

JEAN LAFITTE

National Historical Park and Preserve • Louisiana

RECOMMENDED:

Joel Kussman
Chief of Planning, Central Team Denver Service Center

February 22, 1993

Robert Belous
Superintendent, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

April 14, 1995

APPROVED:

Jerry Rogers
Regional Director, Southwest Region

April 21, 1995



Amendment to the General Management Plan

April 1995

JEAN LAFITTE

National Historical Park and Preserve • Louisiana



2
3



.



PREFACE

This document is an amendment to the 1982 *General Management Plan* for Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. Since the 1982 plan was prepared, several changes and issues concerning operation of the park have surfaced. The areas of concern that are being investigated for restructuring are cooperative agreements, resource additions, natural resource management, and visitor use and general development. Many provisions of the existing 1982 plan remain valid, and the purpose of this planning effort is to amend the plan to provide additional guidance, not to completely write a new plan. The new or modified concepts in this amendment are designed to ensure that the park maintains its integrity and that a high-quality visitor experience continues.

This amendment provides a framework for interpreting the development of cultural diversity in Louisiana's Mississippi River Delta. The plan also provides for protection of cultural and natural resources at the park sites and a cooperative program to encourage recognition and continuation of these values and of evolving folkways in the region. Additionally, developments to facilitate access to and visitor use of park sites are identified in the plan.

Pivotal in carrying out the mission of the park are three critical elements — operation of NPS park units and preservation/maintenance of their natural and cultural resources, interpretation of the Mississippi Delta environment and the cultural diversity this environment sustains, and development of cooperative agreements with entities active in supporting the cultural traditions and natural resources of the region, including designation of cooperative park sites.

When Jean Lafitte National Historical Park was established in 1978, three units were authorized, incorporating an existing operational unit — Chalmette National Historical Park and War of 1812 Battle of New Orleans sites. In 1988, Congress amended the park's legislation leading to the establishment of the Acadian unit. By 1994 the Barataria unit (now the Barataria Preserve unit), the French Quarter unit (now the New Orleans unit), the Chalmette unit, and the Acadian unit were also operational. In addition to these units, a variety of cooperative programs have also been undertaken that have led to NPS assistance with a regional visitor program, support of traditional cultural events, and maintenance/preservation of selected sites. Linkage with regional transportation providers for purposes of interpretation will also be encouraged.

The following table, based on a summary of the 1982 proposed actions, has been updated to incorporate the changes or modifications proposed under this 1995 amendment.

TABLE 1: PLAN SUMMARY — 1995 AMENDMENT

Topic	Parkwide	Cooperative Programs	Barataria Preserve Unit	New Orleans Unit	Chalmette Unit	Acadian Unit
Interpretive Theme/Unit Role	Contributions of Mississippi Delta environment and its peoples to a nationally unique regional character: historic roles of region's cultural groups, their influence on contemporary culture, and their current status and activities.	Diverse traditions, archeological resources, and aspects of expressive culture such as music, art, crafts, and architecture.	Geomorphic and biologic processes of Louisiana's Mississippi River Delta environment and human use of the area.	Development of multicultural heritage throughout New Orleans metro area and other Delta locations; cosponsor events and demonstrations.	Historical significance of the Battle of New Orleans, including diverse groups of the region involved in the battle.	Contribution of the Acadian peoples to the unique culture of the region; prairie and wetlands as examples.
Visitor Activities	Activities available in all units.	Demonstrations, festivals, and tours.	Boating, hiking, interpretive tours, environmental education, hunting, fishing, and nature study.	Trip planning, walking tours of historic districts, interpretive demonstrations, and expressive art performances.	Self-guided battlefield tours, history talks, audio-visual and exhibit presentations.	Cultural activities, theaters, festivals, demonstrations, and interpretive displays.
Facility Development	Park headquarters and visitor center located in the French Quarter.	Support efforts of cooperating groups.	Interpretive center/unit office/maintenance area, environmental education center, foot and boat trails, docks, interpretive waysides, parking, and picnic areas.	Administrative headquarters; central site for parkwide information.	New interpretive center, Beauregard house used to interpret its period and for group assembly; trail realignment.	Cultural centers at Thibodaux, Lafayette, and Eunice.
Resource Management						
Natural Resources	Provide examples and support preservation of regional environments in which cultures developed.	Fill parkwide role to extent NPS units lack pertinent regional habitats.	Manage wetland ecosystem; manage trapping, fishing, oil and gas development, and other resource activities.	None	Maintain historically representative appearance.	None
Cultural Resources	Support efforts of regional groups to maintain cultural traditions and sites.	Same as parkwide.	Protect archeological sites.	Support regional groups.	Conserve historic features of site.	Support efforts of Acadian and regional groups to maintain cultural traditions.

CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Purpose of and Need for the Plan Amendment	3
Purpose of the Park	3
Delta Region Preservation Commission	4
Brief Description of the Park	4
Park Organization	4
Park Resources	4
Parkwide Concerns	5
Special Resource Studies	5
Cultural Centers	6
Cooperative Agreements	6
Evaluation Criteria for New Resource Additions	7
Management Objectives	8
Management, Administration, and Support	8
Interpretation and Visitor Use	8
Visitor Protection and Safety	9
Natural Resources Management	9
Cultural Resources Management	9
Planning, Development, and Transportation	10
Land Resource Protection	10
The Plan	13
Parkwide Visitor Use and Development	13
Land Protection Strategies	14
Boundary Studies	14
Oil and Gas Rights	17
Recreational Camps	17
Partnership Proposals	17
Big Oak Island	17
Couba Island	18
Wisner Foundation Tract	18
Lake Salvador Cooperative Resources and Recreation Planning Province	18
Park Unit Actions	20
Barataria Preserve Unit (Formerly the Barataria Unit)	20
New Orleans Unit (Formerly the French Quarter Unit)	27
Chalmette Unit	27
Acadian Unit	29
Planning and Research Requirements	30
General Studies	30
Parkwide Natural Resource Studies	33
Barataria Preserve Unit Natural Resource Studies	33
Wetlands and Floodplains Requirements	33
Parkwide Environment	37
Unit Descriptions	38
Barataria Preserve Unit	38
Geology, Hydrography, and Soils	38

CONTENTS

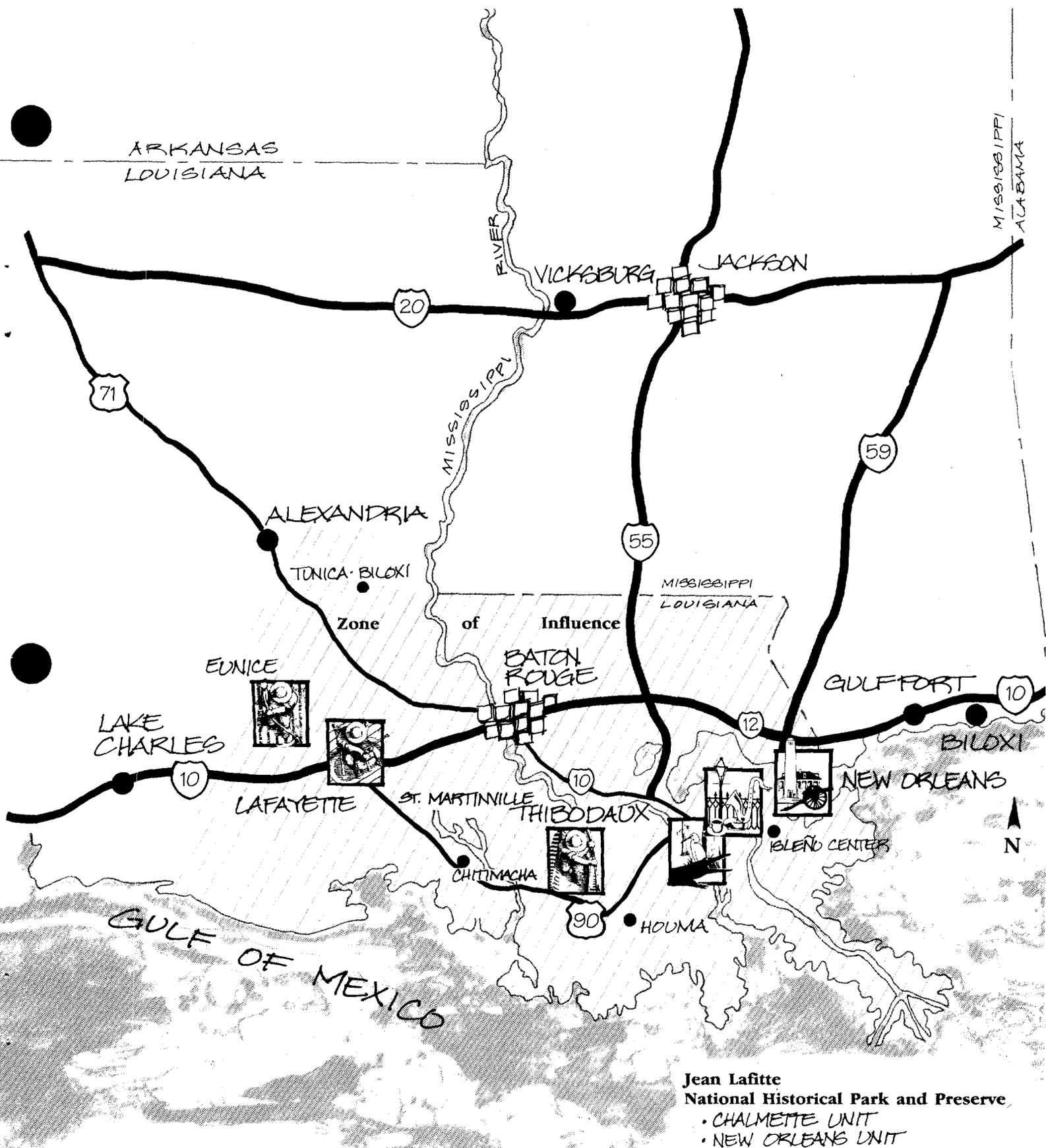
Plants and Wildlife	39
Threatened or Endangered Species	40
Archeological Resources	40
Historic Resources	41
Existing Development	41
Site Descriptions	41
New Orleans Unit	44
Cultural Resources	44
Existing Development	45
Chalmette Unit	45
Natural Resources	45
Cultural Resources	45
Existing Development	46
Acadian Unit	46
Big Oak Island	46
Consultation and Coordination	51
Appendixes/Bibliography/Preparers	53
Appendix A: Legislation	55
Appendix B: Finding of No Significant Impact	61
Bibliography	64
Preparers, Consultants, and Advisors	65

