be more distant or in location informed by lessons learned from previous evening's outing.

Activity

- Walk from camp: stand or stalk hunting (not uncommon to walk 6-8 hours)
- Drive to planned locations, perhaps dropping off people on the way at their hunting stands or hunting areas (i.e., hunters walk an area after getting off vehicle)
- Hunt
- People may reunite at vehicle and drive to other hunting locations
- Some may walk back to camp alone and not look for vehicle the rest of day

Duration

- From before dawn to before lunch, some people stay out all day

Setting

- Special, familiar locations, perhaps with stands
- Backcountry

Role of vehicle

- Direct transport, more important if wet than if dry
- Scouting

Social Setting

- Group to destinations but mostly alone

Experience/benefit

- Primitive skills
- Mental and emotional control
- Environmental awareness
- Self reflection

Camp Rest During Day

Overview: Tired from a late night and a strenuous morning hunt/outing, people return to their camps for lunch, rest, nap, to compare notes, and to brag about the one that got away. Tent campers and Bear Island campers are less likely to return to camp, but many still do.

Activity

- Lunch, stories, physical rest, hygiene
- Nap and sleep

Duration

- 1 to 3 hours

Setting

- Camp

Role of vehicle

- Parked (someone will drive it back, some may walk back, or all will be collected on vehicle and returned to camp)

Social Setting

- Group
- Some solitary activities

Experience/benefit

- Bonding
- Sense of community
- Place identity
- Self reflection and contemplation

"...you are not thinking about anything else when you're out there, you're not thinking about your job or other things back in town.. you're just thinking about the woods"

"[You] get away from the pressure [out there], in a place where pressure means nothing. You say pressure? How could you feel pressure out there....[the pressure] cooks off... you can be a normal human being"

Camp Maintenance

Overview: "Nature takes over whatever stands still in the Everglades; the camps are in need of constant repair." Permanent camp owners take obvious pride in their camps. The condition of the camp communicates to guests and passersby the self respect the owner feels for himself. Owners described in detail the camp's size, sleeping capacity, decking, bear proofing, roofing, cook facilities, etc., etc. Maintenance of the camp provides a focal point for group activities, responsibilities are distributed, roles are known, people willingly cooperate by working towards a greater good.

Activity:

- Repair camp, doing whatever is needed.

Duration: Varies from hours to days (much less in hunting season)

Setting

- Camp

Role of vehicle: Hauls materials.

Social Setting

- Responsibility is shared, roles are known. People's role in the group is reinforced by responsibilities:
- Children are involved and given responsibility.
- Cooperation is high, one feels good about being part of the group.

Experience/benefit

- Place identity and pride
- Sense of community within group, group identity
- Stronger relationships among group members
- Land ethic (working with/against nature)

"[Place upkeep] is a sense of accomplishment that you can do it and get it done and keep it up..." "I've got a camp out there and it is the same as my house, and that is how I feel about it. I keep my camp clean, I keep my yard clean, and I keep the area around it clean"

"I know what this place has done for me in my lifetime and what impact its had on me and I want it to have that same impact on my children.... clean, natural fun.... It is important for me to have that use [with my children] and always have that use so it can carry on in my family...I want it to carry on "

"[My son] has grown up in the woods...the first suit of clothes he had after he got out of the hospital [when he was born] was a camo suit that my wife sewed him. He was brought up immersed in this culture"

"[I learned about this from my father's generation and he learned about it from his father] "Its part of who I am, where I am from, where I am going... it is my culture.... I can be anywhere, doing anything ...but I still have..." [this connection to the past and to BICY]

Visit Neighboring camps

Overview: A solid sense of community exists among neighboring camps, enhanced by the need for mutual aid and repeated social contact. Unoccupied camps are visited and inspected and repaired for damage. Occupied camps are visited to share or bring supplies, to check on health of occupants, to share news and gossip, and to confirm the availability of mutual aid in a demanding and dangerous country. Visits are not extended or frequent, nor are they necessarily eagerly sought out (people go to BICY to get away from others) but courtesy visits nonetheless seem a common event.

Activity

- Buggy ride to neighbors
- Deliver supplies (ice, etc.)
- Check on unoccupied camps to repair/report damage
- Visit with neighbors
- Update local information

Duration

- 1 to 3 hours

Setting

- Established routes between camps
- At camps

Role of vehicle

- Transport of people and supplies

Social Setting

- Neighbors

Experience/benefit

- Sense of community
- Mutual aid
- Self policing of BICY
- Land ethic

"We look out for each other to an extent that you don't experience in town"

"The camaraderie of people who do the same thing that you do. [For example] there's nobody out here that you couldn't sit down with and start talking about tractor tires, and not have a pretty good conversation out of it... but these people all have that common thread... you are tied to the buggy, you're tied to the woods, and you're tied to family"

Evening Outing

Overview: The swamp is cooler and darker, and the sky is bright. A short ride to catch the evening breezes and watch the sky for meteorites and satellites. The group is smaller and more intimate. Occasionally the evening trip involves a visit to neighboring camps. Not infrequently the evening trip involved frogging.

Activity

- Buggy ride

Duration

- 1 to 3 hours

Setting

- Primarily established routes to avoid damaging vehicle
- Backcountry

Role of vehicle

- Typically in motion, source of fun

Social Setting

- Small, intimate group
- Usually on one vehicle
- More in-depth conversation

Experience/benefit

- Nature study
- Group bonding, know others
- Self reflection
- Food (frogs) for camp

"Natural beauty is lost a lot if you don't know...it requires understanding...It is the part of natural beauty I enjoy and I want other people to know"

"... I see all kinds of things... wildlife... that I can't see from the road and... it's like wow, I wake up"

Departure

Overview: Moods are more somber, the adventure is at an end. The camp must be closed and buggy packed. The return trip is similar to the arrival trip, direct and deliberate with occasional but minimal stops or detours. The driver expends considerable energy cautiously and deliberately negotiating hazards which can damage vehicle. All are alert to environmental conditions and nature is studied and discussed. Small group interaction among persons reflect on and solidify in memory the days just experienced.

Activity:

- Drive loaded vehicle with caution.
- Select and navigate trail based upon vehicle weight and conditions of swamp
- Direct route with an occasional stop for picnic, toilet, nature study
- Socialize with people on buggy
- Occasionally stop at other's camps for mutual aid
- Haul stuff out from camp (left from construction, etc.)

Duration

- Varies with location of camp (2 to 4 hours)

Setting

- One of several, familiar, frequented routes (which one depends upon time available, vehicle load, swamp conditions). There may be multiple paths along the same route and which one is used depends upon its condition compared to the vehicle's abilities and weight.
- Backcountry

Role of vehicle

- Transport
- Facilitates social interaction by keeping people together

Social Setting

- People on buggy
- Can be communication among vehicles

Experience/benefit

- Sharing of experiences among group members solidifies the experience and memories.
- Place and activity identity
- Other benefits and experiences as described in arrival trip

"On the way back [home]...I start thinking about responsibilities again, ...my work... but the whole time I am [out] there I don't think about it, it is one of the few places I can go when I really don't think about it, I really don't"

Script for Airboaters: Temporary and Permanent Camps

This section describes the script for a typical trip to a temporary or permanent camp in parts of the Preserve where designated routes do not exist (i.e., use patterns are not constrained by predetermined routes).

The information summarized here comes from extended, video-taped interviews with six informants who had considerable experience in BICY: from 7 to 37 years of first-hand recreation experience in what is now called BICY and, on average, going into the preserve "too many times to count" each year. Informants were articulate and for the most part sincere in the descriptions they provided. One informant was very skeptical of the process and suspicious of my questions but nonetheless did not intentionally distort descriptions given, eventually warming up and giving detailed data. Two informants had permanent camps just outside BICY, the others frequented a temporary camp at the location of a previous "trespass" camp.

Several major differences exist between hunting and nonhunting trips (although there are more similarities than differences). Fundamentally, the difference is that during a hunting trip people "work hard" and the dominant activity is hunting. In contrast, during nonhunting trips, which also were numerous, people were more likely to spend time at camp and making short outings for nature study and active recreation (walk, swim, scout, pleasure ride).

Detailed descriptions of these stages follows this brief, tabular outline of a typical trip sequence for hunting and nonhunting trips.

Hunting and Non hunting	Non hunting
Arrive at entry point	Arrive at entry point
Entry trip to camp	Entry trip to camp
Open Camp	Open Camp
Brief outing for firewood	Brief outing for firewood
Frogging	Frogging
Camp Evening	Camp Activities (Evening)
Camp Morning	Camp Activities (Morning)
Hunt	Day-outing
Camp Rest	Camp maintenance
Hunt or Visit Neighbors	Outing or Visit Neighbors
Camp Evening	Camp Evening
Brief Evening outing	Brief Evening outing
Camp Morning	Camp Morning
Hunt	Outing
Departure	Departure

Arrival

Overview: Spirits are heightened by anticipation of the upcoming adventure. Friends and family engage in intense interaction as trip preparation duties are carried out, expectations shared, jokes told, and memories relived. The vehicle provides a focal point, around which this activity swirls.

Activity:

- Boats arrive on trailer, trailer is backed into water and boat unloaded.
- Supplies are loaded and secured.
- Boater may drive out several hundred yards to make space for others
- Plans are hastily discussed

Duration: 15 to 30 minutes

Setting: developed roadside

Role of vehicle: It is the primary focus of attention, followed by the social setting.

Social Setting :

- There exists spirited social interaction. Extended trips involve multiple (2 to 4) boats, and there is often two people per boat.
- Friends reunite, jokes and stories are told.
- Responsibility is shared, roles are known
- Children are involved and given responsibility.
- Cooperation is high, one feels good about being part of the group.

Experience/benefit :

- Anticipation and excitement for the imminent trip
- Activity Identity: Pride in vehicle and in family responsibility
- Skill in vehicle design and maintenance
- Sense of community within group, group identity
- Stronger relationships among group members
- Children learn about their culture and how to deal with responsibility

"all the time you're doing this you are collecting experiences,... there will often be a funny thing that you and your friends will laugh about for two generations... each time you're out there you collect something funny or something you overcome.... where else can you do this? City people don't have a clue"

"average working class people that could really give Detroit and McDonald Douglas some competition... we have backyard people who are designing, building and maintaining, and constantly improving....with such skill ...that [the vehicles] are still holding up [when lots of cars or planes built during the same era] are no longer operational"

"It has more to do with a person being able to overcome his environment... He has built in his backyard, with whatever he can obtain, this machine which is capable of going out into the everglades, that is unique throughout the world and harvest a deer or a hog and its not only taken him out there but it has taken him back.... and he built it with his own two hands"

Entry Trip

Overview: Several hundred yards into BICY boaters will wait for all members of their group to join them. It is not uncommon to be contacted by a NPS ranger while the group is getting organized. Boats make direct trip into camp with minimal stops or detours along one of several known routes. New routes are not explored with a heavy boat. All are alert to environmental conditions. As if choreographed, boats follow and respond to one another's turns and occasional stops. Conversation is not easy on the boat during travel but at occasional stops boaters converse about sights seen and travel plans.

Activity:

- Drive loaded vehicles to camp
- Direct route with an occasional stop for chat or nature study

Duration

- Varies with location of camp (15 to 30 minutes)

Setting

- One of several, familiar, frequented routes (which one depends upon time available, vehicle load, swamp conditions).
- It is not uncommon to have contact with a NPS Ranger during entry (this seems more likely in the Southeastern part of BICY)
- Wayfinding ribbon on trees left by boaters unfamiliar with the area detract from backcountry experience

Role of vehicle

- Transport
- Fun

Social Setting

- Communication among vehicles and people on boat when vehicle stops

Experience/benefit

- Immediate "change of attitude" and sense of escape
- Activity Identity: pride in self from success of vehicle
- High arousal and alertness from boat speed and from anticipation of trip
- Self confidence: practice and testing of planning skills (ready for every emergency)
- Nature study

"It is a blend of aviation fuel, adrenaline and testosterone... it is an instantaneous change in attitude..." "anything can happen"

[When boating through the swamp with two buddies there will be an unspoken communication and understanding between the two boat drivers. They will respond to each others' movements and gazes in their travel through the swamp as if the journey were choreographed.] "The drivers are somehow in synch with each other...they respond to what the other driver is doing...It is like an extension of your own self... it is an instantaneous reaction"

Open Camp

Overview: For both permanent and temporary campers the camp is home and the feeling of arrival is similar to that many people experience upon arriving home after an extended absence. The place is full of memories about past events and past guests. There is a great deal of pride in having created and/or maintained the camp in the wilderness. Even people who tent camp typically return time after time to the same location and hence feel a fond familiarity for the setting. Social interaction begins in earnest, with well defined roles for unloading boats and setting up camp. Jokes are told, memories relived, persons no longer around remembered.

