



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Guadalupe Mountains
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Guadalupe Mountains NP News Release

For Immediate Release
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Contact: Fred Armstrong

Comments Invited on Frijole Ranch Proposal

Superintendent John Lujan announced today that Guadalupe Mountains National Park is considering the relocation of the Frijole Ranch parking lot and the development of limited new facilities at the Frijole Ranch area for the purposes of improving visitor access, improving traffic flow with a new parking lot and to restore the cultural landscape presently used as a parking area to better protect, preserve and interpret the historic setting of Frijole Ranch.

The historic Frijole Ranch is one of the best remaining examples of early settlement in west Texas. It is a focal point for the park's interpretation of ranching history and is the location of the park's cultural history museum. It is also the trailhead for one of the park's more popular, low country hikes leading to Smith and Manzanita Springs.

Currently, the existing parking lot is limited in size and does not provide for bus or large RV's to turn around. In addition, the shape and configuration of the lot and its pedestrian access to the historic grounds makes handicapped access difficult. This current lot is immediately adjacent to the cultural landscape and detracts visually from the historic setting. There are no restrooms in the area to serve visitors and there are inadequate picnicking facilities. These factors make it difficult to accommodate school groups, bus groups and general visitors to this location. The park's administrative horse corrals are also at this location and operations sometimes impact available parking for visitors as well as provide logistical and efficiency challenges.

The proposed project includes the development of a new parking lot in the Frijole area including handicapped accessibility. This parking lot would accommodate and provide turn around ability for buses and large RV's. It would also include the construction of a small restroom facility and associated drinking fountain, and a picnic area for families and groups. The project would include the restoration of the old parking lot adjacent to the cultural landscape, and relocation of the administrative horse operations to a more efficient facility.

In recent years the park service prepared a Cultural Landscape Report for Frijole Ranch and developed several actions to restore and interpret the historic ranching landscape of the area. The proposed project would be a step in the process of restoring the cultural landscape setting of this significant west Texas historical resource while providing for improved visitor parking and access.

An environmental assessment (EA) will be prepared to analyze the proposal and alternatives and their impacts on the environment. This EA will be prepared in accordance with the National



Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1508.9).

Guadalupe Mountains National Park invites comments from interested agencies and the public throughout the Environmental Assessment process. During the process, the public has two opportunities to formally comment on the project; during initial scoping and following release of the Environmental Assessment. The National Park service is currently in the scoping phase of this project, and invites you to submit your written comments to the address below. Following receipt of these comments, an Environmental Assessment will be prepared, at which time the public will be provided another opportunity to comment on this project. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask the park in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, the park cannot guarantee that they will be able to do so. Please provide all comments by December 31, 2007 to:

John V. Lujan, Superintendent
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