MAPS

Location	viii
Management Zoning — Barataria Preserve Unit	15
Lake Salvador Cooperative Resources and Recreation Planning Province	19
Barataria Preserve Development Concept Plan	21
Management Zoning — Chalmette Unit	31

TABLES

1. Plan Summary - 1995 Amendment	iv
2. General Management Plan Actions and Cultural Compliance Requirements	49
3. Cost Estimates	65



- Jean Lafitte**
National Historical Park and Preserve
- CHALMETTE UNIT
 - NEW ORLEANS UNIT
 - BARATARIA PRESERVE UNIT
 - ACADIAN UNIT

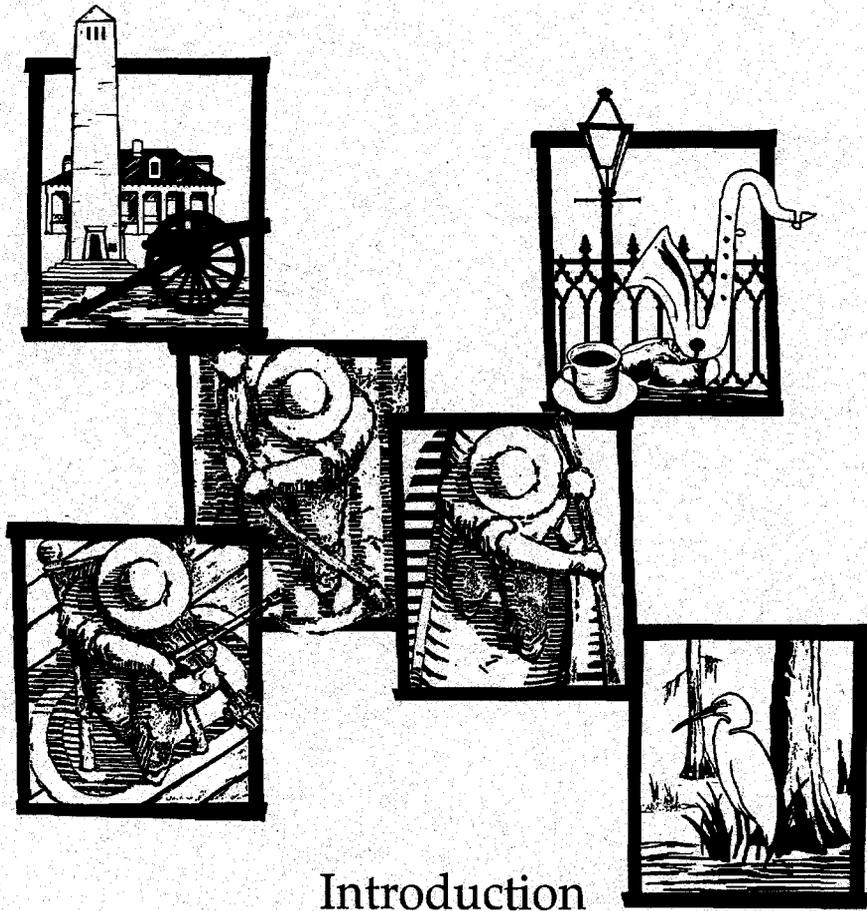
Location

Jean Lafitte
National Historical Park and Preserve
 U. S. Department of the Interior / National Park Service

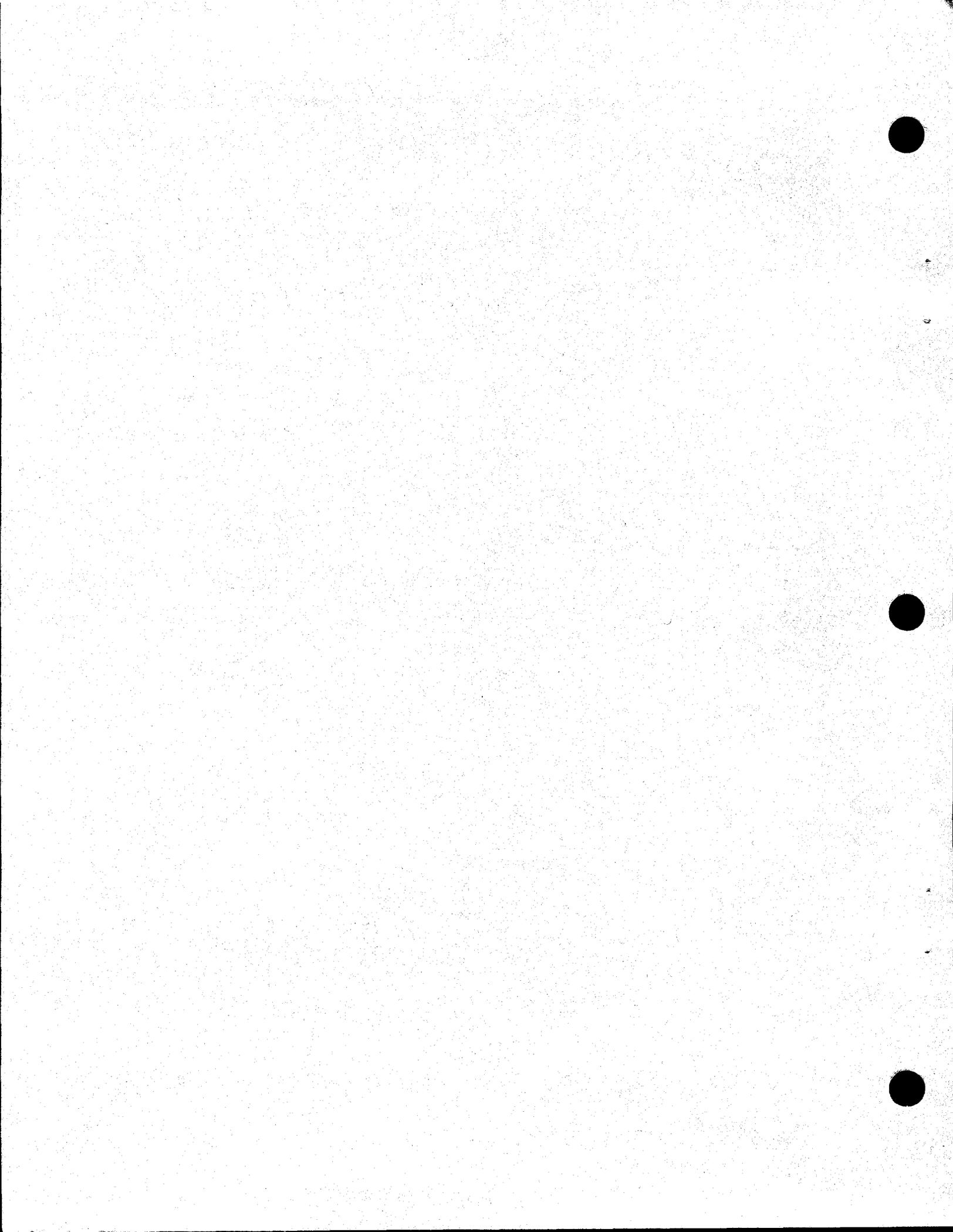
467. 20059 - DEC - JUNE 94

ON MICROFILM





Introduction



INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PLAN AMENDMENT

The purpose of this *Amendment to the General Management Plan for Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve* is to address certain events that have occurred during the last decade that have affected Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. These events are not significant enough to require the creation of a new general management plan; the 1982 *General Management Plan* still remains valid, and many of the actions called for have been implemented. However the National Park Service has determined that a plan amendment is required to address the following: (1) legislation in 1988 that authorized the establishment of folklife centers in the Acadian region; (2) cooperative agreements developed in the past to provide technical and financial assistance to a variety of organizations to help perpetuate the diverse culture of the region; (3) an emphasis on the management, preservation, and interpretation of cultural resources in the Barataria Preserve unit, which led to a de-emphasis of natural resource management in the original general management plan; and (4) actions called for in 1982 plan that have not been implemented to date.

The plan amendment is to provide guidance for management of the new Acadian unit; guidelines for future cooperative agreements and resource additions; and direction for natural resource management and interpretation in the Barataria Preserve unit. The amendment also re-examines some of the actions proposed in the 1982 plan, substituting new proposals where appropriate.

A draft amendment to the plan/ environmental assessment was made available for public review and comment during a 60-day period ending December 27, 1994. After the review, the draft plan was modified to reflect the comments and the final amendment to the plan was completed

(see the approved Finding of No Significant Impact in appendix B).

PURPOSE OF THE PARK

Louisiana's Mississippi River Delta and the southern Acadian parishes of Louisiana comprise a region of abundant natural resources, rich in history, that fostered the evolution of a unique and diverse cultural milieu. In 1978 Congress passed legislation (PL 92-625) that recognized the national importance of this region (see appendix A) and directed the National Park Service to establish Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve for the purpose of preserving

for the education, inspiration, and benefit of present and future generations significant examples of natural and historical resources of the Mississippi Delta region and to provide for their interpretation in such manner as to portray the development of cultural diversity in the region.

The legislation also provides for inclusion, by cooperative agreements, of other natural and cultural resources representative of the development of regional cultural diversity. Historical forts and plantations and areas such as the Garden District of New Orleans and Acadian towns and villages (see Location map) were suggested in the legislation as representative resources that may be considered for potential cooperative programs. The National Park Service is to interpret natural resources and cultural diversity, preserve the basis for continuation of that diversity in a cooperative program with public and private entities, and provide visitor activities, experiences, and use of the sites.