Activity:

- Light lantern, unload vehicle
- Inspect grounds for snakes, damage, signs of wildlife, clean up debris
- or -Set up tent if not a permanent or temporary camp

then

- Start supper
- Plan future outings (hunt, nature study, explore)
- Joke and jive with one another about days events and about vehicle performance
- Maintain vehicle (inspect, clean, grease)

Duration: 1 to 2 hours

Setting

- Special, familiar location
- Developed "island" within backcountry

Role of vehicle: None

Social Setting

- Responsibility is shared, roles are known. People's role in the group is reinforced by responsibilities
- Children are involved and given responsibility.
- Cooperation is high, one feels good about being part of the group.
- People will jive about one another's vehicles and fire building skills

Experience/benefit

- Place identity, it "fits like an old shoe"
- Sense of community within group, group identity
- Stronger relationships among group members
- Children are given responsibility and learn cultural history
- Escape and relaxation

Quotes on following page

Opening Camp Quotes

"our young people... who are raised in this who grow up with this... they have more confidence, [are] more competent, [have] more respect, more focus..... overcoming these ...little... crises that come up is part of the growing up process..."

"shows them to be self sufficient... to be innovative. If a part does break down when they are back there...you make do with what you can until you get back [to the road]... It is a good experience for younger people who are use to running down to McDonalds for a hamburger... you just don't do that in the swamp"

"When you go with people you have gone with before... kind of like a family, everyone has kind of a duty... so and so makes a fire because he makes a good fire.....not everyone has an assigned role... they just do it"

"Even though it is a campsite, it is a feeling of coming home...it's a feeling of familiarity...it's like a place ... you're finally there... you don't own it but it owns you... you are a part of it... It fits like an old shoe"

"It's a sense of belonging. It is just like your home, if you move away you always think of the memories and the things that happened in those particular spots"

"There was this [trespass] camp built in 19xx.... to us this was a cultural site... an early camp... [a symbol of] our predecessors.. because it was a [trespass camp, the NPS] took it out... this was a total disregard for our culture. Instead of putting up a plaque or something... they took it OUT!"

"Some of our early people... [one] took his little boyas a toddler. [and told him] 'this is your tree'... they planted this tree and it grew into a big tree, ...and every year they would come back to this tree... the tree symbolized... [that] these people had been there [for years, that the] kids had grown up there... and the NPS cut it down because it was an exotic...they were cutting into our souls... "

"They took a piece of our heart... its like a cultural cleansing, ... a genocide... they are messing with our culture...it is a cultural offense, a feeling of oppression"

Evening Outing

Overview: Riding the airboat is fun, boredom and/or wanderlust soon motivate a ride. Typically the destination involves the search for firewood, frogging, scouting signs of deer, or just wandering. Oftentimes these destinations are just an excuse to ride the boat. Informants described being absorbed in a Zen-like trance during the boat ride, being mentally alert and keenly absorbed in details of the setting and performance of the boat.

Activity

- Ride principally to collect firewood and to frog, ...but also just to ride.
- Stop to take in night sky
- Stop to chat with passenger, if any
- May stop on an open prairie for an "Everglades Cocktail to toast nature"

Duration

- 1 to 2 hours

Setting

- No fixed route
- Up to five mile radius (go where the frogs are)
- Backcountry

Role of vehicle

- Typically constantly in motion, source of fun
- Transport to location

Social Setting

- Alone or one other passenger
- Boats rarely travel in groups
- More focus on setting and motion than on people
- When stopped, in-depth conversation and reflection

Experience/benefit

- Fun
- Escape and stress relief
- Self reflection
- Nature study

"people will stop and have an Everglades Cocktail... just to toast the fact that they come out and just miles away there are millions of people and you are out here enjoying this solitude and the stars and the light and the frogs and the (vehicle)... just a rum and a coke with a sprig of grass sticking out of it... toasting the fact that you are there and you are experiencing it"

"Part of the experience to us is the fact that we don't have charted trails, and don't have signs and instructional we take a route because it is the route to take not because it is the sign that says to do it ... some people feel compelled to put up yellow ribbon on the trail (so they can find their way back)... and that grates on my nerves like graffiti... because it is not supposed to be there, it distracts ... it is like a beer can on the highway..."

Camp Evening/Camp play

Overview: Pressure is off or quickly deflating. The vehicle survived the trip, the camp is functioning, escape from civilization is nearly complete. People, freed from the role constraints of work and civilization behave and are known to others as "who they really are" and as "true friends". Relationships are strengthened by banter around the campfire, comparison of success at frogging adventures or misadventures during the entry or evening trip. People reflect on their lives.

Activity

- Dinner, stories, physical rest, hygiene
- Children explore and play near group but do not wander far
- Lay on cot and listen to boats and camp banter
- Sleep

Duration

Until morning

Setting

- Camp

Role of vehicle

- Parked. May power lights or serve as cook stand

Social Setting

- Group
- Some solitary activities

Experience/benefit

- Bonding
- Sense of community
- Self reflection and contemplation
- Escape and relaxation

"It is not uncommon out here to have life long friendships with people that we never see in town ... unless one of them dies and we go to their funeral... It was more so before the park service got rid of the trespass camps."

"there is always something to share [when you get back to camp]... the fish that got away or the challenges overcomes... the cottonmouth.... the engine...some sort of vehicular problem,...[for a jury-rigged repair]....everyone will stand around and give their opinion on how it can be fixed....a combined effort to solve the situation"

"Sometimes we will stop and just look and listen to the quiet, and let the wildlife go back to doing what they are doing... on a cold winter night you can climb up on the cage and look at the stars, oh yeah the stars... you can just reach out and touch them"

Morning at camp

Overview: Escape from civilization is now complete. Pressure is completely off.

Dawn, sounds of nature, and morning calm heighten sensitivities and make people feel "alive". Nature is studied and people reflect on their lives. When not hunting, the morning unfolds leisurely and people linger around camp without hurry. During hunting season, people "work hard" and spend less time at camp.

Activity

- Breakfast (quickly if hunting, leisurely if not)
- Solitary walks
- Nature study
- Quiet contemplation of life
- beginning social banter about who snored the loudest

Duration

- Hunting season: brief
- Otherwise: several hours

Setting

- Camp

Role of vehicle

- Parked. May power lights or serve as cook stand. May be used for a morning ride.

Social Setting

- More solitary activities
- Group dynamics and relationships

Experience/benefit

- Bonding and knowing others (get to really know someone when you see them in the morning)
- Group identity
- Self reflection and contemplation

"It changes your attitude towards everything . It's a lot harder to come back [to society] from a weekend in the woods and [take seriously] the minor pains and pressures of work when you have seen something so big...it has cleansed your soul... when you come back you are a different person than when you went out there"

Hunt (during hunting season, otherwise see "day outing" below)

Overview: Hunting is more an excuse to be at BICY and to use the airboat than it the primary reason for visiting BICY. The hunter is serious and engrossed in the activity. And the hunt is deadly, but as Ortega describes, killing is not the goal: "To the sportsman the death of the game is not what interests him; that is not his purpose. What interests him is everything he had to do to achieve that death -- that is, the hunt ... To sum up, one does not hunt in order to kill; on the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted."

The hunt, and especially the kill is thrilling and captivating, but the process and time spent hunting also afford the BICY hunter his principal time for solitude and personal reflection. Hunting also requires and motivates nature study; animal habitat and habits which are known can be used to the hunter's advantage. The hunt is typically not "successful," in that game are not harvested.

Activity

- Many different hunting scripts, each use the vehicle differently
- In one script the vehicle is used to ferry the hunter to dry hunting ground which will be walked. The boat will be used numerous times to ferry the hunter from island to island.
- In another script the boat carries the hunter from stand to stand or still-hunt area to still-hunt area with little walking. Hunting occurs on or very near vehicle
- In another script the boat is in more constant motion, looking for deer. Hunting occurs on or very near vehicle. Plans are fluid
- In another script boats may hunt together, one or more boats to scare game, one or more boats waiting to hunt.

Duration

- Some stay out all day, some people return to camp for mid-day break

Setting

- Walk hunting occurs in special, familiar locations, perhaps with stands
- Roving hunting occurs over vast areas covered by boat; less intimate knowledge of the setting is required.

Role of vehicle

- Direct transport for walk hunting with frequent use between islands
- Base of operations for other hunting
- Can be parked for extended times or in constant motion

Social Setting

- Alone and in groups

Experience/benefit

- Primitive skills
- Mental and emotional control, excitement and relaxation
- Nature study
- Self reflection

Hunting Quotes

"You are physically and mentally at your maximum, it's only a few seconds [you have before game appears and disappears]... so your are constantly taking things in and you are looking at other things,... other wildlife, clouds, ...shape of trees,..."

"[it is] time to reflect on life's priorities"

"It has more to do with a person being able to overcome his environment.... He has built in his backyard, with whatever he can obtain, this machine which is capable of going out into the everglades, that is unique throughout the world and harvest a deer or a hog and its not only taken him out there but it has taken him back... and he built it with his own two hands"

"There is a sense of accomplishment when it has broken down [and you fixed it]... that getting back to the road when you have broken down out there is such a feeling of accomplishment that you can't put words to it... the use of ingenuity and invention, just the feeling of accomplishment "

"Going to a hotel, going to Disney World... all that is (BS).. there is nothing like going out into God's creation... man can't duplicate it"

Day-Outing

Overview: Riding the airboat is fun, boredom and/or wanderlust soon motivate a ride. Typically the destination involves the search for firewood, nature study, scouting signs of deer, or just wandering. Oftentimes these destinations are just an excuse to ride the boat. Informants described being absorbed in a Zen-like trance during the boat ride, being mentally alert and keenly absorbed in details of the setting and performance of the boat. Attending to "nothing and everything at the same time."

Activity

- Ride

Duration variable

Setting

- Some of the locations are special, familiar and meaningful for repeated visits
- Some sites are cultural or natural wonders
- Some trips have no destination, just exploration and nature study
- Usually travel along new or unfamiliar trails, "rarely the same trails"
- Backcountry
- Ranger contact likely (and will be avoided because of negative connotations)
- NPS signs (especially Everglade boundary) offensive because they signify loss of freedom and the evidence of authoritarian control boaters seek to escape.

Role of vehicle

- Typically in motion, source of fun and absorption
- Transport to location

Social Setting

- Usually on one vehicle, conversation only when stop, but intimate then
- Stories/experiences are collected for telling when return to camp

Experience/benefit

- Activity identity: pride in vehicle, testing skills
- Nature study
- Collect experiences
- Self reflection
- escape, excitement, relaxation

"...the view you get from the seat of the [vehicle] first thing in the morning before the sun has reached the Earth, that golden glow, the sparkling of the spider webs and the saw grass, ... the way the light shimmers, the little bubbles of light..."

"Every time you're on [the vehicle] you see something different, a huge orchid, a deer, a tree, just the color of the grass, it changes, sometimes it is emerald green, we are constantly looking"

"You're going along and you're looking, always looking... always looking for subtle differences, you tell others in your group 'did you see that?' .. You crank up that boat and you feel alert"

Camp Rest During Day

Overview: Tired from a late night and a strenuous morning hunt/outing, both permanent and temporary camper may return to their camps for lunch, rest, nap, to compare notes, and to brag about the one that got away.

Activity

- Lunch, stories, physical rest, hygiene
- Nap and sleep

Duration

- 1 to 3 hours

Setting

- Camp

Role of vehicle

- Parked. Some may use it as a place to sleep.

