APPENDIX C:

National Park Service
Purpose and Significance Statement of
the Ice Age National Scenic Trail

The mission of the National Park Service is to acquire, develop, operate, maintain, and protect through public and private partnerships, the Ice Age National Scenic Trail—a trail that meanders for approximately 1,200 miles through Wisconsin, from Potowatomi State Park in Door County to Interstate State Park in Polk County, generally following the terminal moraine and other glacial landscape features as a component of the National Trails System, for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail is:

To establish a trail within scenic areas of the Nation to provide increased outdoor recreation opportunities and promote preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the nation scenic and historic resources.

To provide for maximum outdoor recreation potential and for the conservation and enjoyment of nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, and cultural qualities through which the trail passes.

To provide a superlative hiking facility and experience consistent with preserving the landscape in which the trail is established.

To encourage and assist volunteer citizen involvement in the planning, development, maintenance, and management of the trail wherever appropriate.

Significance Statement

The Ice Age National Scenic Trail preserves outstanding landscapes and landscape features resulting from continental glaciation. Nowhere are the marks of continental glaciation upon the land more impressive than in Wisconsin. Indeed, the State has lent its name to the most recent series of glacial advances and retreats—the Wisconsin Glaciation lasting from about 100,000 to 10,000 years ago. The meandering landscape that exhibits the marks of the glacier's furthest advance is a showplace of moraines, kames, drumlins, erractics, kettle lakes, potholes, eskers, marshes, meltwater channels, gorges, ice-walled lake plains, outwash plains, and glacial lake beds.

The Ice Age National Scenic Trail links together six of the nine units of the Ice Age National Scientific Reserve. The Reserve units contain outstanding examples of the glacial land forms found along the trail and are major nodes of interpretation of the glacial story and landscape.

The Ice Age Trail provides an opportunity to explore a slice of American landscape at a walking pace rather than at freeway speed, and a place of retreat from the hectic routine of everyday life. It exists as much for the enjoyment of the causal walker as it does for the challenge of hikers who travel its entire length, providing outstanding opportunities for recreation, education, inspiration, solitude, and enjoyment.