In 1988 the enabling legislation was amended by Public Law 100-250 to authorize

INTRODUCTION

the establishment of folklife centers in the Acadian region (see appendix A).

DELTA REGION PRESERVATION COMMISSION

The legislation also established the 16-member Delta Region Preservation Commission whose function is to advise the secretary of the interior in the selection of sites for inclusion in the park, in the development and implementation of a general management plan, and in the development and implementation of a comprehensive interpretive program of the natural, historic, and cultural resources of the region.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PARK

Park Organization

The organizational structure of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve is based on a "unit management" concept. Management of the park is headquartered in New Orleans' Vieux Carre, or French Quarter. This office provides technical services and program oversight to four management units: Acadian, Barataria Preserve, Chalmette, and New Orleans. The units are geographically dispersed throughout south Louisiana and each represent a unique aspect of the Mississippi Delta region. Administered under the various management units are cooperative agreement sites. These sites are not owned by the federal government and reflect varying levels of involvement, ranging from an operational presence to the provision of technical support for such centers as the Tunica-Biloxi Regional Indian Center and Museum, Chitimacha Tribal Cultural Center, Isleño Center, Germanic-American Cultural Center, and American-Italian Renaissance Foundation Museum.

Park Resources

Barataria Preserve Unit. The Barataria Preserve unit consists of about 20,000 acres in the upper freshwater zone of the Barataria Basin, one of the most productive estuarine wetlands in North America. It contains a portion of an abandoned delta of the Mississippi River and associated ecological zones, including natural levee hardwood forest, baldcypress swamp forest, and the eastern end of one of the largest floating freshwater marsh systems in the world. Associated with each of these zones are rich communities of characteristic plants and wildlife.

Cultural resources of the unit include hundreds of archeological sites marking a progression of prehistoric and historic habitations. Land use patterns from a succession of historical occupations overlay the natural landscape and provide a matrix for interpretation of the interrelationship between environment and culture. A historic district on the National Register of Historic Places includes the Bayou Coquille archeological site, other prehistoric middens, and sites associated with 19th century plantation agriculture. In addition to these cultural sites, the communities of the basin are a living resource, offering opportunities to interpret traditional resource uses and contemporary culture.

New Orleans Unit. Established on the banks of the Mississippi River in 1718, the capital of the French colony of Louisiana survives today as the French Quarter of New Orleans. Containing one of the most extensive collections of late 18th and early 19th century buildings in the United States, the French Quarter was the first legally recognized and protected historic neighborhood in the country and was later designated the Vieux Carre Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places. This living neighborhood serves as the backdrop for the New Orleans unit's interpretation of the rich history and cultural heritage of the city. The New Orleans unit visitor center and the park headquarters are located in the French

Quarter, and the historic 419 Rue Decatur building is currently being renovated by the National Park Service to serve as a permanent home for both. The park visitor center will be managed by the New Orleans unit.

Acadian Unit. Louisiana's Acadian people are descendants of some of the first French colonists to settle Canada in 1604. They were forcibly dispersed from Nova Scotia in 1755 by the British to ports across the old and new worlds. After 1763, the Spanish Colonial government encouraged many to emigrate to Louisiana. They settled in various areas of the state and adapted to conditions as they found them. This adaptability resulted in distinctive folkways that are reflected in both traditional and contemporary language, music, food, and crafts. The Acadian unit, established to interpret the prairie and wetland Acadian cultures, consists of three geographically separate sites in the towns of Lafayette, Eunice, and Thibodaux, Louisiana. The Lafayette site serves as headquarters for the Acadian unit as well as a cultural center that interprets all of Acadiana.

Chalmette Unit. The Chalmette unit, also on the national register, is 5 miles downriver from New Orleans. It commemorates the successful stand made by the Americans in the Battle of New Orleans at the culmination of the War of 1812. This unit also contains a national cemetery that was established in 1864. The majority of the approximately 15,000 burials date from the Civil War. Originally established as Chalmette National Historical Park in 1939, the unit was redesignated and made part of the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve under Public Law 95-625.

Big Oak Island. Big Oak Island is a significant archeological site on undeveloped land within the city limits of New Orleans. It is a large prehistoric archeological site, dating from the Tchefuncte and Marksville periods (ca. 600 B.C. - A.D. 400), located in an undeveloped tract of drained marsh in New Orleans East. This site was mentioned in the establishing legislation, but the National

Park Service does not have acquisition authority.

PARKWIDE CONCERNS

The following concerns have surfaced in the past decade and make it appropriate to re-examine the park as a whole and to decide if its future course is properly charted.

Special Resource Studies

The National Park Service has conducted two special resource studies in southern Louisiana. The New Orleans Jazz Study, authorized by Public Law 101-499 and completed in December 1993, investigated methods of preserving and interpreting jazz in New Orleans. Specifically, the study reported to Congress on the following:

- methods of protecting sites and structures in the city that are associated with early jazz
- ways of conserving the jazz parade tradition and the contributions of neighborhood social and pleasure clubs
- techniques of supporting public and private jazz archives
- means of providing for public education and interpretation of jazz history

Legislation designating New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park has been passed by Congress. The new park will share administrative staff with Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

The second special study and environmental assessment is in preparation and addresses the potential for NPS involvement in the Atchafalaya Basin. One of several alternatives under consideration will add an Atchafalaya unit to Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve for interpretation and education.

Cultural Centers

Although the establishing legislation for Jean Lafitte clearly allows for cultural centers, the 1982 plan did not envision a role for cultural centers in interpreting the region's cultural diversity. Since that time, the National Park Service has become involved in a number of cultural centers through cooperative agreements. In response to proposals from cultural organizations, the National Park Service plays a cooperative role in cultural centers for the Chitimacha Indians, Tunica-Biloxi Indians, Isleño, Germanic-Americans, and Italian-Americans. The NPS role has been different for each of the centers, but examples of NPS contributions include maintenance and repair of buildings, planning and construction of interpretive exhibits, and staffing.

Because the role of the cultural centers in park interpretation was unanticipated in the initial park planning process, problems have occurred. Some cultural groups remain unrepresented or underrepresented. Also, because the emphasis in each cultural center is on one particular culture, the rich story of the interrelationships among cultures is not fully conveyed.

This amendment proposes a feasibility study to resolve these problems through a major cultural center, capable of nationwide recognition, devoted to the interpretation of the interrelationship of the various ethnic groups that contributed to the Mississippi Delta Region's culture. A necessary aspect of this study will be early and thorough consultation with cultural groups, and a major goal will be to reflect the dynamics and consequences of cultural interrelationships. If the cultural center is to be a structure, adaptive use of historic buildings will be given thorough consideration. Also, leases, use of structures within the park, and partnerships with state and local governments and private sector entities should be explored as alternatives to new construction. An environmental assessment will be done as part of this study.

Cooperative Agreements

The mission and purpose of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve are uniquely broad in allowing agency associations with nongovernment entities. As an instrument of management, cooperative agreements provide a means for establishing varying and widely diverse levels of agency affiliation with property owners, institutions, cultural communities, and other groups germane to the park's mission.

The Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act, 31 U.S.C. 6301 *et seq.*, is the basic statute that empowers an agency to enter into cooperative agreements. This authorization extends use of such agreements to a broad range of cooperators, including state and local governments, colleges and universities, scientific organizations, and cultural groups for mutually beneficial purposes.

Proper execution of a cooperative agreement necessitates that the resulting action be supported by a separate legislative authority, such as the park's establishing legislation or similar enabling statute. Supported by such legislative authority the action must then meet two basic criteria. The agreement must accomplish a beneficial public purpose of support or stimulation and demonstrate a substantial involvement on the part of government.

Management actions controlled by the above-mentioned process constitute a majority of the park's cooperative agreements. The park's establishing legislation provides an additional authority for entering into cooperative agreements with ". . . the owners of properties of natural, historical, or cultural significance . . . for the preservation and interpretation of such properties."

Opportunities for agency involvement under these authorities might result in substantial long-term commitments of funding and personnel to state and local governments and private sector entities. Agency involvement

with technical assistance, restoration, and interpretation could result in obligations for management services, program implementation, and incremental financial assistance — all of which are specifically authorized by the park's enabling legislation.

These cooperative agreements, while few in number, constitute a potentially escalating commitment that warrants, and therefore requires, increased levels of management oversight and quality control by the regional office. Cooperative agreements deriving from the park's enabling legislation will also undergo review and concurrence by the Delta Region Preservation Commission.

Guidance for use of cooperative agreements is threefold. Controls will derive from the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act, the park's enabling legislation (or similar statute), and the park's general management plan, as amended. The following guidelines for cooperative agreements provide a basis for consistency and conformance in the use of cooperative agreements that commit agency funds, personal services, technical assistance, or any other in-kind rendering of governmental support.

Cooperative Agreement Guidelines

Cooperative agreements will not be used for purposes of establishing a new operational unit of the park that involves construction and/or the assignment of NPS personnel unless the proposed action has undergone appropriate evaluation for feasibility, suitability, National Environmental Policy Act and resource significance, and received written approval of the regional director.

All cooperative agreements will contain a description of the intended action sufficient to clearly establish the government's "substantial interest" in the proposed action and its intended result.

Cooperative agreements and subagreements related thereto will commit no obligation of funds beyond amounts available within the single fiscal year coterminous with the subagreement, and under no circumstances obligate funds for future fiscal years.

Cooperative agreements will contain provisions for the National Park Service to have the right of access at reasonable times for purposes of monitoring performance of stipulated actions, and for purposes of visitor use and interpretation where appropriate.

Evaluation Criteria for New Resource Additions

Since 1982 a variety of resources have been either proposed for inclusion or have been added to Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. To ensure that future resources considered for addition are properly evaluated, this general management plan provision will form a basic guiding process for adding new resources to the park. It should be noted that the following criteria do not apply to the establishment of a new unit of the national park system, but rather to a proposed addition to an existing national park unit.

For a particular site or area to be considered for addition to Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, it must be evaluated against the following characteristics.