Social Setting

- Group
- Some solitary activities

Experience/benefit

- Bonding
- Sense of community
- Self reflection and contemplation

"I'm there for recreation...I'm there to rest. I'm there to recharge ...when I come home my mental attitude is very good.... My attitude is always better after a weekend in the woods"

"Past friends that are no longer with us...it can be as simple as a rock sticking out of the ground...[causing] you remember when old man so and so [did such and such]. The place where you go camping probably has more meaning, but every place you go you see a tree and remember where I saw a ..."

Camp Maintenance

Overview: "Nature takes over whatever stands still in the Everglades; the camps are in need of constant repair". Permanent camp owners take obvious pride in their camps. The condition of the camp communicates to guests and passersby the self respect the owner feels for himself. Owners described in detail the camp's size, sleeping capacity, decking, bear proofing, roofing, cook facilities, etc., etc. Maintenance of the camp provides a focal point for group activities, responsibilities are distributed, roles are known, people willingly cooperate by working towards a greater good.

Activity:

- Repair camp, doing whatever is needed.

Duration: Varies from hours to days (much less in hunting season)

Setting

- Camp

Role of vehicle: Hauls materials.

Social Setting

- Responsibility is shared, roles are known. People's role in the group is reinforced by responsibilities:
- Children are involved and given responsibility.
- Cooperation is high, one feels good about being part of the group.

Experience/benefit

- Pride
- Place identity
- Building sense of community within group, group identity
- Stronger relationships among group members
- Nature study and land ethic (maintenance)

[I learned about this from my father's generation and he learned about it from his father] "It's part of who I am, where I am from, where I am going... it is my culture... I can be anywhere, doing anything ...but I still have..." [this connection to the past and to BICY]

"You have to go through it from beginning to end... it is a culture... it goes all the way back... it is a teaching process, and we were taught there is more to getting on a swamp buggy and driving back into the woods ... and go camping... some people may do that but there is a lot of education that goes along with [it]... and we teach our children..."

"When you get to camp, everyone has a job...generally we get the younger ones ...youthful assistance.. to carry the heavier things... into camp... while the ... older fellows are examining camp, looking for bear tracks,.... (laughter)... It is really a great experience when you have reached that point of life, are getting a little long in the tooth, and you can get the younger [folks to do the heavy work]"

Visit Neighboring camps

Overview: A solid sense of community exists among neighboring camps, enhanced by the need for mutual aid and repeated social contact. Unoccupied camps are visited and inspected and repaired for damage. Occupied camps are visited to share or bring supplies, to check on health of occupants, to share news and gossip, and to confirm the availability of mutual aid in a demanding and dangerous country.

There seems to be much more contact among camps made by the permanent camp owners than by temporary camp "owners," although substantial visitation still occurs among some temporary camps because people have returned year after year to the same location where "trespass" camps use to be and thus know their neighbors.

Activity

- Ride to neighbors
- Deliver supplies (ice, etc.)
- Check on unoccupied camps to repair/report damage
- Visit with neighbors
- Update local information

Duration

-1 to 3 hours

Setting

- Established routes between camps
- At camps

Role of vehicle

- Transport of people and supplies

Social Setting

- Neighbors

Experience/benefit

- Sense of community
- Mutual aid
- Self policing of BICY

"We want to visit them like family... but also to check to see if they need anything"

Departure

Overview: Interviews ended due to time constraint, no data on departure.

Script For Wheeled Buggy and ATV: Designated Routes and Front Country Developed Campground

This section describes the script for a typical trip into parts of the BICY preserve where there exist designated routes (i.e., Bear Island). The informants I spoke with stayed at a developed front country campground at night and went into the backcountry by day.

The information summarized here comes from extended, video-taped interviews with three informants who have considerable experience in BICY: from 3 to 17 years of first-hand recreation experience in what is now called BICY and averaging more than 20 BICY trips and 30 overnights last year. Two had swamp buggies and 2 had ATCs. Informants were articulate and sincere in the descriptions they provided. Generally these informants spoke less about the intense benefits and experiences described elsewhere. It is likely that the lack of intensity is due to the less verbal nature of the informants rather than that fewer benefits actually result.

For buggy visits to other parts of BICY major differences exist between hunting and nonhunting trips (although there are more similarities than differences). During my interviews with people using Bear Island I only talked about hunting trips.

A detailed descriptions of these stages follows this brief, tabular outline of a typical trip sequence for a hunting trips.

Hunting
Arrive at Bear Island Campground
Drive around camp
Camp Evening
Camp Morning
Hunt
Afternoon ride
Hunt
Camp Evening
Drive around camp
Camp Morning
Hunt
Departure

Arrival

Overview: Spirits are heightened by anticipation of the upcoming adventure. Friends and family engage in intense interaction as camp is prepared, duties are carried out, expectations shared, jokes told. Arrival is late Friday. Some people will camp further in, this will require a short (less than an hour) buggy ride along designated trails to site of temporary or tent camp.

Activity:

- Vehicle (ATC or Buggy) arrive on trailer.
- Next day hunting supplies are loaded and secured on the vehicle.
- Camp is set up (tent or mobile home)
- Plans are discussed
- Dinner

Duration: One hour

Setting

- Developed campground

Role of vehicle: Parked, but frequented for packing next day's provisions

Social Setting :

- Groups are smaller than other buggy trips
- Friends reunite, jokes and stories are told.
- Responsibility is shared, roles are known

Experience/benefit :

- Anticipation and excitement for the imminent trip
- Pride in vehicle
- Relaxation and escape from being out of town

"...you are not thinking about anything else when you're out there, you're not thinking about your job or other things back in town.. you're just thinking about the woods"

Drive around Camp

Overview: Vehicles are used to cruise the developed camp area both for something to do and to look for friends to visit. Typically several camps are visited, information shared, friendships renewed, mutual aid offered.

People camping away from developed campground will not participate in this phase.

Activity:

- Drive
- Visit camps
- Secure mutual aid in case problems develop later in weekend

Duration

-1/2 to 2 hours

Setting

- Camp roads

Role of vehicle

- Transport
- Fun to ride

Social Setting

- One person per buggy, limited communication
- Multiple people at camp visits

Experience/benefit

- Sense of community (although less intense than P&T camps)
- Mutual aid
- Pleasure of driving

"It is a high, you're so amped, you're ready to go, ...it's just coming out of you, enjoyment,...total enjoyment..."

Morning at camp

Overview: Escape from civilization more complete. More pressure is off. Guns and lunch are packed. A quick breakfast may be had.

Activity

- Breakfast, sometimes not
- Pack vehicles, depart

Duration

- Brief

Setting

- Camp (tent or motor-home)

Role of vehicle

- Parked

Social Setting

- Little

Experience/benefit

- Anticipation
- Groggy

Morning Hunt

Overview: A short, direct drive along designated trails to a predetermined hunting location is followed by a short walk to the hunting stand or area. Hunting is more an excuse to be at BICY than it the primary reason for visiting BICY. The hunter is serious and engrossed in the activity. And the hunt is deadly, but as Ortega describes, killing is not the goal: "To the sportsman the death of the game is not what interests him; that is not his purpose. What interests him is everything he had to do to achieve that death -- that is, the hunt ... To sum up, one does not hunt in order to kill; on the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted."

The hunt, and especially the kill is thrilling and captivating, but the process and time spent hunting also afford the BICY hunter his principal time for solitude and personal reflection. Hunting also requires and motivates nature study; animal habitat and habits which are known can be used to the hunter's advantage.

Activity

- Drive from camp in caravan (if more than one vehicle), keeping within sight or sound of other vehicle
- Split from group
- Park, secure and unpack vehicle
- Walk alone to tree stand and/ or start stalk hunting
- Walk back to vehicles and drive to reunite with others for lunch or midday break
- Rarely do people walk from camp to hunt because of problems with crowding.

Duration

- Drive along trail is 30 minutes
- Walk to hunting stand ranges from 15 minutes to 1 hour
- Typically out five hours before break

Setting

- Drive on designated trails in backcountry
- Special, familiar locations, perhaps with stands

Role of vehicle

- Direct transport

Social Setting

- Group to destinations but mostly alone

Experience/benefit

- Primitive skills
- Mental and emotional control
- Environmental awareness
- Self reflection

Mid-Day Break

Overview: Some hunters return to their vehicles and drive to meet friends in the woods for lunch, rest, nap, to compare notes, and to brag about the one that got away. Bear Island campers are less likely than P&T campers to return to camp.

Activity

- Walk back to vehicle (15 minutes to an hour)
- Drive several minutes to rendezvous
- Lunch, tell stories, physical rest
- Nap and sleep
- Walk to explore new areas or pleasure ride along trails after lunch for an hour
- Visit others

Duration

- 1 to 2 hours

Setting

- On designated trails

Role of vehicle

- Transport to rendezvous
- Pleasure ride

Social Setting

- Group
- Some solitary activities

Experience/benefit

- Bonding
- Group
- Self reflection and contemplation

"You don't have the social constraints that you have at work. You get a much better judge of a guy when you're out here... there are no police, no nothing. You are your own referee. So if you are a wild and crazy guy and you are a little too wild for me, well I probably won't go out with you again..."

Afternoon ride

If hunting has been bad or if it is very hot then people may go for a ride to explore potential hunting areas or just to ride.

Afternoon hunt (same as morning hunt)

- Lasts until dark
- Ride back to camp

Camp Evening/Camp play

Overview: Pressure of civilization is off. One is tired and hungry from a hard day. A substantial, leisurely meal of steak is welcome. Stories are shared about events, the one that got away. People are relaxed and social relationships strengthened.

Activity

- Dinner, stories, physical rest, hygiene
- Sleep

Duration

Dark to sleep

Setting

- Camp

Role of vehicle

- parked

Social Setting

- Small group

Experience/benefit

- Bonding
- Self reflection and contemplation

Drive around Camp (same as first night)

Morning Hunt (same as day one)

Departure

Overview: After returning from the morning hunt, camp is broken and vehicle Trailered. The drive home begins. Moods are more somber, the adventure is at an end. Small group interaction among persons reflect on and solidify in memory the days just experienced, but this ends soon as people climb back in their personal vehicles and drive home alone (some people arrive in small groups, in which case social interaction continues in the vehicle during the trip home).

Activity:

- Break camp

Duration

- Brief

Setting

- Camp

Role of vehicle

- None. Loaded on trailer

Social Setting

- people at camp
- may be alone in vehicle for trip home

Experience/benefit

- Modest sharing of experiences among group members solidifies the experience and memories.

WHY ORV ACTIVITIES OCCUR

Benefits and Experiences of ORV use in BICY

It's a different thing...its not the same thing as sitting at the bowling alley hoping you're going to pick up this spare... It's the natural element, this isn't something that was put together by a general contractor with some boards and mortar. You are out here looking at what the great general contractor did, the general general contractor... And the enjoyment of it ...is far and beyond what you get in the man-made, manufactured culture... the bowling alley. I'm not sitting here swatting [bugs] because I don't know that the bowling alley is air-conditioned... its because what I get here you can't find no place else. You can't buy what I can get for free by the buggy load... [as long as] they'll let me go and do it.

Many recreation outings produce valued experiences and long lasting benefits (Driver et al. 1991). Big Cypress Preserve (BICY) ORV visitors were asked to describe and explain the experiences and benefits they received from their recreation. Informants provided rich, detailed, passionate descriptions of numerous ways in which recreational use of BICY improved their lives. The structured interview pushed informants to describe what they did and why they did it--these are difficult questions for people to answer, especially about topics which are so implicit and ingrained in their lives. One informant summed up this difficulty: "It is hard to... talk about why you go out there--it is who you are." But they did, and they did it well.

What follows is an overview of the key benefits/experiences. A more detailed discussion of these and other benefits, using scientific literature and many more quotes can be found in Appendix A. This study focused only on ORV users.

Some of the quotes from the earlier section are repeated here.

Identity:

The vehicles, activities and places are so significant to people that they provide a primary source of their self-identity. That is, ORV recreation in BICY is a major defining quality of the lives of its participants.

