

## s e c t i o n k

## MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

## 1. Examination of Similar Projects

**B**eginning with the establishment of Yellowstone National Park in 1872, areas administered by the National Park Service have grown in size and complexity. They range from large wilderness areas in the West and Alaska, to historic areas predominantly in the East, to complex urban parks in New York and San Francisco, to cooperatively managed areas in urban and suburban regions of the country. A common thread in today's nontraditional management spectrum is the involvement of the Secretary of the Interior and in many cases, the Director of the National Park Service.

## s u m m a r y

**S**ince 1872, the National Park System has grown from managing only large tracts of wilderness to cooperatively managing programs in urban and suburban areas. This progression has resulted in more and more involvement by the public in planning and management. Using existing nontraditional areas as models, the Ice Age Floods proposal describes an interpretive tour route, called a "Geologic Trail" or "Floods Pathways," through Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon, utilizing existing federal, state and local governmental land ownerships. The key to its successes, and the core of the Ice Age Floods proposal, is the written agreements among all levels of government and the private and nonprofit sectors. These agreements will form a series of partnerships to manage and interpret the Floods region.

Over the last two decades, Congress has created a number of nontraditional areas, including (1) *Affiliated Areas*, which are not part of the National Park Service but have NPS assistance; (2) *National Heritage* areas, which are not part of the National Park Service but have NPS assistance while being managed by various partnerships; (3) *Wild & Scenic Rivers*, which are managed by federal agencies including the NPS; and (4) the *National Trail System*, managed by federal or state agencies. There are four examples of National Heritage Corridors that are Affiliated Areas of the NPS:

Illinois & Michigan Canal, Illinois; Delaware River Valley, Pennsylvania, and the Blackstone River Valley, Massachusetts, all managed by federal commissions; and the Quinebaug and Shetucket River Valley, Connecticut, which is managed by a nonprofit organization.

The structural organization of these National Heritage areas might be adapted to the Ice Age Floods region. In such partnership structures, the key to success is the clear definition of responsibilities and duties. In the Blackstone River



Valley National Heritage Corridor, for example, the legislation that created the Heritage Corridor provided for partnerships between two states and their many agencies, 20 local governments, the National Park Service and other federal agencies, and many of the Valley's business and civic organizations. These are all coordinated by a Congressionally authorized commission. The organizational structure for the Blackstone River Corridor incorporates these provisions:

### ***The Commission***

- Defines roles
- Sets clear goals
- Formulates effective cooperation among those involved
- Conducts fund-raising campaigns from governments and private sources
- Provides professional expertise

### ***The Federal Government (National Park Service)***

- Prepares and implements the management plan

- Provides interpretive services
- Sets consistent standards
- Includes base funding within regular NPS appropriations
- Provides expertise in management
- Provides expertise in preservation, restoration, interpretation and education
- Provides expertise in resource protection outside the boundaries
- Acquires funding through the Land & Water Conservation Fund.

### ***The State Governments***

- Provide leadership and preliminary planning
- Serve on the Commission.
- Collaborate across state lines with similar state agencies
- Work with the Commission to assist in information, technical assistance, program funding and award grants

### ***Local Governments***

- Provide local planning to support the project
- Develop zoning and initiatives to support the project
- Inform the Commission of important issues

### ***Business, Industry and Labor***

- Partnership with individual businesses and private sector, such as the Chambers of Commerce and Tourism Councils.

These interrelationships demonstrate the high degree of complexity needed to manage the Blackstone River Valley NHC. The willingness to participate and the commitment to the concept of a partnership area is formalized by a series of cooperative agreements with the participants. There are many examples of agreements that have been used successfully in other nontraditional areas that could be adapted for use in the Ice Age Floods concept.

## 2. Configuration

The configuration of the proposed Ice Age Floods region could best be characterized as a “linear, nontraditional area without boundaries.” The area that was inundated by the Floods now forms the region that serves as the Study Area. This area was investigated for significant Floods resource sites that were identified through the inventory process. These resource sites could be connected by a series of interpretive “pathways” or routes. Using this concept of boundary-less, interconnected interpretive sites, it becomes clear why existing NPS terminology does not meet the needs of the Ice Age Floods concept. The term “Region” best describes the overall configuration of the area, and the term “Pathways” best describes the routes or paths of the torrent of water from the Floods.



NPS Photo

*In many locations, the Floods Pathways are clearly etched on the landscape*



## Floods

*Moses and Grand Coulees*

Grand Coulee and Moses Coulee to the west largely were formed by the Missoula Floods. A lobe of the Cordilleran Ice Sheet descended into the Okanogan Valley, blocked the Columbia River, and covered 500 square miles of the Waterville Plateau west of Grand Coulee. The south terminus of the Okanogan lobe is clearly marked by an abrupt south limit of lumpy, rocky moraines. The ice-dammed Columbia River backed up to form Glacial Lake Columbia, a huge version of the lake now ponded by Grand Coulee Dam. Lake Columbia's overflow—the diverted Columbia River—occupied Grand Coulee between Ice Age Floods events.

## Facts

### 3. Socioeconomic

The socioeconomic impacts of the Ice Age Floods concept are difficult to evaluate. Caution in projecting increases in the amount of visitation was constantly voiced by representatives of state tourism groups. Tourism is dependent on so many variables—the overall economy, weather, cost of fuel, trends in vacations, disposable income, available time for travel, etc.—that projections of increased tourism are out of favor. But even while being cautious, tourism representatives stated they expect tourism to increase simply by adding an additional attraction and by adding regional tours involving a new topic area. There apparently is a critical mass in which the combination of attractions offers so much to the visitors that they will forgo travel to other areas in order to visit the Pacific Northwest. By developing an Ice Age Floods region, the economies of a largely rural area, which is generally dependent on agriculture, logging, mining, etc., will be strengthened.

Almost all of the Floods resources are remote from urban centers, and as a result, visitors will have to plan day trips to the region or even stay overnight. In many cases, the level of occupancy for the hospitality industry is already high during the visitor season. With additional visitors traveling through the Floods region along Pathways tour routes, more accommodations would be needed.

Tourism ranks as one of the three most important generators of outside income

in Montana, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. To reflect this rank, increasing tourism is one of the major goals of the Ice Age Floods concept. Of all the many nontraditional area goals that were examined, New York's Seaway Trail's purpose stood out among the others. It states that the trail was created to: “. . . promote the trail as a tourist destination and to encourage regional economic development through tourism.” Opportunities to enhance regional tourism may result from the Ice Age Floods tour routes.

Because there will be no federal land acquisition proposed, land in the Floods region would not be removed from the local tax rolls. The increase in visitation and the potential increase in duration of those visits could add more money to the hotel/motel and sales tax base and state gasoline tax income. Encouraging the continued development of spring and fall seasonal travel would also serve to spread out the positive economic benefits affecting the regional tourism industry. Thus, the general economic picture should favor the creation of the Ice Age Floods interpretive trail or Pathway because visitors coming to view Floods resources would benefit the economy of the region.

## Floods

### *Not-So-Dry Falls*

Separating the tandem canyons of upper and lower Grand Coulee is Dry Falls (now within Sun Lakes–Dry Falls State Park). Dry Falls serves as a stark reminder of the magnitude of the Ice Age Floods. At the height of the Floods, water nearly 400 feet deep poured over the lip of the Falls, showing but a wrinkle on the floodwater's surface. Today, the 350-foot cliffs, plunge pools and lakes show that the Falls were over three miles wide or five times the width of Niagara Falls. At the height of the Floods, water poured not only over the Falls, but also over cataracts farther east.

## Facts