The considered resource(s) must

- be located within Louisiana's Mississippi River Delta region
- directly relate to the park purpose
- require federal assistance to ensure preservation

INTRODUCTION

- not duplicate other programs, preservation efforts, or representations of culture in the Mississippi Delta region
- not duplicate resources or programs provided by other park cooperative agreements
- undergo review and concurrence of the Delta Region Preservation Commission

Once an area or site meets the above criteria, it will then be evaluated against suitability and feasibility standards contained in *Criteria for Parklands*. These standards are crafted for purposes of adding resources to an existing park unit.

To be suitable for inclusion in the park, an area or site must represent a natural or a cultural theme that is not already adequately represented in the park. Adequacy of representation will be determined on a case-by-case basis, comparing the proposed site or area to other resources within Jean Lafitte in terms of character, quality, or combination of resources and opportunities for public enjoyment. Consideration will also be given to appropriate levels of management being available through agencies other than National Park Service.

To be feasible as an addition, an area's natural system or historic setting must be of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure long-term protection of the resource and to accommodate public use. Such a resource must also have potential for efficient administration at a reasonable cost. Important feasibility factors include land-ownership, acquisition costs, access, threats to the resource, and staffing or development requirements.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The following management objectives accommodate changes in the past 10 years. They may continue to be refined as the *Statement for Management* is reviewed and approved.

Management, Administration, and Support

Management will

effectively coordinate, control, and support the operation of several satellite units

coordinate all internal and external park activities with appropriate local, state, and federal agencies; citizen's organizations; and quasi-public agencies

avoid duplication of programs, facilities, and activities through cooperative agreements for such operations as law enforcement, fire suppression, and management of hunting activities

assist in the preservation and accessibility of significant properties and activities through cooperative agreements with agencies and organizations whose programs parallel the objectives of the park

coordinate with the Delta Region Preservation Commission the selection, development, and interpretation of cooperative sites

develop programs via cooperative agreements that are relevant to the regional theme of the park

Interpretation and Visitor Use

Management will

communicate to visitors an interpretive theme that addresses the relationships between the Delta environment, the development of cultural diversity, and the outward manifestations of the regional cultural character

put park visitors in contact with the contemporary and traditional cultures of resident populations

enable visitors to experience and understand the Delta environment

orient visitors at all park units to regional sites and programs

provide interpretive opportunities in cooperation with regional transportation providers

promote and support environmental and cultural heritage educational programs and maintain liaison with schools and other organizations with similar purposes

provide opportunities for outdoor recreational activities that are appropriate to the primary mandates of preservation and interpretation of the park

ensure accessibility and facilitate enjoyment of park resources by visitors with disabilities and other special populations

Visitor Protection and Safety

Management will

protect visitors through provision of emergency services, including patrol, search and rescue, and information in all NPS-operated units

ensure visitor awareness of hazards to their health, safety, and property

minimize risks to visitor health and safety

stress public safety in design and construction of facilities

Natural Resources Management

Management will

recognize the regional ecosystem context of park units and coordinate with other resource management entities

establish baseline data for understanding ecosystems and for developing natural resource management programs

protect representative natural communities

establish or maintain native wildlife populations representative of natural conditions

manage the Barataria Preserve unit as a natural area

determine the role of fire in the natural ecosystem and establish a fire management program

manage hunting, fishing, and trapping as stipulated in the legislation

Cultural Resources Management

Management will

assist cultural groups in maintaining their heritage

provide contextual background for the cultural resources of the park by establishing baseline data through research and surveys

preserve sites and structures of or directly related to the park

encourage and participate in the collection and preservation of information on regional cultures and cultural practices as appropriate to the mission of the park

accomplish these objectives in close cooperation and coordination with the cultural groups affected by using the federal consultation process

INTRODUCTION

Planning, Development, and Transportation

Management will

provide facilities needed for public use, resource protection, and safe and efficient management of the park

seek to develop an economical and efficient transportation system to and between the various park units through cooperation with local and regional transportation entities

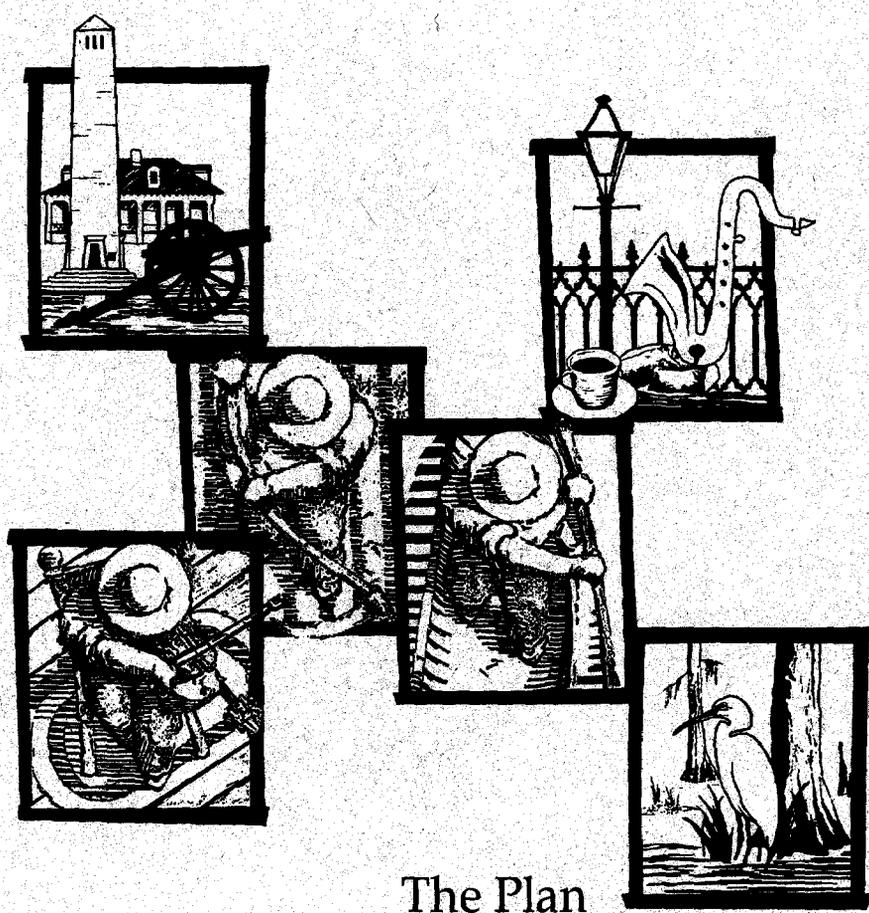
facilitate visits by special populations with the assistance of schools, churches, and public service organizations

Land Resource Protection

Management will

conduct studies and research to ensure that appropriate resources are identified and then included in the system

acquire needed interests in lands or otherwise provide for control, protection, and management of resources and for public access and circulation



The Plan



THE PLAN

The concepts, actions, and future studies needed to both fulfill the revised legislative mandate for Jean Lafitte and to carry the park into the next century are described below. The proposals are based on the direction outlined in the 1982 *General Management Plan* and address the events, issues, and concerns discussed under the "Purpose of and Need for the Plan" section. This plan will direct the National Park Service to undertake actions to enhance resource protection and to refine and expand the scope of park visitor experiences.

Certain unit improvements, an evaluation of a multicultural center to interpret the cultures of the remaining ethnic groups of the Mississippi Delta Region, better resources management, and a transportation study are proposed under this amendment.

PARKWIDE VISITOR USE AND DEVELOPMENT

The sites within the units of Jean Lafitte are dispersed throughout southern Louisiana, so connecting the distinct areas and providing a composite visitor experience has been difficult to achieve. As funds become available, a transportation study is proposed to determine if these sites can be linked and if a transportation system is feasible within the park.

Transportation services will provide visitors easier access to the dispersed units and sites where cultural events are traditionally held. Services will remain flexible because cooperative agreements and programs may change over time. A variety of transportation modes may be used, including shuttle buses, railroads, boats, public transit, charter service, and private automobiles. Private cars will be the primary mode of travel over the short term, but a shuttle bus system now operates within the French Quarter, and Chalmette is accessible by tour boats from the French

Quarter. Many regional sites are also accessible via a variety of boat and bus tours. The park will work with regional transportation providers to provide effective and efficient transportation services.

The theme of the park will emphasize the contributions of Delta peoples and the Delta environment to a nationally unique regional character. The historic roles of the region's ethnic groups, their influence on the contemporary culture, and current status and activities would be included. Diverse traditions and aspects of expressive culture, such as music, art, crafts, and architecture, will be interpreted.

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve is not a typical national park in which the federal government owns and manages most of the resources. Instead at Jean Lafitte, the federal government and local organizations work cooperatively in keeping the natural, cultural, and historical heritage of this region vital and in providing a cohesive interpretive program.

The National Park Service will enter into cooperative agreements with individuals, organizations, and agencies to meet the objectives of preserving natural resources and of assisting in the perpetuation of cultural traditions and activities and encouraging greater appreciation of cultural diversity. Cooperative sites and programs will be selected on the basis of resource significance and how well they demonstrate the history, change, and/or continuity of the culture. How they supplement the park interpretive story above and beyond what is presented in the NPS-operated units will also be a factor.

NPS involvement in cooperative units will include recognition of a site in the visitor orientation program, participation in presentation of interpretive programs, sponsorship of festivals or other exhibitions, technical

assistance for preservation of resources and development of visitor use facilities, or other arrangements as appropriate and mutually beneficial. The National Park Service will also assist groups requesting help in recording or maintaining aspects of their culture and in interpreting natural and cultural resources of the area; attempts will be made to minimize NPS efforts from affecting the content or nature of the group's activities. Many park experiences will center around cooperative sites and programs.

Visitors to the park will have the opportunity to experience the contributions of Delta cultures to a nationally unique regional character. Each unit will present its own part of the cultural diversity story, including the historic roles of the region's ethnic groups, its influence in the contemporary culture, its interaction with the natural environment of the Delta, and its current activities.