Place:

When my parents were alive that was our recreation, we would go out there. We would eat wild pumpkins and turkey that we killed. When I go out there I remember those experiences growing up, and my daddy saying 'I want to kill one more deer before I die, son'... and he did.. and I was with him--just him and I. It is part of my culture. I love it. When I die, that is where my remains will be, out there too. That is how important it is to me, and to a lot of my friends.

We have had so many good times there, hung a lot of game there, and.... an old, old friend of ours who built the camp...his last wish was for us take him to camp... and we did, we had a ceremony around the fire, a few bourbons in his memory, we had a little ceremony in [his honor].....its a special spot because what remains of him went to the camp, in that ground

I would have rather lost an eye than have to leave that place.

There was this camp built in 19xx..... to us this was a cultural site, an early camp, a symbol of our predecessors. But because it was a trespass camp they took it out. This was a total disregard for our culture. Instead of putting up a plaque or something... they took it OUT! They took a piece of our heart. Its like a cultural cleansing, a genocide. They are messing with our culture; it is a cultural offense, a feeling of oppression.

Activity:

The vehicle is something you put the hours and the time into, and literally the blood, sweat, and tears. It is something that you respect and have some type of love for. You are a team, going through the woods. It makes you proud.

I'm very proud of it, very proud of it...my [relative] ... is a ...certified mechanic... he came down and said 'I can't believe you built that', he was pretty proud of it and that made me proud of it.

Average working class people that could really give Detroit and McDonald Douglas some competition... we have backyard people who are designing, building and maintaining, and constantly improving....with such skill ...that [the vehicles] are still holding up [when lots of cars or planes built during the same era] are no longer operational.

Spirituality: Nature provides recreationists everywhere a spiritual experience. Some BICY visitors developed a deep spiritual connection to the land and use there time in the Preserve to find and worship their God.

We go out and we see nature and God on a one to one basis . When you're sitting on a buggy watching the sun drop into the western sky and its highlighting the plants, and the colors all change... you are seeing nature and God on a one-to-one basis. It is not something that is being interpreted by another human being, telling you what God should be. You don't need to go to church after you've been to the woods. You see it all.

To a lot of people, their idea of religion is that to go to a big cathedral or a big church, ...a fancy ceiling... and that puts you into a frame of mind that you are communicating with the higher being because you are in a grandiose, man-made... box, no matter how big it's still a four walled box.

We go out and we see nature and God on a one to one basis. When you're sitting on a buggy watching the sun drop into the western sky and its highlighting the plants, and the colors all change... you are seeing nature and God on a one-to-

one basis. It is not something that is being interpreted by another human being, telling you what God should be. You don't need to go to church after you've been to the woods. You see it all. You can't just sit there and look at something that is as inspiring as that and not walk away with a different feeling about yourself. It's a humbling experience...

It is a big part of my life...it is a spiritual thing...I'm not saying I am a pantheist, but I find God out there.

Introspection and Self Awareness

The opportunity for Introspection is another important psychological benefit associated with recreation. Many recreation events, especially nature-based recreation, provide respites from the pressures and politics of "civilization" and thereby facilitate introspection. BICY recreation is not unique in the opportunities it provides for self-reflection, but it nonetheless provides this benefit. Nature and buggy experiences heighten awareness and occasionally the intense awareness focuses inward, providing opportunity for reflection and consideration of life's priorities.

Sometimes you're concentrating on the actual hunting, sometimes I'm thinking about things totally unrelated [to hunting] ... just thinking things through.

...time to reflect on life's priorities.

It is therapy.

You get in the tree stand, and you start reminiscing, thinking about the wife and the kids... and all the sudden something will move... and instantly that thought is gone...and then you are taken back into the woods...your listening to the birds and your mind starts wandering off and all of the sudden you hear a grunt from a pig or something and you are instantly focused back on what you are there for.

Freedom

One of the most basic definitions of recreation is that it involves activities undertaken of one's free will. Typically, backcountry recreation is associated with opportunities for "unconstrained" experiences. Regulation of use potentially degrades this sense of freedom. Several quotes are included to illustrate how such restrictions, particularly designated trails, potentially degrade experience.

I knew [BICY] when there was almost total freedom out there...you could go for miles,... nobody told you what you could do, you were on your own, you had to be self-correcting. It was just a wild, free experience...so I have a little difficulty these days being regulated, watched over, told what to do. That sense of freedom is harder to find.

There are signs all over the highway coming down here, ... when you put the signs out into the woods it takes what is on the road, what you are trying to get away from and puts it right on top of you... you could never get away from it.

The designated trails are something that... it is a whole attack of the control of your freedom... and that [freedom] is a big part of why we go out there... to be able to say "look at that head over there" ...and to be able to go look at..., and now you can't do that.

Part of the experience to us is the fact that we don't have charted trails, and don't have signs and instructional we take a route because it is the route to take not because it is the sign that says to do it ... some people feel compelled to put up yellow ribbon on the trail [so they can find their way back]... and that grates on my nerves like graffiti... because it is not supposed to be there, it distracts ... it is like a beer can on the highway...

[A sign denoting a designated trail] is more than a beer can because it is somebody standing there saying ... [putting hand up like a stop sign] ... you go right here fellow [banging on table].... It takes away my freedom....

Designated trails.... signifies to me that they are regulating... that they are trying to make BICY like other units of the Park Service, to make it uniform, and it takes away from the experience.

Escape From Civilization

Closely related to the visitor's goal of seeking freedom is the motivation of escaping from civilization. Part of what is being left behind is the restrictions and regulations of society (i.e., restraints on freedom), as well as the pressures and responsibilities of ordinary day-to-day life.

...you are not thinking about anything else when you're out there, you're not thinking about your job or other things back in town.. you're just thinking about the woods"

It changes your attitude towards everything . It's a lot harder to come back [to society] from a weekend in the woods and [take seriously] the minor pains and pressures of work when you have seen something so big...It has cleansed your soul... when you come back you are a different person than when you went out there.

[I go out to get away from all that, not to see] ... ribbon on the trees, reflectors on the trees, blue paint on the trees, stop signs, red lights, horns blowing...

Formative experiences for children

Past research demonstrates that recreation provides children with important opportunities for social and physical development. Informants at BICY described how BICY recreation not only kept kids off the street and allowed parents to provide "quality time" with their children, but also provided opportunities for culture and nature study and promoted responsibility, integrity, self-confidence, and restraint.

It provides an excuse for me to spend uninterrupted time with him rather than having him sit in front of the 'tube'.

These experiences with friends and family build character, integrity ... a lot of the qualities you like to find in people. You take those lessons learned out here and apply them back in normal life, in your life in town, as a parent, everywhere.

It shows them to be self sufficient.... to be innovative. If a part does break down when they are back there you make do with what you can until you get back to the road. It is a good experience for younger people who are use to running down to McDonalds for a hamburger... you just don't do that in the swamp.

When you go with people you have gone with before... kind of like a family, everyone has kind of a duty... so and so makes a fire because he makes a good fire....not everyone has an assigned role... they just do it.

When do you start teaching a kid responsibility? If you don't have some kind of a foundation to build on...You can't take somebody who is 18 years old and say 'OK now you have to be a responsible adult' [the swamp provides these lessons]

I get the 483 questions [about nature] from the kids... so I do a lot of stopping and showing what a bird is or a [specific species] is... that's what I am getting, I am getting this educational experience for my kids.

They are always asking questions. We stop and point out plants or animals and discuss them.

Bonding with Friends and Family

ORV recreation is a very social experience. Spending energy and time to get to know others in a leisure situation provides deep, lasting, and meaningful relationships. There exists little or no pressure to play a role when out in the Preserve; rather you can be who you are and let others know you that way.

[there is] ...no time back home to get to know people, because of so many different distractions At camp you get to tell stories and spend time with people.

When you are in the woods with someone, you really get to know them for who they are. My hunting partner... if you saw him at work and then meet him at camp you wouldn't know the guy ... at work he is as grim a person as you can find because his

mind is solely on that business. You get him to camp and he can unwind he is telling jokes and always laughing...it's amazing.

You don't have the social constraints that you have at work. You get a much better judge of a guy when you're out here... there are no police, no nothing. You are your own referee. So if you are a wild and crazy guy and you are a little too wild for me, well I probably won't go out with you again...

When you are at the camp is when you really get to know people, because there are no outside pressures... no phones ringing... conversation is about.... your life.

If I am with my buddies we are continuously harassing each other, and picking on each other, insulting each other, down-grading each other's buggy....just having a good time....we tell lies, reminisce, and... have a good time.

It is not uncommon out here to have life long friendships with people that we never see in town ... unless one of them dies and we go to their funeral... It was more so before the park service got rid of the trespass camps.

A lot of people I don't see all year... people I went to school with... that is the only time I see them.

When you go with people you have gone with before... kind of like a family, everyone has kind of a duty... so and so makes a fire because he makes a good fire....not everyone has an assigned role... they just do it.

Emotion: Relaxation. Stress Relief. Excitement

One of the recognized benefits of nature-based recreation is relaxation and stress reduction. The escape from pressures of daily life combine with the soothing effects of natural settings to drain away stress. Also, the thrill of riding and the anticipation of engaging in a fun trip build excitement and intensity feelings.

It is relaxing to get some of the city poison out of you.

[You] get away from the pressure [out there], in a place where pressure means nothing. You say pressure? How could you feel pressure out there....[the pressure] cooks off... you can be a normal human being.

I'm there for recreation...I'm there to rest. I'm there to recharge...when I come home my mental attitude is very good.... My attitude is always better after a weekend in the woods.

Anything can happen.

It is a blend of aviation fuel, adrenaline and testosterone... it is an instantaneous change in attitude...

Environmental Benefits

Informants spoke of an intense respect for nature and frequent efforts to study flora and fauna, as well as of efforts to maintain and improve BICY. Additionally, there is intense sensitivity to the setting. Such sensitivity is necessary to successfully navigate the swamp (i.e., understanding interaction among soil, water level, vegetation, season and vehicle characteristics to determine route) and to be successful hunting (i.e., signs of game, habitat quality, etc.). This sensitivity likely builds a strong land ethic

I wake up and listen to the noises... the birds... everything coming alive. It gives me goose bumps just to hear everything coming alive just as I am coming alive... I listen to everything unfolding in the morning, there is just so much life... it makes you feel young.

Sometimes we will stop and just look and listen to the quiet, and let the wildlife go back to doing what they are doing... on a cold winter night you can climb up on the cage and look at the stars, oh yeah the stars... you can just reach out and touch them.

You're going along and you're looking, always looking... always looking for subtle differences, you tell others in your group 'did you see that?' .. You crank up that boat and you feel alert.

We have changed what we look for... it used to be just hunting.... that is what our fathers did... but now we look for more than just hunting and are more sensitive to nature.... I try to pass that sensitivity on to my children.

There is nothing more disappointing than to be out there, looking at an orchid or something and then look down to see a Coke can...and destroy the natural beauty you are out there to enjoy.

Natural beauty is lost a lot if you don't know...it requires understanding...It is the part of natural beauty I enjoy and I want other people to know.

MANAGEMENT SUGGESTIONS MADE BY INFORMANTS

The information listed here is a summary of the explicit comments and concerns about NPS management informants made during the interviews. I told informants that I would carry forward to the NPS their specific concerns about BICY recreation which were not clearly covered by scripts or benefits (the previous two sections). Their comments are summarized here, without any attempt to validate or explain them.

This section is NOT the result of interpretations by the author resulting from the analysis of recreation scripts and benefits reported in the previous sections. Rather, the "management suggestions" found in this section of the report are direct transcriptions of suggestions made by informants.

The next section of this report develops suggestions for management based on data about the scripts and benefits.