Each NPS-operated unit will provide visitor orientation to all park and cooperative units. A contact center in the French Quarter will continue to serve as a primary orientation point because the French Quarter is a regional tourism center.

The park will interpret legends and stories associated with Jean Lafitte and his Baratarians, as appropriate.

LAND PROTECTION STRATEGIES

Land protection strategies for park areas are included in the 1984 *Land Protection Plan*, which serves as a companion document to the amended plan. The 1984 plan will be updated.

The establishing legislation created two management categories within the Barataria Preserve unit boundary — an 8,600-acre core area to be acquired in fee and a park protection zone of approximately 11,400 acres north of the core to remain in private ownership subject to locally enacted guidelines for protection of core area values.

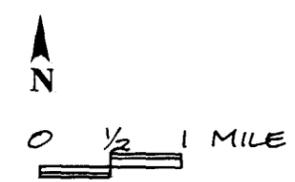
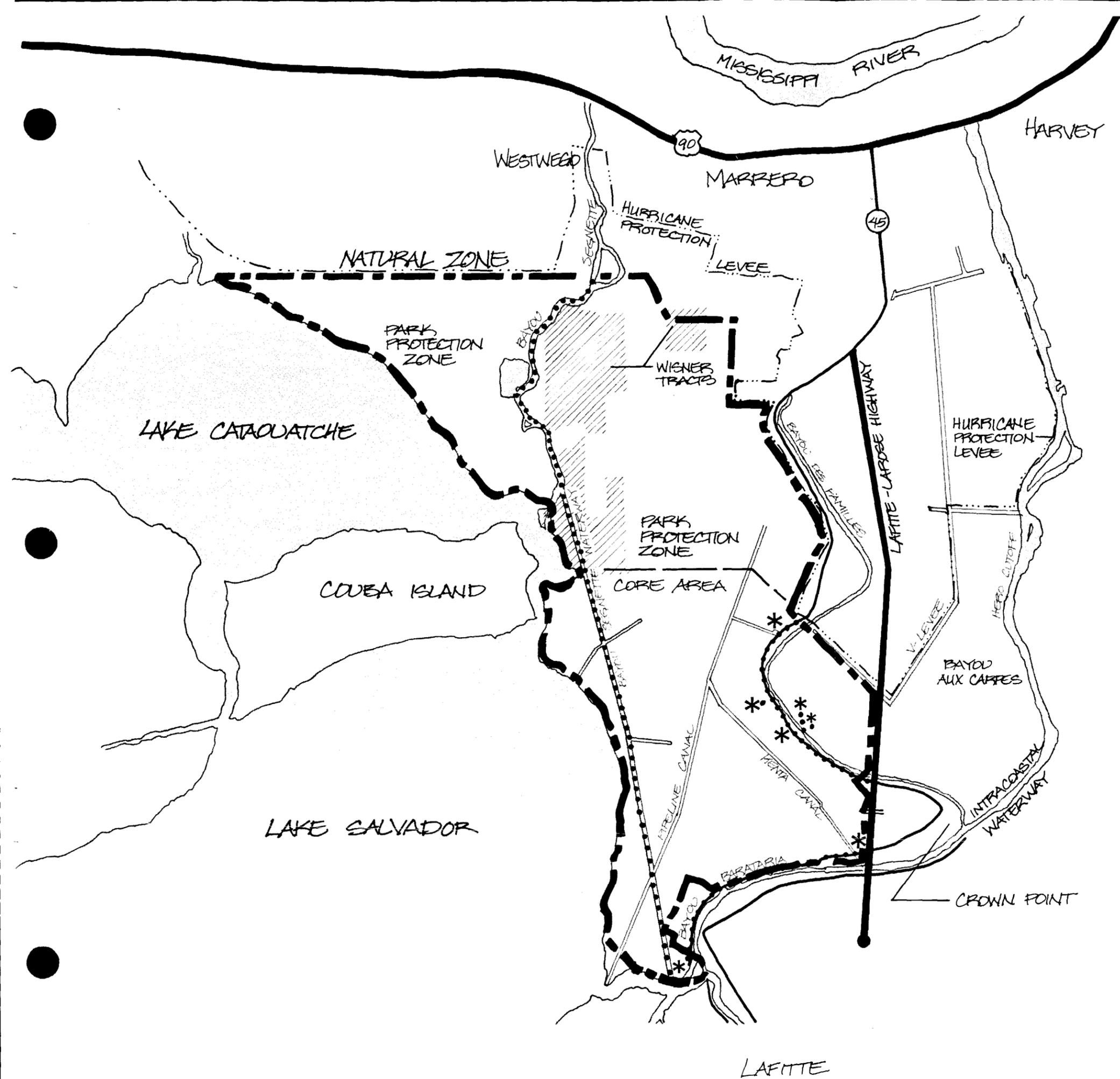
Guidelines to manage the park protection zone for protection of core area values were developed by the National Park Service in consultation with the state and with Jefferson Parish, the governing authority responsible for implementation of these guidelines. On May 9, 1984, the Jefferson Parish Council declined to adopt the guidelines. The establishing legislation authorized the secretary of interior to acquire property within the park protection zone in the event that the local government chose not to place restrictions on unsuitable development. Accordingly, acquisition of these properties is now underway. The National Park Service will gain management and law enforcement authority as a result of acquisition. The distinction between the core area and the park protection zone will diminish and cease to have management significance as the properties come under federal jurisdiction.

Approximately 205 acres on three tracts of state-owned property are located within the boundary. Under the legislation, the park cannot acquire public property, except by donation. The National Park Service will pursue the appropriate process for transfer of these parcels to the park.

Boundary Studies

A boundary study is proposed for the Barataria Preserve unit. (See Barataria Preserve Unit Management Zoning map.) The study will emphasize those areas that are ecologically and hydrologically connected to the park. Some small areas may be included in this study, however, the main areas of interest are as follows:

- Bayou aux Carpes Area — an area of approximately 3,000 acres containing high-quality examples of bottomland hardwood, baldcypress-water tupelo swamp, and freshwater marsh. The area is bounded by the V-shaped levee on the north, the intracoastal waterway on the east and southeast, Bayou des Familles on the south, and the Barataria Preserve on



-  Natural Zone
-  Park Development Zone
-  Access / Circulation Subzone

Management Zoning Barataria Preserve Unit

Jean Lafitte
National Historical Park and Preserve
U. S. Department of the Interior / National Park Service

467-20049C · DEC · DEC 94

ON MICROFILM



the west. The Bayou aux Carpes wetlands originally comprised the entire drainage east of the Bayou des Familles ridge. Though this wetland system is bisected by the highway along the present boundary, both sides are ecologically and hydrologically interconnected. Because of this interdependence, the natural integrity of both parts is contingent upon the preservation of the whole.

- Upper Bayou Segnette Area — Because the hurricane protection levee will essentially form a boundary along the north and east sides of the Barataria Preserve unit, any associated land protection issues will also be examined along with the study of recreation potential. The northern boundary of the unit may need to be adjusted to correspond to the levee's alignment and to protect resource management values and recreational uses in the intervening area of approximately 3,000 acres. These properties, up to and adjoining the levee on the floodside, may be acquired to preclude any adverse land uses. For that portion of the boundary already adjoining the levee corridor along Louisiana Highway 45 (LA 45), a strategy will be developed for acquisition of the undeveloped West Jefferson Levee District properties lying between the park boundary and the newly constructed hurricane protection levee.

Oil and Gas Rights

Oil and gas rights will remain in private ownership unless acquired with owner consent. The National Park Service will allow the exercise of these rights, as provided in the enabling legislation and subject to NPS mineral management regulations and conditions to be specified in individual plans of operation. An environmental assessment will be prepared with each plan of operation.

Recreational Camps

The park's land protection plan provides guidance on the management of camps within the Barataria Preserve unit. These camps are generally cabins that are accessed by water only and used for recreational purposes. Camps are compatible with park purposes in numbers that do not adversely affect water quality and where there is no conflict with general public use. The park will manage camps within its jurisdiction according to the provisions in the land protection plan and park guidelines. Of the 200 camps within the Barataria Preserve boundary, more than half are on lands administered by the city of New Orleans as part of a bequest from the Wisner Foundation (see Wisner Foundation Tract).

PARTNERSHIP PROPOSALS

Big Oak Island

The 1982 plan proposed a role for the park in preservation and interpretation to be achieved through easement or cooperative agreement. A series of title transfers and eventual bankruptcy of the landowners has deterred progress toward realizing these goals. The adjacent land, containing the related Little Oak Island archeological site, has been designated as Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge. The creation of the refuge has presented an opportunity for the park to enter into a partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service for the protection and interpretation of Big Oak Island. The National Park Service is seeking an agreement by which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will acquire Big Oak Island as part of the refuge. The National Park Service will provide technical assistance for preservation and interpretation. This partnership will provide maximum protection of the resource by the most practical and cost-effective means available. In the event that Big Oak Island cannot be protected as part of the Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge, the National Park

Service will seek congressional authorization to acquire the archeological site through other acquisition means.

Couba Island

In keeping with the legislation authorizing the park, and as outlined in the 1982 plan, Couba Island was studied so the National Park Service could provide "a statement setting forth the actions which have been and should be taken to assure appropriate protection, interpretation, and management . . . of Couba Island." Accordingly, the National Park Service recommends the following:

Though Couba Island remains in private ownership, the National Park Service may enter into a partnership to better affect management of resources that have an important ecological connection to the park. Or, the National Park Service may seek authority to acquire the property through purchase or donation, depending upon the results of further study.

Wisner Foundation Tract

Within the boundary of the park are five tracts of land, totalling approximately 1,960 acres, belonging to the Wisner Trust Foundation and its principal trustee, the city of New Orleans. The National Park Service is precluded by legislation from purchasing public property, and the city of New Orleans is precluded by the terms of the Wisner bequest from any form of sale or donation of the property until at least 2014.