Factors Perceived as Alienating and Reducing Use of BICY by ORVers

Inconvenience of permitting system for buggies: Permittees perceive the permitting process as unnecessarily and intentionally burdensome. The trip to Oasis is burdensome for many as is obtaining weights from certified scales (the latter is perceived as one more hurdle since it is not clear how the information is used). Personal checks could be accepted (rather than requiring money orders) since so much personal information is known it would be easy to track down a bounced check. On occasion the NPS could offer to inspect and photograph vehicles outside the park (i.e., Naples or Miami)

Restrictions of guns on buggies and boats. Hunting often involves moving through an area (i.e., along high ground and among high ground). While it is possible to walk along contiguous high ground there is often need for short trips through water to nearby high ground. This travel is done by buggy or airboat and, because of current regulations, requires the hunter to disarm and disassemble the firearm before using the vehicle. The regulation is perceived as an unnecessary and artificial inconvenience doing little to improve hunter safety. Informants note statistics which show that most hunting accidents occur during loading and unloading and that the current regulations therefore increase risk to hunters.

Loss of I-75 access to Turner River. For many, the time it takes to travel from home to put-in increased by over an hour for use of the same area.

Frequent changes in regulations and requirements create the perception that these regulations and requirements are arbitrary and capricious. "A lot of guys have given up with it... all the red tape... its frustrating, the changes, every year there is more and more and more and more, and they change it... Many people have just thrown-up their hands and given up. They don't go there any more."

Limited on the ground presence in areas typically accessed by buggies. There is minimal enforcement of regulations and reported violations. What contact there is seems to ignore

the culture and values of the legitimate users. Rangers seem unfamiliar with history or reason of ORV use in preserve.

Fixed trails: prevent retrieval of shot game, access to familiar and interesting places, increase crowding to fewer accessible locations, destroy solitude while hunting or camping.

Comments about "Negative" Attitude of NPS Rangers

Excessive contact of air boaters at put in points and in the backcountry. It is not uncommon for boaters to be contacted several times during each visit. [This level of contact seems very high by most national backcountry standards. The buggy ORV users said just the opposite: that they never saw enforcement in the backcountry except on Bear Island]

"The National Park Service,... they are well intentioned good people, well educated, but they don't know a damn thing about the BICY, or South Florida, they come here from North Dakota or somewhere else, with a lot of preconceived ideas about people... and have no understanding, no historical perspective about what this area was like even 20 years ago, and they are put in a position of authority to control and interact with people like myself... Not being sensitive to the people that are here.. Yea we need education and regulation... but I really believe that they need more than we do. They need to know how to deal with us in a respectable manner... if they treat me fairly I can be a big constituency for them."

"The Park Service [does not seem to like us, they take an] ... almost racial or anti-cultural offense against us."

Ranger attitude towards us: "... they bring these people in that don't know us, don't know this part of the country... and they act like they don't want us here..." "... they seem to work out of one book... and that book has "Park" on it... and this book allows no ORV use.... so when they see us they think we are doing something wrong"

"It seems that they hate us.. not all of them, but some of them ... it is like they don't want us out there, maybe it is because we hunt"

"I want to say one thing...I've only been going out there since 1967... but I love this area. I love this area as much as ...[another informant who had several generations of connection with BICY] And I would not do anything to hurt it. ... I obey the law.... I try to keep up with each new regulation to the best of my ability. I try to do everything I can. I love this place. I don't want to do a thing to hurt it. And I would like to be treated with some respect by NPS law enforcement, not with the complete disrespect I typically receive from them."

"What they have got to do is accept ORV use. Yea it looks like hell. I don't know if there is too much more you can do to lessen the impact. You have to accept a certain amount of impact from ORV use.... The big problems are from outside the preserve: encroachment, 5 million people, the development, the homes, the citrus, the roads ... not the ORV use. I just want to be accepted, and that I have a right to be there."

Comments on Helicopter

Excessive surveillance by helicopters (and to a lesser extent airplanes). A helicopter totally destroys the backcountry experience. Moreover, it is perceived to be ineffective and thus a waste of resources (the violator is alerted by sound of approach, and ranger on-the-ground knowledge is minimized) and because it is a worst case example of an impersonal, uncaring system trying to be big brother. Because people have been "buzzed" from the air by law enforcement they now interpret most over-flights with "big brother" keeping an eye on them in the wilds.

"Opening morning of hunting season ... to have a ...helicopter hover over you at 100 feet in BICY, I felt like I was in Vietnam, I wanted to run and hide. That was totally insensitive.... That was their idea of patrolling and letting me know that big brother was out there watching over what I might do. It totally ruined my experience and my sense of wonder"

"for the last [few] years there has been no NPS come to our camp in a buggy, they come there in a helicopter, they fly over and hover, that totally detracts from my experience."

Air surveillance is demeaning and probably very ineffective. It destroys experience (a) because of the message/meaning it sends and (b) the noise and intrusion it creates.

Perceived Impacts of Potential BMPs

Closing an area would likely reduce use and benefits, not just relocate them to other areas in the preserve. Regular hunters would lose years of accumulated knowledge about habitat, wildlife habits, and terrain. All users lose the accumulated memories and meanings they have attached to the place [see place identity benefits].

Designated trails limit and/or make it difficult for ATCs and smaller buggies to access the preserve because the large buggies make such large holes.

Hardened trails are bad. They open up area to people who don't care about the land... who don't respect private property...

ATC would not substitute for buggies. They bounce too much, destroy gear, and will not work in high water.

Many reports of off-trail use in Bear Island. That is, designated trails don't work. Many people don't stay on the trails.

Limiting the number of entry points would not be a problem. High NPS presence at those points during high use times would be welcome and appropriate (if contacts are well done).

It is OK to have 1/8 mile of harden trail from road/put-in point. The trail would direct use into preserve. As a result there would be less impact near the road and it would not

be such an eyesore to road side visitors. This solution would have minimal impact on ORV activities. Not sure whether it would lessen or merely displace impact.

Weight of vehicle could go down (psi of buggy on the ground). Technology of tire and design could improve. The weight of most vehicles has gone up over the last decades.

"I have no problem with being checked. They should stop everyone going into and out of BICY, check our coolers every time we check out.. to stop poaching..."

Opportunities to Improve Management and Relations Between NPS and Users

Work with permanent camp owners. They want to preserve the BICY, and use it.... They would like to work with NPS to help maintain the preserve.

Be consistent.... there is concern that the regulations and NPS attitudes change too frequently, creating an air of unsettledness..... and randomness... Be consistent... be stable.

"More on-the ground-enforcement... put someone in the woods... policing it from the air in a helicopter is not the way to police it.... get back there and get to know the people."

"I would volunteer my time... to teach NPS staff about our culture, our history, or use and love of the land"

As part of the permit process there ought to be an educational process, a leave no trace, sort of a driver's license test. Some people don't know what ethical outdoor behavior is.

The problem I (a buggy user) have ...with the NPS is that there is almost no enforcement of the law out there in the woods., they don't get off the road, they don't know the woods. The boaters would conclude just the opposite.

IMPLICATIONS INTERPRETED FROM DATA

There are virtually an endless number of implications from data such as are reported here. If management or planning efforts are considering a change to established use patterns, one could look at the scripts described here and estimate what benefits or experiences would be degraded or eliminated if a particular script were modified and a stage/act within the script were changed or eliminated.

Several general observations are possible, however:

1) **Considerable benefits produced by ORV recreation.** The magnitude of benefits and intensities of experiences are large, far exceeding those associated with other recreation experiences with which the author of this report is familiar. Thus, while there are relatively few ORV users, each user obtains tremendous benefits. (While my informants may not be representative, we have no reason to suspect that most BICY ORV visitor don't feel the same way. I suspect more feel this way than don't.)

ORV recreation in BICY is strongly associated with a culture. To alter ORV use is seen by the ORV population as threatening their culture, not just their leisure: generating such strong sentiments as the following:

"They took a piece of our heart... its like a cultural cleansing, ... a genocide... they are messing with our culture...it is a cultural offense, a feeling of oppression".

"There was this [trespass] camp built in 19xx..... to us this was a cultural site... an early camp... [a symbol of] our predecessors.. because it was a [trespass camp, the NPS] took it out... this was a total disregard for our culture. Instead of putting up a plaque or something... they took it OUT!..

2) **Limited substitutes for ORV activities or places visited.** Some benefits produced by BICY ORV use can be produced by substitute recreation activities. Some cannot. That is, some benefits are dependent upon ORV use in BICY. If ORV recreation use were substantially altered or redirected to other settings, then some benefits would be degraded. Certainly some of the benefits produced by ORV use of BICY could be easily obtained if visitors would substitute alternative recreation activities or alternative settings (e.g., fun, escape, freedom, relaxation, hunting and nature appreciation, to name a few benefits/experiences, are commonly found to be associated with a wide range of nature based recreation endeavors in a wide range of settings).

However, many of the most significant benefits discussed above seem dependent upon the specific activities and/or upon the specific places. Alteration of either the vehicle use patterns or use locations would degrade benefits and experiences. Specifically, the identity of the recreationist is firmly tied to specific places within the Preserve and to their specific vehicles. Thus, it is not possible to substitute places or vehicles without degrading these benefits.

In other words, the type and intensity of place and activity dependent benefits create connections between users, activities, and place that are unique. There are no

substitutes. Such place- and activity-dependency may be unusual in NPS management. The majority of visitors to NPS lands are less attached to and dependent on specific activity/place combinations. These typical visitors come for scenery, novelty, and nature study. BICY ORV recreationists come for much more. What they come for is shaped by generations of past recreation use along with the intense involvement and investment with swamp vehicles. This involvement creates intense bonds between people and specific places and between people and specific activities. Specifically, these recreation places and activities serve as important sources of identity for committed recreationists. (Note the extended discussion on identity and self evaluation related benefits.)

[Again, there is every reason to suspect that my informants represent most BICY ORVs. For example, 73% of respondents to the more representative survey reported elsewhere said they were "Very Attached" to specific places in BICY.]

As a result, NPS management practices successful in other NPS units may degrade recreation benefits/experiences and alienate ORV visitors of BICY. Current and past NPS practices seem to have soured relations with many ORV users because these practices threatened or destroyed individual and group identity. Perhaps relationships with users could be improved if the NPS more explicitly considered the impact of their policies and actions on place and activity dependent benefits and experiences.

Specifically, management should be sensitive to the meanings associated with specific environmental features. Bluntly, despite biological science prejudices to the contrary, a tree is not a tree is not a tree. A particular tree can be more valuable than other trees because of meanings associated with it. For example:

"Some of our early people... [one] took his little boy ...as a toddler. [and told him] 'this is your tree'... they planted this tree and it grew into a big tree, ...and every year they would come back to this tree... the tree symbolized... [that] these people had been there [for years, that the] kids had grown up there... and the NPS cut it down because it was an exotic...they were cutting into our souls... "

3) Benefits differ by ORV user type. Not all benefits and experiences were associated with all user groups of BICY (i.e., some user groups experienced more and more intense benefits than other groups). Moreover, some benefits are not experienced uniformly throughout a BICY trip, but rather are associated with specific stages, activities, and settings in BICY. Therefore planning and management policies should be sensitive to these differences and patterns. Other benefits are not tied to a specific trip, stage, activity or place but to the "Gestalt" of repeated trips into BICY on an ORV.

4) Regulations and designated trails reduce benefits. Signs, regulations, and designated trails restrict freedom and symbolize the controls of civilization which recreationists seek to escape in their trips into BICY. As much as anything else, what is resented is the meaning and implication that the rules of "civilization" have intruded into the backcountry. These regulations, signs or route restrictions symbolize loss of autonomy on part of the ORV recreator. Their mere presence in the backcountry degrades the experiences of freedom and escape. Several quotes from freedom and escape sections of the "benefits" chapter of this report serve to illustrate the point.

"designated trails.... signifies to me that they are regulating... that they are trying to make BICY like other units of the Park Service, to make it uniform, and it takes away from the experience"

"...there are signs all over the road coming down here, ... when you put the signs out into the woods it takes what is on the road, what you are trying to get away from and puts it right on top of you... you could never get away from it"

5. ORV recreation builds strong sense of community. ORV recreation in BICY is a social experience: Friendships are deepened. Children are educated. Responsibility and integrity are prized. Families bond. Mutual aid is rendered as needed. And sense of community is fostered. This is not to say that individualistic experiences commonly associated with remote, backcountry recreation are less valued by BICY recreator. Indeed, solitude, nature study, and developing primitive skills are very much valued in BICY. However, the nature of an ORV trip, the dependency on the vehicle, the numerous repeat visits, and the relatively small number of permit holders all combine to add an important social dimension to recreation at BICY.