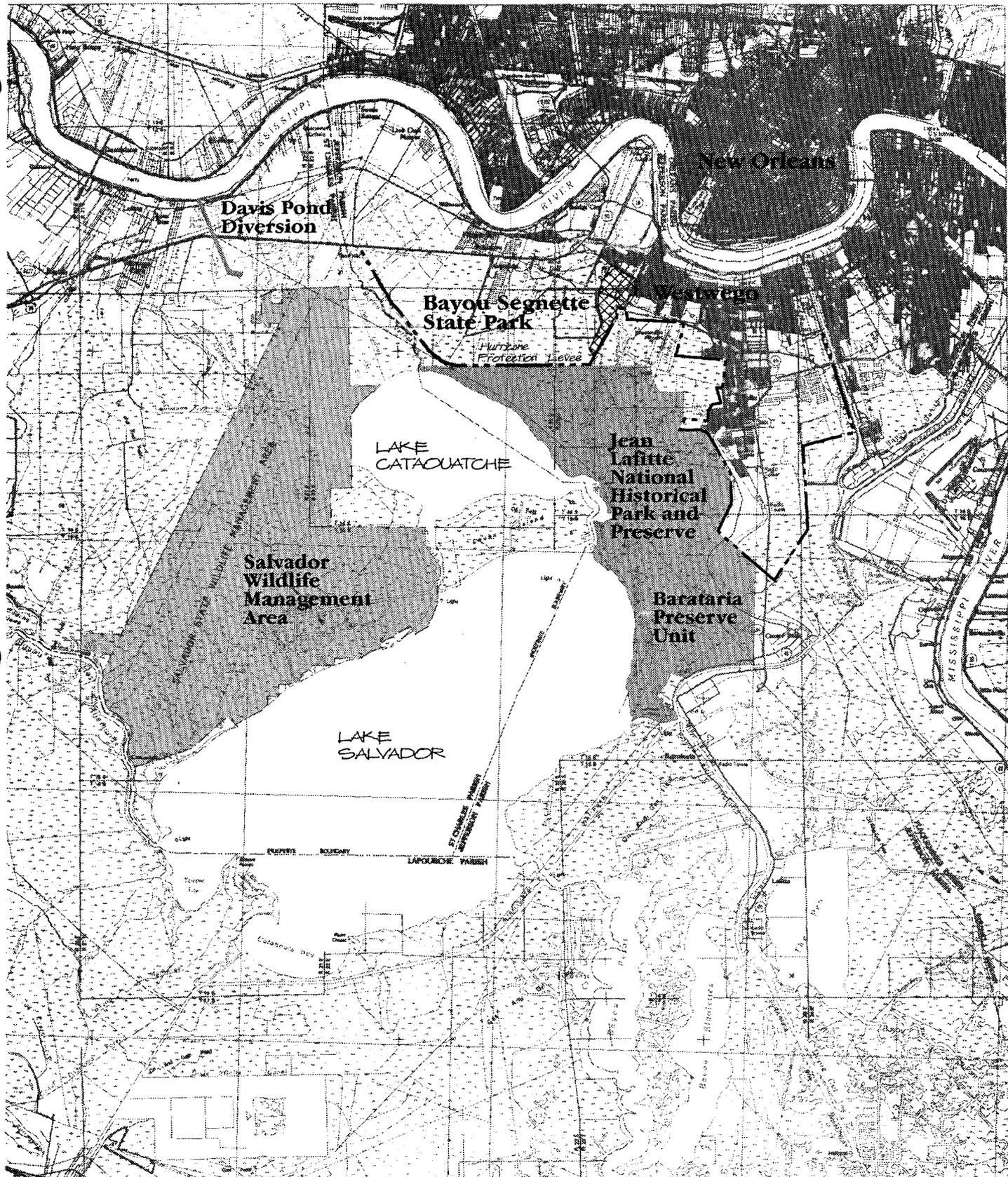
A partnership through cooperative agreement will be sought with the Wisner Foundation for compatible visitor use, resource protection, and campsite regulations, which include refuse, garbage and sewage control, for campsites administered by the City of New Orleans.

Lake Salvador Cooperative Resources and Recreation Planning Province

The wetlands and waterways surrounding Lake Salvador, including the Barataria Preserve unit, have evolved in recent years into a major recreational area for greater New Orleans and the lower Mississippi Delta (see Lake Salvador Cooperative Resources and Recreation Planning Province map). The area forms a mosaic of different landownership patterns, with overlapping management authorities shared by several different federal, state, and private entities.

Major recreational activities include fishing, boating, hunting, hiking, waterskiing, camping, picnicking, and wildlife viewing. Several interagency efforts are also underway near Lake Salvador to restore and protect wetlands. The lake area lies approximately 15 miles from Louisiana's largest population center, yet retains much of its primitive character.

In addition to the Barataria Preserve unit, the Lake Salvador area includes Bayou Segnette State Park, the state's most popular water-oriented park, and Lake Salvador Wildlife Management Area (31,000 acres). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is constructing a hurricane protection levee in the area from Harvey Canal to the community of Westwego. Through the consultation process, the National Park Service has been involved in the design of the levee and has been successful in mitigating some of the adverse impacts the levee potentially will have had on the park. Currently, the National Park Service is assisting the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in determining the recreational potential of the levee corridor. The levee forms the northeastern boundary of the Barataria Preserve unit and links the unit with Bayou Segnette State Park, other local public resources, and, by ferry, the city of New Orleans. If properly developed, the levee could facilitate recreational opportunities in the area such as hiking, bicycling, picnicking, and fishing, as well as natural and cultural resource interpretation.



Lake Salvador Cooperative Resources and Recreation Planning Province

ON MICROFILM

Jean Lafitte
National Historical Park and Preserve
U. S. Department on the Interior / National Park Service
467-20061-DSC-Oct 94

The Davis Pond Diversion Project in St. Charles Parish is another public effort under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the Lake Salvador area. The project is dedicated to diversion of fresh-water from the Mississippi River into wetlands along the northern perimeter of Lake Cataouatche, an extension of Lake Salvador north of Couba Island. This massive water diversion project is designed to revitalize wetlands and waterways that have been cut off from the natural flow of water and sediments from the Mississippi River by flood control levees.

The Barataria Preserve unit has also directly benefitted from interagency cooperation on the Bayou Segnette Waterway. A wave erosion barrier has been constructed along the waterway through a joint agreement among the National Park Service, the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, Jefferson Parish, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The National Park Service will pursue a partnership with Jefferson Parish and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources for the purposes of long-term maintenance of the wave erosion barrier protecting park resources.

Given this record of interagency cooperation, the National Park Service will explore the potential with the parishes, the state of Louisiana, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for formalizing a partnership agreement for public recreation and resources management in the Lake Salvador area.

PARK UNIT ACTIONS

Since the 1982 plan, the Barataria Preserve, New Orleans (former French Quarter), and Acadian units have become operational. The Chalmette unit was operational when the park was established. As mentioned in the previous section, Big Oak Island is being considered for acquisition by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge.

Barataria Preserve Unit (Formerly the Barataria Unit)

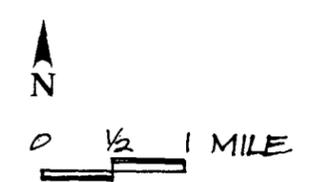
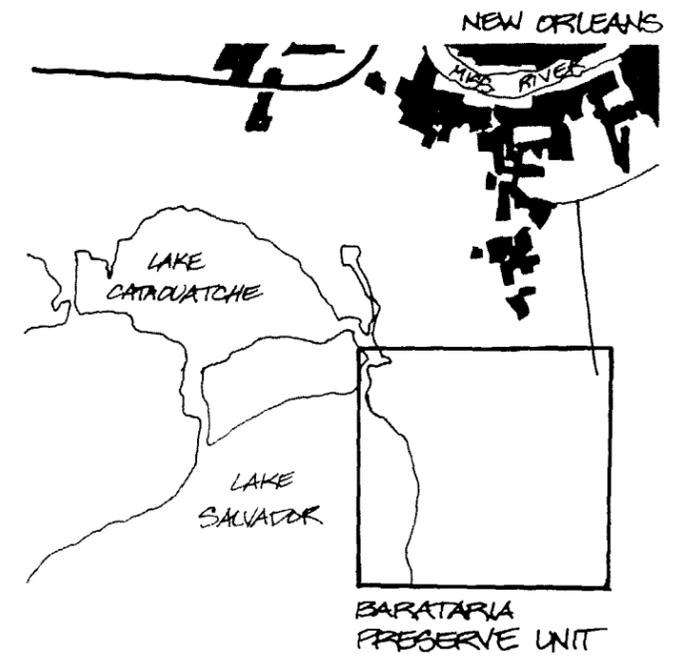
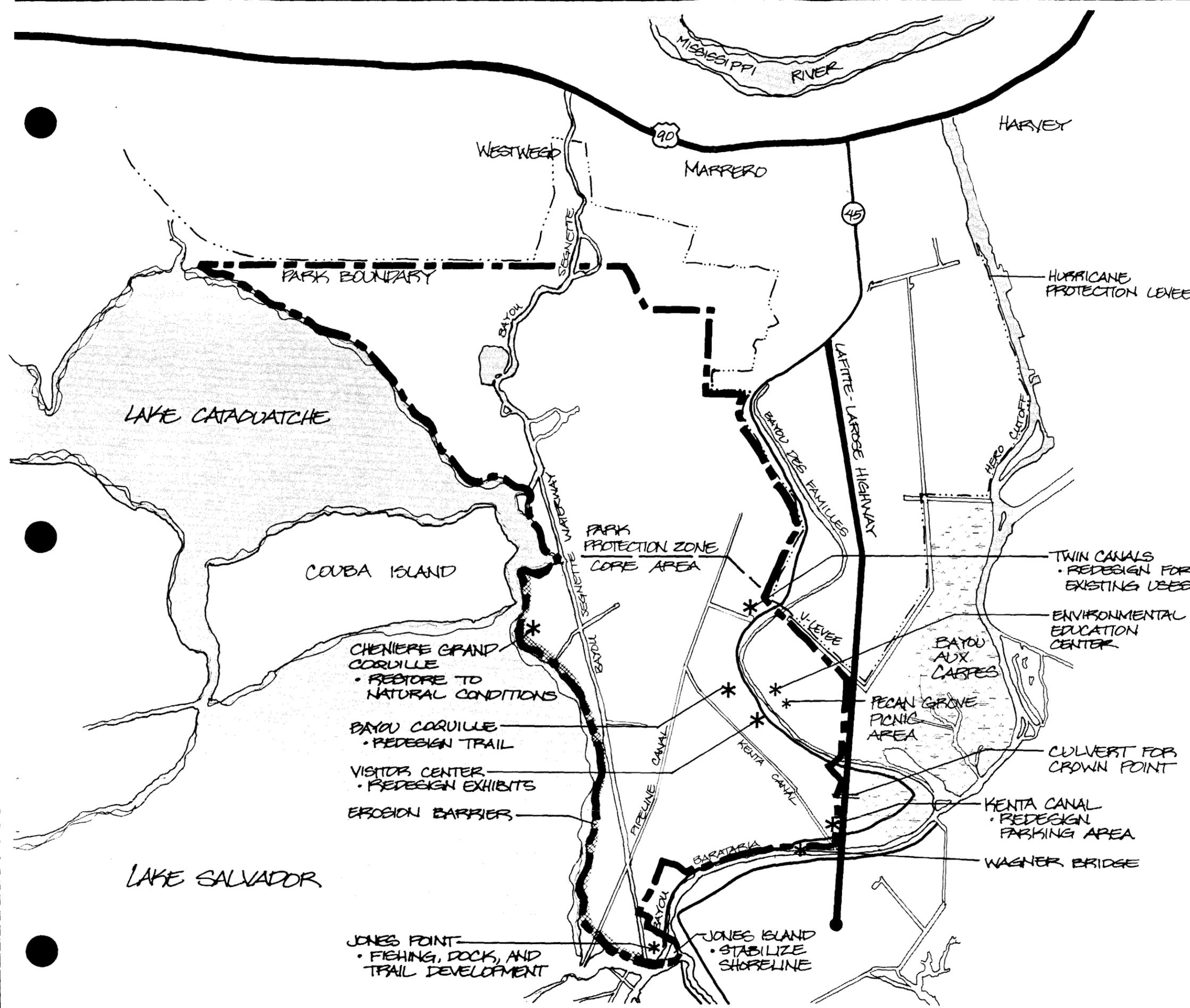
The enabling legislation referred to the preserve portion of the park as the Barataria Marsh unit. Because the preserve contained important habitat components in addition to marsh, the 1982 plan simplified the name to Barataria unit. Because Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve is unique in the national park system in being both a historical park and a preserve, the appropriate name is Barataria Preserve unit.

Visitor Use, Interpretation, and Development. As proposed in the 1982 plan, a staffed interpretive center in the Barataria Preserve unit has been completed. It provides information, orientation, and interpretation highlighting the relationship between the Delta and its uses, especially the effect of natural and human-caused changes in the Delta ecosystem on local cultures. The facility also has an NPS office and adjacent maintenance space.

A day-use parking area and trailhead have been developed adjacent to the interpretive facility in the Barataria Preserve unit. Trailheads have also been developed at Twin Canals, Bayou Coquille, and the Pecan Grove. Twin Canals, Kenta Canal, and Bayou des Familles have canoe put-ins.

An environmental education center has been developed east of Bayou des Familles in the Pecan Grove area of the Barataria Preserve unit, along with general use picnic areas.

Designated Use Areas. Since the 1982 plan, actions have been taken to provide a higher level of public safety and visitor appreciation of the resource through closure of certain waterways to motorized boats, and identifying areas that are open to hunting, trapping, and other resource extraction activities. Visitor safety and impacts of uses on park resources and visitors will be monitored. Management of uses will be modified accordingly, including potential additional closures.



----- Hurricane Protection Levee

Development Concept Plan

Barataria Preserve Unit

Jean Lafitte
 National Historical Park and Preserve
 U. S. Department of the Interior / National Park Service

467-20060-DEC-JAN 95

ON MICROFILM

JONES POINT
 • FISHING, DOCK, AND TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

JONES ISLAND
 • STABILIZE SHORELINE

EROSION BARRIER

VISITOR CENTER
 • REDESIGN EXHIBITS

BAYOU CORUILLE
 • REDESIGN TRAIL

CHENIERE GRAND CORUILLE
 • RESTORE TO NATURAL CONDITIONS

CULVERT FOR CROWN POINT

KENTA CANAL
 • REDESIGN PARKING AREA

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

TWIN CANALS
 • REDESIGN FOR EXISTING USES

PECAN GROVE PICNIC AREA

BAYOU AUX CARPES

V-LEVEE

PARK PROTECTION ZONE CORE AREA

HURRICANE PROTECTION LEVEE

LAFITTE-LAROSE HIGHWAY

BAYOU DES FAMILLES

MARRERO

WESTWEGD

PARK BOUNDARY

LAKE CATATATCHE

COUBA ISLAND

LAKE SALVADOR

LAFITTE



The actions described below are being proposed under this amendment to ensure a high-quality visitor experience and better resource protection. (See Development Concept Plan — Barataria Preserve Unit map.)

Visitor Center — In addition to the past emphasis on the interrelationship between human communities and the natural environment, natural resource management will receive increased attention in the Barataria Preserve unit. Consistent with that direction, interpretive media will be redesigned, and the existing visitor center will be evaluated for adequacy. New exhibits on deltaic wetlands, archeological artifacts and the area's cultural history will be included. A movie that is tailored for the Barataria Preserve unit and its natural values will also be produced. A trail segment will be designated for a self-guided nature walk, and a recyclable trail guide will be available for visitors.

Jones Point — The remnant shipyard will be removed and the site restored. After the cleanup is finished, access to the water will be provided for fishing. A picnic area, short trail, and fishing dock will be constructed. Wayside exhibits will be provided to interpret natural features and cultural responses to environmental changes.

Trail Plan/Environmental Assessment — The draft Barataria Trail Plan will be finalized and trails will be constructed. Completion of the trail network will allow for improved traffic and pedestrian flow patterns, with a preference for loop trails where appropriate. Due consideration will be given to avoid close proximity and overlapping visitor impacts to waterways that serve as canoe trails. Visitors will gain access to previously inaccessible wetland habitats, allowing the park to broaden its interpretive effort. The cultural history of the natural levee of Bayou des Familles will be interpreted by upgrading the existing trailhead display. Additionally, the park will develop a self-guiding trail brochure that will be equally meaningful for trail visitors and those who are

unable to access this semiprimitive trail that is often flooded.

Jones Island/Gulf Intracoastal Waterway — The shoreline will be stabilized and protected against erosion caused by heavy boat traffic on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and the Barataria Waterway.

Twin Canals — The abandoned pumping facilities will be removed, and better facilities will be provided for recreational activities. An accessible fishing facility will be provided. A canoe launch, trailhead, an improved parking lot, and storage and launch facilities for NPS watercraft will also be provided.

Barataria Environmental Education Center — Two additions to the environmental education center might be undertaken. First, as the center begins to be frequented by school groups and others, facilities might be needed to accommodate group picnicking. A group site will be developed between the center and the existing comfort station. Primitive overnight facilities, such as tent camps or equivalent, could serve to complement the educational experience. Such facilities will be developed, according to a study that is completed for location, purpose, capacity, and size. The proposed project will be subject to available funds and provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act.

Wagner Bridge Area — The docking facility proposed in the 1982 plan will not be constructed. A study will be conducted to evaluate future use of the site, including use of interpretive waysides.

Bayou Coquille Trail and Parking Area — The nature trail will be enhanced by additional exhibits interpreting the area's natural and cultural resources. Any future trail modifications will be redesigned to lessen effects on nearby archeological sites.

Cheniere Grand Coquille — Because of the significance of the archeological resources at this site, the formerly proposed boat dock

THE PLAN

and picnic area will not be developed. The site will be managed to protect archeological resources from further disturbance.

Kenta Canal Canoe Area — To reduce safety hazards, a new parking lot for this site will be designed to safely accommodate parking.

Westwego — Construction of the information station/boat docking facility proposed in the 1982 plan may be postponed until there is a demonstrated demand to enter the Barataria Preserve unit from the north. However, a ranger station may be established along the Bayou Segnette Waterway near the northern edge of the park protection zone to serve the Barataria Preserve unit.

Navigational Hazards — Casings from abandoned oil and gas wells that remain in the Barataria Preserve unit will be removed. Although all wells were plugged upon abandonment, in many cases well casings, some with wood pylons surrounding them, remain, posing a navigational hazard.

Navigation Canals — Federal navigation projects administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers include the Bayou Segnette Waterway, within the unit boundary, and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, forming the southern boundary of the unit. Because these waterways predate the creation of the park, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers retains a superior jurisdiction over matters of navigation. This situation poses a special requirement on the park to seek accommodation with the Corps on matters within their jurisdiction, while ensuring the protection of park resources and the enhancement of the visitor experience. The park will continue to work towards minimizing or eliminating navigational channel dredging within park boundaries.

Natural Resources Management. Some of the natural resources management activities approved in 1982 were implemented and are described below; however, the direction established at that time has been supple-

mented by more refined resource management protection.

The natural resources of the Barataria Preserve unit will be recognized as part of the larger Barataria Basin ecosystem, thus cooperative research and planning with other natural resources management entities will be emphasized. Because natural deltaic processes have been largely interrupted, subsidence and erosion threaten the region's long-term stability, and the National Park Service is working in concert with other agencies and adjacent communities to develop solutions.

A program has been implemented to control exotic water plants. Surface waters in visitor use areas are kept clear of exotic water plants where possible. Techniques will continue to be explored to control exotic vegetation elsewhere in the park.

To understand the ecosystem and to develop a natural resources management program, baseline data will be established. Programs will be undertaken to protect representative natural communities and wildlife populations representative of natural conditions. Traditional use such as hunting, fishing, crabbing, and trapping will be managed in cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries as stipulated in the legislation. The natural resources component of the park resources management plan will provide an ongoing comprehensive management, monitoring, and research program that will further specify resource problems and actions to mitigate them. One such resource management action is restoration of the natural hydrology as feasible.