LIMITATIONS

These data and conclusions must be evaluated in light of their limitations. On balance, however, we have confidence in the validity of these data and interpretations. It is important to note that informants were well aware of the on-going ORV planning effort which had been motivated by a lawsuit to reduce environmental impacts of ORV use in the Preserve. Therefore informants could have been motivated to describe a fabricated ORV recreation visit which intentionally minimized environmental impact. That is, informants could have intentionally avoided discussing ORV uses which produce adverse environmental impacts. However, the data did not seem influenced by such an agenda. The stories offered as examples had real texture and great depth. There was no evidence of a fabricated story told to make a political point and there were no inconsistencies characteristic of half truths. On balance, any bias of this type seems minor, if present at all. If it is present, the results merely describe an idealized ORV trip into the BfCY, which also has merit as data for ORV planning.

There was triangulation among informants and among groups of informants, which increases credibility of the data. Informants did not know in advance who would be in their small (focused) interview group. This was done intentionally to minimize any potential of them organizing before the meeting. The interview itself was conversational and all parties were eager to volunteer and explain their trips. Some differences of opinion about details of the activities, settings, and experiences did emerge and were openly and eagerly discussed and explained by informants. That is, there was a free and open exchange of ideas, informants (in this application as in the pilot tests of the method) were eager to share information and tell stories about the recreation experiences which they obviously treasured. No major contradiction or disagreement was evident about the general stages of the script. Similarly, there was triangulation in the stages of the scripts among groups, even across different vehicle and use types. That is, the data we collected from different sources converged.

Another reason for confidence in the data is that when given a chance to evaluate the information (as in method step 11), informants expressed a great deal of comfort with the descriptions they had just provided. No one expressed any reservation that the "typical" trip they just described would in any way mislead management or misrepresent the ORV experience to researchers, the public, or Park Service staff. To further evaluate the data's validity, informants were mailed draft copies of the report and asked to review the summary of their scripts. About one third of informants responded and their feedback was positive, suggesting only minor editorial alterations. Similarly, all interviews were videotaped. These tapes were reviewed by the interviewer and by two project staff. No substantive disagreement existed among the three researchers interpreting the interviews.

A final reason why the data are trusted arose from the unlikely source of the informants' reluctance to answer a question. After the trip was completely described, informants were asked to then describe and evaluate the "high points" or most important stages of the trip (method step #8). Informants had great difficulty with this question. They were unwilling or unable to say that any one stage of the trip was more important than another, and noted instead that every stage depends on every other stage. In other words, they said it made no sense to them to isolate and evaluate one stage (i.e.,

one activity, setting, experience combination) independent of the context of the whole trip. Thus, informants were not mindlessly answering questions to appease the "higher status scientist" but rather were thinking and engaged in the interview. This struggle on the part of our informants is also interesting because recreation use questionnaires often ask respondents to do just what our informants said they could not do: identify and evaluate the few most important activities and experiences of a complex and extended recreation visit.

A weakness which exists with any study using informants is the potential bias caused by memory processes. Events recounted months, days, even hours after they occur become confused and fused with other events or merely forgotten (Ericsson and Simon, 1980; Kelly and Lindsay, 1993; Bradburn, Rips, Shevell, 1987). Detail, however, was not lacking in informants' descriptions of their scripts. Perhaps because of informants' prolonged, frequent, and recent experience with BICY, memory failure, while possible, presented at most minor problems (recall that informants averaged 15 years of prior use and had over 25 visits within the previous 12 months).

An obvious potential weakness of the method is its lack of representation. The informants represent only a small percentage of the total user population. These informants may use the preserve in ways different from the majority but because they were leaders of the community they likely shape the opinions and behaviors of others. A purported advantage of systematically distributed questionnaires is that there exist less bias in the sample, or that the degree of bias is known because the sampling error is known. The method described here sacrifices that information for more detailed information from an admittedly less representative sample.

A related and important limitation is that several types of user groups were under or not represented in the interviews (i.e., the "street legal" and the day trippers). Hence, their perspectives are not reflected in this analysis.

CONCLUSION

The data and findings reported here are one part of a larger social science effort to understand ORV recreation use of BICY. This report describes in some detail the use patterns (scripts) and benefits of typical ORV visits into BICY. Other data, based on representative survey of permit holders, examines the broadly held concerns and experiences of the ORV public.

ORV planning for BICY presents serious challenges because of the intense relationship between ORV recreators and BICY. ORV recreation is, currently, an active and vibrant part of the culture and lifestyles of many people. The source of many of these benefits is a strong sense of identity and culture derived from specific places and specific activities.

There exist pressure on Preserve staff to impose regulatory efforts to change the nature of ORV use in an attempt to minimize perceived or actual environmental impacts caused by ORV use. These regulatory efforts may further alienate the ORVing population if the regulations diminish valued and long sought after benefits and experiences. Hopefully, the description of these benefits/experiences provided in this report may be useful in evaluating alternative actions.

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**APPENDIX A
BENEFITS AND EXPERIENCES OF ORV RECREATION AT BICY**

The main text contains a summary of the findings reported here. This section contains additional quotes from informants as well as interpretation of relevant scientific literature.

According to Driver (1996), there are four broad benefit categories: (a) personal (both psychological and physiological), (b) social, (c) economic, and (d) environmental. A benefit or experience is not listed below unless it was described by multiple informants (i.e., at least three times). For some benefits multiple quotes are included to illustrate the breadth and depth of the feeling. For better understood benefits or experiences only one quote is listed which reflects, generally, what was said many times by many informants. Occasionally no specific quote is offered but rather a summary of the examples informants provided.

PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS

There are a variety of psychological benefits BICY recreationists receive. Two of these benefits involve components of the self-concept, specifically: (a) the identity dimension, which seeks to answer the question of "who and what am I?" and (b) the evaluative dimension, which seeks to answer the question "how do I feel about my self?" (Campbell, Trapnell, Heine, Katz, Lavalley, & Lehman, 1996). The identity dimension of self-concept will be discussed first.

Identity

In an increasingly segmented and manipulated society, people find fewer opportunities to develop, maintain, and express who they are. Recreation can provide such opportunities, both in terms of the activity being done (Haggard & Williams, 1991) and the place in which it is being done (Williams & Patterson, 1996).

Place Identity: Place identity is another important source of identity for BICY recreationists. Encounters with these places and with place features provide reminders of one's past and future and the past and future of others (Proshansky et al., 1985; Korpella, 1989). For permanent camps there is a feeling of "coming home" when one arrives at camp. Perhaps to a marginally lesser extent these feelings are also evoked by temporary camps, especially for persons who camp where their now removed "trespass" camps used to be. For all camps there is a sense of identity evoked by the memories associated with the place (growing up, lost friends, first experiences, etc.).

For the purposes of illustration, the following discussion differentiates among permanent and temporary camps and tries to draw attention to how loss or destruction of place features have significant, negative impacts on meaning and identity.

Permanent Camps:

"It is hard to... talk about why you go out there -- it is WHO you are.... My family has been in South Florida for a long time.... I've traveled around a bit...to the Blue Ridge, out west, California, south of here, and it is beautiful... I can see why people want to live there... but the swamp is where my family has been and where I grew up. And I am not comfortable anywhere else. This is it. And as long as [BICY] is there, I will be part of it. ...when my parents were alive...that was our recreation, we would go out there...we would eat wild pumpkins... turkey that we killed.... When I go out there I remember those experiences growing up.... and my daddy saying 'I want to kill one more deer before I die, son'... and he did.. and I was with him; just him and I. (a, 78)

"We have had so many good times there, hung a lot of game there, and.... an old, old friend of ours who built the camp...his last wish was for us take him to camp... and we did, we had a ceremony around the fire, a few bourbons in his memory, we had a little ceremony in [his honor].....its a special spot because what remains of him went to the camp, in that ground" (a)

"I love the place like I love a child" (e)

"We don't call it a camp,... we call it a house... I mean you go into ours and see pictures of the family... to us it is a home away from home.....when you get there everything is comfortable for you" (e)

"I've got a camp out there and it is the same as my house, and that is how I feel about it. I keep my camp clean, I keep my yard clean, and I keep the area around it clean" (f)

Temporary Camps:

"even though it is a campsite, it is a feeling of coming home...it's a feeling of familiarity...it's like a place ... you're finally there... you don't own it but it owns you... you are a part of it.... It fits like an old shoe" (g)

"It's a sense of belonging, it is just like your home, if you move away you always think of the memories and the things that happened in those particular spots" (f)

Activity Identity: As the following quote illustrates, the vehicle, its operation, and its maintenance, provide a strong source of identity for BICY recreationists.

"[the vehicle is something] you put the hours and the time into, and literally the blood, sweat, and tears... it is something that you respect and have some type of love for.. [and it] may or may not return [that love], and there is nothing worse than being spurned by a buggy when you are 8 miles out... You are a team, going through the woods" (n)

Self-Evaluation

As noted above, the second dimension of self-concept--self-evaluation--seeks to answer the question "how do I feel about myself?" (Campbell et al., 1996). According to Gecas (1991), two of the most important types of self-evaluation are: (a) self-esteem, which is concerned with seeing oneself favorably and acting in such a way as to maintain, protect, or increase positive evaluations of oneself; and (b) self-efficacy, which is concerned with seeing oneself as a causal agent, autonomous, and having some degree of power or control. Self-esteem will be examined first.

Self-Esteem: As the following quotes illustrate, BICY recreationists are very proud of designing, building, and maintaining their vehicles.

"pride in vehicle [I made] having endured trip" (b)

"I'm very proud of it, very proud of it...my [relative] ... is a ...certified mechanic... he came down and said 'I can't believe you built that', he was pretty proud of it and that made me proud of it" (f)

"I built that buggy myself, I know it inside and out... so I have a certain amount of pride in what I built...knowing it is reliable ..." (a)

"average working class people that could really give Detroit and McDonald Douglas some competition... we have backyard people who are designing, building and maintaining, and constantly improving....with such skill ...that [the vehicles] are still holding up [when lots of cars or planes built during the same era] are no longer operational" (g)

Self-Efficacy: Feelings of control, mastery, accomplishment are all illustrated in the following statements.

"It has more to do with a person being able to overcome his environment.... He has built in his backyard, with whatever he can obtain, this machine which is capable of going out into the everglades, that is unique throughout the world and harvest a deer or a hog and its not only taken him out there but it has taken him back.... and he built it with his own two hands (i)

"There is a sense of accomplishment when it has broken down [and you fixed it]... that getting back to the road when you have broken down out there is such a feeling of accomplishment that you can't put words to it... the use of ingenuity and invention, just the feeling of accomplishment " (g)

"There is a great sense of accomplishment, to be able to go out there, taking nature at hand, going pretty much anywhere you want to go, going in something you made work" (c)

"It is using your mind. It is achieving a goal... there is a challenge in figuring it out" (h)

"it takes an incredible amount of planning to be prepared for everything you might encounter"

" there is a certain amount of tension... leaving the road and relying on the vehicle... when you get to camp... it's very satisfying...Sometimes I feel like I want to kiss the ground when I get there" (d)

"I consider it a challenge... every time you go you are fighting or working with the elements.. the water...it's a strain on the running gear.. it's a challenge.... you want your equipment in as good a shape as you can..."(f)

"[Place upkeep] is a sense of accomplishment that you can do it and get it done and keep it up..." (f)

Freedom

One of the most basic definitions of recreation or leisure is that it involves activities undertaken of one's free will (Tinsley & Tinsley, 1989). More significantly, backcountry, nature-based recreation is typically associated with opportunities for

"unconstrained" experiences, where one does what one does because one wants to do it; one moves with the rhythms of the Earth and responds to an inner voice rather than respond to externally proscribed rules, regulations, and policies (e.g., the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum). Regulation or restriction of use have the potential to degrade the sense of freedom, hence several quotes are included below which illustrate how such restrictions, particularly designated trails, degrade experience.

"The designated trails are something that... it is a whole attack of the control of your freedom... and that [freedom] is a big part of why we go out there... to be able to say "look at that head over there' ...and to be able to go look at..., and now you can't do that".

"I knew [BICY] when there was almost total freedom out there...you could go for miles.... nobody told you [what you could do], you were on your own, you had to be self-correcting. It was just a wild, free experience...so I have a little difficulty these days being regulated, watched over, told what to do. That sense of freedom is harder to find." (a)

"Part of the experience to us is the fact that we don't have charted trails, and don't have signs and instructional we take a route because it is the route to take not because it is the sign that says to do it ... some people feel compelled to put up yellow ribbon on the trail [so they can find their way back]... and that grates on my nerves like graffiti... because it is not supposed to be there, it distracts ... it is like a beer can on the highway..." (g)

[A sign denoting a designated trail] "is more than a beer can because it is somebody standing there saying ... [putting hand up like a stop sign] ... you go right here fellow [banging on table].... It takes away my freedom...." (i)

"designated trails.... signifies to me that they are regulating... that they are trying to make BICY like other units of the Park Service, to make it uniform, and it takes away from the experience" (g)

"...there are signs all over the road coming down here, ... when you put the signs out into the woods it takes what is on the road, what you are trying to get away from and puts it right on top of you... you could never get away from it" (h)

Escape From Civilization

Closely related to the visitors' goal of seeking freedom is the motivation of escaping from civilization. Part of what is being left behind are the restrictions and regulations of society (i.e., restraints on freedom), as well as the pressures and responsibilities of ordinary day-to-day life. Research has identified escape as one of the most common motivations for outdoor recreationists. (Knopf, driver).

"...you are not thinking about anything else when you're out there, you're not thinking about your job or other things back in town.. you're just thinking about the woods" (d)

"On the way back [home]...I start thinking about responsibilities again, ...my work,... but the whole time I am [out] there I don't think about it, it is one of the few places I can go when I really don't think about it, I really don't" (c)

"It changes your attitude towards everything . It's a lot harder to come back [to society] from a weekend in the woods and [take seriously] the minor pains and pressures of work when you have seen something so big...It has cleansed your soul... when you come back you are a different person than when you went out there" (n)

"people will stop and have an Everglades Cocktail.... just to toast the fact that they come out and just miles away there are millions of people and you are out here enjoying this solitude and the stars and the light and the frogs and the (vehicle).... just a rum and a coke with a sprig of grass sticking out of it.. toasting the fact that you are there and you are experiencing it" (i)

[I go out to get away from all that, not to see] "... ribbon on the trees, reflectors on the trees, blue paint on the trees, stop signs, red lights, horns blowing...." (i)

Emotional Change

As Hull (1991) as noted, individuals also engage in recreation in order to change their mood states. Typically, this involves either relaxation and stress relief, or excitement. Both types of changes were found with BICY recreationists. Relaxation and stress relief will be examined first.

Relaxation and stress relief: One of the recognized benefits of nature-based recreation is relaxation and stress reduction. The escape from pressures of daily life combine with the soothing effects of natural settings to drain away stress. (Knopf, 1988; Ulrich, et al., 1991)

"This is not something you want to be in a hurry about. One of the reasons we wanted to get away from the big city is that you can slow down, that you can relax, just because you're on a buggy you are not in any hurry,... you are relaxed." (f)

"It is relaxing to get some of the city poison out of you" (d)

"[You] get away from the pressure [out there], in a place where pressure means nothing. You say pressure? How could you feel pressure out there....[the pressure] cooks off... you can be a normal human being" (n)

"I'm there for recreation...I'm there to rest. I'm there to recharge...when I come home my mental attitude is very good.... My attitude is always better after a weekend in the woods" (n)

Excitement: Experiencing excitement is another commonly expressed motivation associated with outdoor recreation events (Knopf, 1988). Few opportunities in 'normal'

day-to-day life provide opportunity to be or to act excited, as the following statements suggest.

"anything can happen" (l)

"It is a blend of aviation fuel, adrenaline and testosterone... it is an instantaneous change in attitude..." (g)

"It is a high, you're so amped, you're ready to go, ...it's just coming out of you, enjoyment,...total enjoyment..." (b)

Introspection

The opportunity for introspection is another important psychological benefit associated with recreation. Many recreation events, especially nature-based recreation, provide respite from the pressures and politics of "civilization" and thereby facilitate introspection. BICY recreation is not unique in the opportunities it provides for self-reflection, but it nonetheless provides this benefit. Nature and buggy experiences heighten awareness and occasionally the intense awareness focuses inward, providing opportunity for reflection and consideration of life's priorities.

"Sometimes you're concentrating on the actual hunting, sometimes I'm thinking about things totally unrelated [to hunting] ... just thinking things through" (g)

"time to reflect on life's priorities" (h)

"ponder life"

"It is therapy"

"you get in the tree stand, and you start reminiscing, thinking about the wife and the kids... and all the sudden something will move... and instantly that thought is gone...and then you are taken back into the woods...your listening to the birds and your mind starts wandering off and all of the sudden you hear a grunt from a pig or something and you are instantly focused back on what you are there for" (d)

Flow/Absorption

Another benefit BICY recreationists reported suggests they may have been experiencing either flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) or absorption (Quarrick, 1989). Both of these experiential states are characterized by a high level of attention, a loss of consciousness of the self, a loss of awareness of time and surroundings, and a feeling of being "one" with a person, place, or thing.

[I was looking at] nothing and everything all at the same time" (h)

[When boating through the swamp with two buddies there will be an unspoken communication and understanding between the two boat drivers. They will respond to each others' movements and gazes in their travel through the swamp as if the journey were choreographed.] "The drivers are somehow in synch with each

other...they respond to what the other driver is doing...It is like an extension of your own self... it is an instantaneous reaction" (g)

"You know where you're going and what you are doing and what he is doing and where he is going and almost what he may be thinking" (h)

Spirituality

Being in and with nature provides a spiritual experience for many (Driver et al, 1996). Many BICY visitors have developed a deep spiritual connection with their surroundings

"Going to a hotel, going to Disney World... all that is (BS).. there is nothing like going out into God's creation... man can't duplicate it" (i)

"The simplicity of it moves you closer to everything you hold holy. Sitting out there you can't get any closer to God... it is just you and him" (n)

"To a lot of people, their idea of religion is that to go to a big cathedral or a big church, ...a fancy ceiling... and that puts you into a frame of mind that you are communicating with the higher being because you are in a grandiose, man-made... box, no matter how big it's still a four walled box.

"We go out and we see nature and God on a one to one basis. When you're sitting on a buggy watching the sun drop into the western sky and its highlighting the plants, and the colors all change... you are seeing nature and God on a one-to-one basis. It is not something that is being interpreted by another human being, telling you what God should be. You don't need to go to church after you've been to the woods. You see it all. You can't just sit there and look at something that is as inspiring as that and not walk away with a different feeling about yourself. It's a humbling experience..." (n)

"It is a big part of my life...It is a spiritual thing...I'm not saying I am a pantheist, but I find God out there" (a)

SOCIAL BENEFITS

In addition to psychological benefits, BICY recreationists also report a number of social benefits. In this section we will briefly describe some of the social benefits associated with being with friends and members of one's family, following this with a section on the benefits BICY recreationists describe getting from being part of a neighborhood or community.

Sincerity

According to Gecas (1991), another important self-evaluative benefit is self-authenticity; that is, the feeling of being real or true to oneself. A related concept is sincerity, which "refers to whether a person represents herself truly or honestly to others" (Erickson, 1995, p. 124). The following quotation provides an example of this socially-based benefit:

"I feel much more comfortable around these friends because there is nothing that I can say or do that would offend anybody ... it is much more comfortable because you can let your guard down because they accept you for who you are....[not] for what people expect you to be or what is acceptable, whether at home or at work or as a father" (l)

In addition to letting others see who you are, outdoor recreation may also provide individuals with the opportunity to get to know others as they really are. Once again, note the following statements from visitors to BICY:

[there is] "...no time back home to get to know people, because of so many different distractions At camp you get to tell stories and spend time with people" (d).

"When you are in the woods with someone, you really get to know them for who they are. My hunting partner... if you saw him at work and then meet him at camp you wouldn't know the guy ... at work he is as grim a person as you can find because his mind is solely on that business. You get him to camp and he can unwind he is telling jokes and always laughing...it's amazing." (n)

"You don't have the social constraints that you have at work. You get a much better judge of a guy when you're out here... there are no police, no nothing. You are your own referee. So if you are a wild and crazy guy and you are a little too wild for me, well I probably won't go out with you again..." (n)

"When you are at the camp is when you really get to know people, because there are no outside pressures... no phones ringing... conversation is about.... your life" (d)

Bonding with Friends and Family

Spending energy and time and get to know others in a situation without role constraints. There exists little or no pressure to play a role but rather one can be whole.

"If I am with my buddies we are continuously harassing each other, and picking on each other, insulting each other, down-grading each other's buggy....just having a good time....we tell lies, reminisce, and... have a good time" (a)

"It is not uncommon out here to have life long friendships with people that we never see in town ... unless one of them dies and we go to their funeral... It was more so before the park service got rid of the trespass camps. (g)

"A lot of people I don't see all year... people I went to school with... that is the only time I see them" (b)

"When you go with people you have gone with before... kind of like a family, everyone has kind of a duty... so and so makes a fire because he makes a good fire....not everyone has an assigned role... they just do it" (h)

Formative Experiences for Children

Barnett's (1991) review of the literature on the "Developmental Benefits of Play for Children" found evidence and argument that recreation provides children with opportunities for social development, social integration, social communication, and emotional development. Orthner and Mancini (1991) document how shared leisure experiences are increasingly more important to families and affect family bonds and solidarity. Jordan (1991), in the same edited volume, goes further and draws attention to the enormous benefits to society of having children, especially adolescents, involved and engrossed in recreation activities rather than involved in socially unacceptable activities. Informants at BICY described how BICY recreation not only kept kids off the street and allowed parents to provide "quality time" with their children, but also provided opportunities for nature study and promoted responsibility, integrity, self-confidence, and restraint.

Learning:

"I get the 483 questions [about nature] from the kids... so I do a lot of stopping and showing what a bird is or a [specific species] is... that's what I am getting, I am getting this educational experience for my kids" (d)

"lots of time you have kids with you, and you will want to teach them...why why why" (f)

"they are always asking questions. We stop and point out plants or animals and discuss them"

Bonding:

"It provides an excuse for me to spend uninterrupted time with him rather than having him sit in front of the 'tube'" (n)

Responsibility:

Vehicle and camp maintenance, hunting skills, primitive skills...

"When do you start teaching a kid responsibility? If you don't have some kind of a foundation to build on...You can't take somebody who is 18 years old and say 'OK now you have to be a responsible adult'" [n]

Character and Integrity:

"our young people... who are raised in this who grow up with this... they have more confidence, [are] more competent, [have] more respect, more focus..... overcoming these ...little... crises that come up is part of the growing up process..." (g)

"shows them to be self sufficient... to be innovative. If a part does break down when they are back there...you make do with what you can until you get back [to the road]... it is a good experience for younger people who are use to running down to McDonalds for a hamburger... you just don't do that in the swamp" (d)

"These experiences with friends and family.... build character, integrity, ... a lot of the qualities you like to find in people...and you take those lessons learned out here

and apply them back in normal life, in your life in town, as a parent, everywhere.
 ...” (h)

Sense of Community and Neighborhood

Burch and Hamilton-Smith (1991) argue that social cohesion is a significant benefit of leisure activities. BICY ORVers speak passionately of a sense of community that is rare in today's faceless, placeless, and segmented society. Most BICY users, especially those with permanent camps (or trespass camps to which they repeatedly return), appear to experience a stronger sense of community than is found in most other contemporary American situations. Unger and Wandersman (1985) and McMillan and Chavis (1986) review the qualities of neighborliness and community in more urban settings. One of the more critical aspects of community is that members share values, beliefs, memories, and history. It is not necessary that group members have participated in the history in order to share it, but they must identify with it (McMillan and Chavis, 1986). Many other qualities of sense of community and social cohesion are also found in BICY recreation: social interaction, intimate knowledge of setting, sense of mutual aid, sense of membership, and a shared emotional connection. Definitions of the qualities and examples from BICY are provided below.

Social interaction: "...refers to the social activities that neighbors engage in such as borrowing or lending tools, informal visiting, and asking for help in an emergency, and to the social networks which residents develop in their neighborhood". "The more people interact, the more likely they are to become close" (Unger and Wandersman, 1985; 13). Interaction within a visiting group is high because transport and camp living are spatially restricted, forcing face to face contact. Interaction among groups is common because people regularly visit one another's camps (people typically go out of their way to visit or check on each others' camps). Friendship and emotional support are shared along with equipment, supplies (e.g., ice, parts), and information (deer signs). Social interaction is a constant part of BICY experiences, rarely are people alone (numerous informant statements).

Quality of interaction: "The more positive the experience and the relationship, the greater the bond. Success facilitates cohesion" (Unger and Wandersman, 1985,13). Because BICY visits are leisure experiences, people are there of their own free will, are intrinsically motivated to be there, and typically have an intense and enjoyable time (numerous informant statements). Even visits with people outside the group are enjoyable.

Intimacy with setting: Visitors and residents of settings with high sense of community typically know those settings well. "Through experience, familiarity with the area, and contacts with a variety of individuals, cognitive maps develop and allow the residents to better manage their neighborhood to avoid dangerous situations" (McMillan and Chavis, 1986,150). BICY visitors know their setting intimately and know temperaments and behaviors of residents at neighboring camps thereby being able to predict and avoid physical problems (getting stuck) and social conflict (different use preferences) (numerous informant statements).

"we even know [who people are by their] different tire tracks" (n)

Mutual Aid: "Neighbors may develop a feeling that if they needed help they could rely on neighbors" (McMillan and Chavis, 1986,154). Without doubt BICY visitors do rely on each other, they also recognize and value that mutual reliance. Informants noted the remoteness of their locations and the need to rely on one another to solve any situation which might arise (numerous informant statements).

"We look out for each other to an extent that you don't experience in town" (d)

"We want to visit them like family... but also to check to see if they need anything" (f)

Sense of belonging and membership: "Membership is the feeling that one has invested part of oneself to become a member and therefore has a right to belong....it is a feeling of belonging, of being part, of knowing your role and place in the group (Unger and Wandersman, 1985,9). ORVers speak with pride of their years of learning about BICY and its people and of knowing the people who camp around them. Moreover, the camps and the buggies are virtual or roving islands, forming clearly defined boundaries and allowing protected intimacy among people on the island (numerous informant statements).

"The camaraderie of people who do the same thing that you do. [For example] there's nobody out here that you couldn't sit down with and start talking about tractor tires, and not have a pretty good conversation out of it... but these people all have that common thread... you are tied to the buggy, you're tied to the woods, and you're tied to family" (n)

Closure to events: "If the interaction is ambiguous and the community's task are left unresolved, group cohesiveness will be inhibited" (Unger and Wandersman, 1985, 14). Each BICY outing has a clear start and finish and tasks are clearly defined and accomplished. That is, the vehicle must be maintained, the camp closed, food prepared, hunting undertaken, stories told,... (numerous other informant statements).

Shared meaningful events: "The more important the shared event is to those involved, the greater the community bond." (Unger and Wandersman, 1985, 14). Whether it be hunting, swimming, or camp maintenance there is a sharing and caring about a clearly identified, significant event that defines the experiences.

"Every trip someone has something new to share with you" (e)

"all the time you're doing this you are collecting experiences,... there will often be a funny thing that you and your friends will laugh about for two generations... each time you're out there you collect something funny or something you overcome.... where else can you do this? City people don't have a clue" (g)

"there is always something to share [when you get back to camp]... the fish that got away or the challenges overcome... the cottonmouth.... the engine...some sort of vehicular problem,...[for a jury-rigged repair]....everyone will stand around and give their opinion on how it can be fixed....a combined effort to solve the situation" (g)

Investment: "Investment determines the importance to the members of the community's history and current status" (Unger and Wandersman, 1985, 14). BICY visitors make several considerable investments, more so than for most any other type of recreation. Money and time spent is invested in vehicle and camp (several tens of thousands of dollars). Time is invested in visits (30 to 40 trips per year is typical). Intimacy is invested because there is emotional risk being isolated and dependent upon group camp and vehicle (numerous informant statements).

Honor and Humiliation: "Reward and humiliation in the presence of community has a significant impact on attractiveness of the community to the person" (Unger and Wandersman, 1985, 14). Hunting, story telling, vehicle and camp maintenance, cooking, demonstrating primitive and orienteering skills, etc., all provide ample opportunity for feedback from group members about valued skills and accomplishments (numerous informant statements).

Spiritual Bond: It is difficult to describe this important element, but you know it when you find it. It is similar to the spiritual connections in religious communities. (Unger and Wandersman, 1985; 14). BICY visitors have it. They talk with passion and eloquence about being "one on one with God" while in the swamp, about having a "spiritual" relationship with God and nature (numerous informant statements, see spirituality, above).

"...It is part of my culture. It is a spiritual thing. ..I love it. When I die, that is where my remains will be, out there too. That is how important it is to me, and a lot of my friends too" (a)

Boundaries: According to McMillan and Chavis (1986), another element of communities is boundaries. Outdoor recreation research has also noted that these boundaries are often "liminal" in nature; that is, they represent a change or transition from the everyday business of life.

"There is a point of crossing [route] 41 ... that for me is the boundary line....from this point on it [civilization, problems back home] doesn't really matter" (d)

Culture/Shared Values and History: As McMillan and Chavis (1986) state: shared values "provide the integrative force for cohesive communities" (p. 13). Similarly, there is also a feeling of shared history (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p.

13) These shared values and history are often exhibited during the process of socializing children into the BICY culture.

"I know what this place has done for me in my lifetime and what impact its had on me and I want it to have that same impact on my children.... clean, natural fun.... It is important for me to have that use [with my children] and always have that use so it can carry on in my family...I want it to carry on "(d)

"[My son] has grown up in the woods...the first suit of clothes he had after he got out of the hospital [when he was born] was a camo suit that my wife sewed him. He was brought up immersed in this culture" (n)

[I learned about this from my father's generation and he learned about it from his father] "its part of who I am, where I am from, where I am going... it is my culture.... I can be anywhere, doing anything ...but I still have..." [this connection to the past and to BICY] (h)

"You have to go through it from beginning to end... It is a culture... it goes all the way back... it is a teaching process, and we were taught there is more to getting on a swamp buggy and driving back into the woods ... and go camping... some people may do that but there is a lot of education that goes along with [it]... and we teach our children..." (e)

"When you get to camp, everyone has a job...generally we get the younger ones ...youthful assistance.. to carry the heavier things... into camp... while the ... older fellows are examining camp, looking for bear tracks,.... (laughter)... It is really a great experience when you have reached that point of life, are getting a little long in the tooth, and you can get the younger [folks to do the heavy work]" (g)

"I don't know whether it's culture or what... but I was always brought out here by uncles and fathers, friends, older people and it is the tradition that the younger guys are the slave labor... I've just gotten to the [age] where I don't have to wash dishes...because there is someone younger than I..." (h)

Common Symbol System: According to McMillan and Chavie (1986), shared symbols have a number of important functions, including differentiating between members and non-members and maintaining a sense of community.

"Past friends that are no longer with us...it can be as simple as a rock sticking out of the ground...[causing] you remember when old man so and so [did such and such]. The place where you go camping probably has more meaning, but every place you go you see a tree and remember where I saw a ..." (h)

"Every little place out there makes you remember things" (h)

"I remember where and when I shot my biggest deer, and who I was with" (a)

Influence (and how the loss of influence affects community): As McMillan and Chavis (1986) note, influence is an important element in community. If, however, that "influence is drawn away from a locality, the integration and cohesion of the community is threatened" (Bernard, 1973, cited in McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 12). This loss of influence to the National Park Service--and its perception as being a threat to their culture and community--was stated by a number of BICY respondents:

"There was this [trespass] camp built in 19xx..... to us this was a cultural site... an early camp,.. [a symbol of] our predecessors.. because it was a [trespass camp, the NPS] took it out... this was a total disregard for our culture. Instead of putting up a plaque or something... they took it OUT!".. (g 137)

"Some of our early people... [one] took his little boyas a toddler. [and told him] 'this is your tree'... they planted this tree and it grew into a big tree, ...and every year they would come back to this tree... the tree symbolized... [that] these people had been there [for years, that the] kids had grown up there... and the NPS cut it down because it was an exotic...they were cutting into our souls...
" (g143)

"They took a piece of our heart... its like a cultural cleansing, ... a genocide... they are messing with our culture...it is a cultural offense, a feeling of oppression". (Group)

"...one of the guys who [had a trespass camp that was destroyed by the NPS]. He is a man with a professional career. He has fathered five children. He is the type of guy that if you talked to for a while you would say, somewhere in your subconscious you would say that, 'yea this guy is a man', in the sense of the word that [differentiates] the type of people who truly are a man from those who only try. He is the type of guy who could handle high water and lots of Hell and be fine... A man you would respect.... [we were at the 'trespass' camp] for the last time before we had to leave [before it was to be destroyed]... I walked around the corner [of a building] and he was crying like a baby. I said ...'what's the problem?' He says, ' You know how much of my life is tied up in this ranch? How many birthdays? How many Christmases?How many good times? How many times when there were good and bad times back home and [I] would come out here?' He was bawling like a baby, because he had lost that portion, it was like somebody had come over and cut a chunk out of his heart and run off with it" (n)

"I would have rather lost an eye than have to leave that place" (n)

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Informants spoke of an intense respect for nature and frequent efforts to study flora and fauna, as well as of efforts to maintain and improve BICY. Additionally, there is intense

sensitivity to the setting. Such sensitivity is necessary to successfully navigate the swamp (i.e., understanding interaction among soil, water level, vegetation, season and vehicle characteristics to determine route) and to be successful hunting (i.e., signs of game, habitat quality, etc.). This sensitivity to the natural environment is examined first.

Environmental Sensitivity

"...the view you get from the seat of the [vehicle] first thing in the morning before the sun has reached the Earth, that golden glow, the sparkling of the spider webs and the saw grass, ... the way the light shimmers, the little bubbles of light..." (g)

"I wake up and listen to the noises... the birds... everything coming alive. It gives me goose bumps just to hear everything coming alive just as I am coming alive... I listen to everything unfolding in the morning, there is just so much life... it makes you feel young" (d)

"Every time you're on [the vehicle] you see something different, a huge orchid, a deer, a tree, just the color of the grass, it changes, sometimes it is emerald green, we are constantly looking" (i.)

"Sometimes we will stop and just look and listen to the quiet, and let the wildlife go back to doing what they are doing... on a cold winter night you can climb up on the cage and look at the stars, oh yeah the stars... you can just reach out and touch them" (g)

"... I see all kinds of things... wildlife... that I can't see from the road and... it's like wow, I wake up" (i)

"You are physically and mentally at your maximum, it's only a few seconds [you have before game appears and disappears]... so you are constantly taking things in and you are looking at other things,... other wildlife, clouds, ...shape of trees,..." (h,g)

"You're going along and you're looking, always looking.... always looking for subtle differences, you tell others in your group 'did you see that?' .. You crank up that boat and you feel alert" (group)

Environmental Ethic

Informants also spoke of having a developed environmental ethic that is different from the more utilitarian ethic of the previous generation of BICY users.

"We have changed what we look for... it used to be just hunting.... that is what our fathers did... but now we look for more than just hunting and are more sensitive to nature.... I try to pass that sensitivity on to my children" (f,d)

"everybody is more environmentally conscious now...." (f)

"There is nothing more disappointing than to be out there, looking at an orchid or something and then look down to see a Coke can...and destroy the natural beauty you are out there to enjoy" (d)

"Natural beauty is lost a lot if you don't know...it requires understanding...It is the part of natural beauty I enjoy and I want other people to know" (d)

"I love the land and would not do anything to hurt it"

"I would never take one [plant] because they're part of the natural beauty" (d)