The natural environment in transition will be studied to gain an understanding of the changing conditions and the response of the ecosystem. Research results will be used to protect the natural resources of the preserve.

An overall ecosystem study will describe the relationships between the biological and physical characteristics of the representative

natural communities, in particular the influence of water levels. Studies of hunting, trapping, and fishing will attempt to identify the level of harvest to assist management in maintaining populations representative of natural conditions. Geomorphological characteristics of the landscape and natural and human-caused processes such as erosion, subsidence, and saltwater intrusion will be analyzed. Natural and human-caused influences will also be investigated in a hydrologic study of natural waterways, canals, sheet flow, and urban runoff; hydrologic units will be identified. Water quality has been intensively studied to establish baseline data, and continuous future monitoring will identify trends.

An expanded natural resources protection role at the Barataria Preserve unit will be undertaken with new programs, policies, and studies to include the following:

Freshwater Marsh Management and Protection — In keeping with the expanded natural resources emphasis in the Barataria Preserve unit, the National Park Service is concluding a three-year scientific study of the area which will simulate hydrology, vegetation, water quality and other ecosystem processes under a variety of alternative management schemes. The study, which is being funded through the Natural Resources Protection Program (NRPP) for \$300,000 over three years, will develop a computer-based predictive model that will be available to assist in wetlands management. The NRPP predictive model will simulate hydrology, vegetation, water quality, and other ecosystem processes under a variety of alternative management conditions. Additionally, the broadened scope of the Lake Salvador Cooperative Resource and Recreation Planning Province will allow NRPP data to be integrated into an extended resource base, including Lake Cataouatche and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion Project.

Overall, the objective of the park's Freshwater Marsh Management and Protec-

tion Program will be to reestablish to the greatest practicable degree the natural flow of freshwater and sediment in support of the park's wetland environment. This will include use of newly established sources of sediment and freshwater, such as those deriving from the Davis Pond Diversion Project.

Stormwater runoff from the community of Crown Point currently flows into the Barataria Preserve unit under the Lafitte-LaRose Highway and into the southeast quadrant of the core area. The park will explore all possible means by which this stormwater can be diverted to the Intra-coastal Waterway, thus reducing urban runoff entering the preserve. This action will be coordinated with appropriate Jefferson Parish authorities.

Park management will also investigate the possibility of enhancing natural waterflow between the Bayou Aux Carpes wetland and the Barataria Preserve unit that was disrupted by the placement of fill as the berm for Louisiana Highway 3134. Waterflow, the movement of nutrients, and the passage of estuarine organisms are currently restricted by culverts, and a new design allowing freer movement will be evaluated. This evaluation will be conducted in cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development.

Shoreline Protection — Wave action from Lake Salvador has caused erosion along the lakeshore on the west boundary of the Barataria Preserve unit. While erosion is a natural process, its impact upon the preserve's fragile marshes is far greater than it will be in a natural system. This is because land-building processes in the Delta have been halted by the leveeing of the Mississippi River and the interruption of overbank flooding. No natural mechanism for replacing erosive losses now exists, and a barrier is needed to stem the disappearance of 30 feet per year of marsh along the shoreline. A partnership between the state of Louisiana and the federal government is

now underway to resolve the problem and provide long-term protection to the Barataria Preserve unit marsh. Funding is available to construct an erosion barrier, and federal action is expected to begin in 1995. The Corps of Engineers will prepare an environmental assessment. Additional shoreline protection along heavily used navigational channels, especially the Bayou Segnette Waterway and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, will be explored.

Nonnative Species Management — An exotic species management plan will be developed in accordance with NPS policy.

Cultural Resource Management. The management of cultural resources will continue as proposed in the 1982 plan.

Known archeological sites will be protected from vandalism and development impacts, but no general action will be taken to offset the submerging effects of basinwide subsidence beyond cooperative measures dealing with the regional environment. Emergency excavations to save critical archeological data might occur.

A cultural resources component of the park resources management plan will guide ongoing studies, ensuring that threatened resources will receive proper consideration and that maximum data fundamental to preservation, management, and interpretation will be gathered.

Human relationships with the Delta environment will be of greatest interest. Primary research emphasis will be on the ethnography, folkways, and economics of the prehistoric, historic, and contemporary peoples of the Barataria region, and the interrelationship between environment and cultural development. Related research will strive to learn more about their settlement patterns, types of occupation, and material culture.

Management Zoning. The increased emphasis on management of the natural

resources of the Barataria Preserve unit has caused some modification to the management zoning of the lands and waters contained in the Barataria Preserve unit.

Natural Zone — This zone comprises the bulk of the unit and covers most of the lands and waters of both the core area and the park protection zone.

Lands and waters in this zone will be managed to conserve natural resources, and visitor use developments are resource-oriented. Proposed developments will be confined to those essential for supporting visitor use: land trails, boardwalks, viewing platforms, canoe/pirogue trails, small boat docks, trailside interpretive displays, and signs. Allowable activities include hiking, picnicking, boating, fishing, birding, and hunting. It includes major land and water areas of the ridge, swamp, and marsh communities.

Park Development Zone — The development zone encompasses areas where park development or intensive use substantially alters the natural environment. The zone includes the necessary facilities for administering the park as well as facilities needed to serve the visiting public. The areas included are the interpretive center; administrative offices; maintenance yard; the environmental education center; Kenta Canal, Twin Canals, and Bayou des Familles canoe launches; Bayou Coquille, Twin Canals, and Pecan Grove trailheads; Twin Canals boatyard and accessible fishing facility; and Jones Point visitor use area.

Public roads, including LA 45 and 301, are part of the access/circulation subzone. The park's Christmas Road from LA 45 into the Pecan Grove area is included, as is Bayou Segnette Waterway, a major water thoroughfare in the park. Management in this subzone emphasizes the facilitation of vehicular and boat circulation on the above corridors.

New Orleans Unit (Formerly the French Quarter Unit)

A variety of resources have been recognized in the remainder of the city that offer potential experiences for visitors to Jean Lafitte. The role of the unit will be expanded to encompass a citywide interpretive, information, and orientation function, consistent with the management philosophy outlined in the 1982 plan and the urban initiative proposed by the National Park System Advisory Board. To reflect this expanded scope, the proper name is New Orleans unit. Other areas of the city will be evaluated for additional interpretive opportunities, while the French Quarter will remain the focus of the urban experience.

Visitor Use, Interpretation, and

Development. A staffed contact center has been established to orient visitors to the park units (NPS-operated and cooperative) and to present information on the opportunities for cultural observations in the French Quarter and in other Delta locations. Publication sales, transportation information, and French Quarter-oriented activities are centered here. The National Park Service, in association with area cultural groups, assists in organizing folk performances, such as cosponsoring expressive arts events in the French Quarter and the region.

The new visitor center at 419 Rue Decatur will offer an orientation point to encourage visitors to take advantage of opportunities to experience other public resources, interpretive features, and visitor attractions in the area. Many interpretive possibilities exist in the New Orleans unit. Existing programs would be complemented by programs relating to local cemeteries, the area's maritime resources, and the region's music. Education programs conducted as outreach programs will also be offered.

Consistent with an overall management plan, the National Park Service may provide spaces and opportunities in the French

Quarter for area groups to share with the general public their special activities.

Two affiliated sites operated under cooperative agreements are components of the urban experience at the park — the American-Italian Renaissance Foundation Museum in New Orleans and the Germanic-American cultural center in Gretna.

Cultural Resource Management. Cultural resources management in the French Quarter will involve research that is mission-oriented for the park interpretive theme. Research will be conducted to meet legislated mandates. All actions will be coordinated with regional preservation groups, particularly the Vieux Carré Commission.

If park activities occur in historic structures owned by the National Park Service, these facilities will be protected, and all treatment of the structures will follow NPS cultural resources management guidelines and the National Historic Preservation Act.

Chalmette Unit

Visitor Use and Development. As proposed in 1982, a visitor center has been constructed at Chalmette to tell the battle story and to serve visitors arriving by tour boat or car. The Beaugard house is being preserved on the exterior and adaptively used inside for interpretation of life in the house.

The historical significance of the Battle of New Orleans will continue to be emphasized, including diverse groups of the region involved in the battle. Expanded interpretive programs and living history demonstrations will be used to convey the importance of the events at Chalmette.

After visiting the battlefield, visitors could tour the Beaugard house. Interpretive exhibits will describe the house's history, architecture, and occupants. The original room arrangement on the second floor will be restored and the spaces will be used as

THE PLAN

meeting space for small public groups and as facilities for the unit's living history program.

The grasses on the battlefield are being mowed to resemble canefield stubble that was evident at the time of the battle. The portion of the site adjacent to the highway and railroad is being allowed to succeed naturally. Natural growth screens adjacent railroad and highway traffic and thereby enhances the historic experience desired.

The National Park Service will work with the levee authorities to rectify the current accessibility problems for visitors with disabilities who arrive via the Mississippi River tour boat. This action will be implemented as funds become available.

The Isleño Center in the community of St. Bernard commemorates the history and unique lifestyle of the Canary Islanders (Isleño) who immigrated to Louisiana in the late 18th century. This center is administered by the Chalmette unit through a cooperative agreement with St. Bernard Parish.

The historic structure used for the Isleño Center and the interpretive exhibits will be rehabilitated (see the Cultural Resources Management discussion below).

Natural Resources Management. Changes in resources management will be primarily in natural resources.

Mowing of the battlefield grasses to simulate rough field conditions is ongoing, as well as attempts to stop the deterioration of the live oak and pecan trees. Otherwise, natural resources management will rely on the responses of the natural resources to the environmental changes that affect the park unit.

Recent research has indicated that a wetland in the northern portion of the unit, which is being managed to allow natural succession, was a sugarcane field at the time of the battle. Despite the fact that the forest is a

nonhistorical element, it will be allowed to remain since it provides a visual screen and sound buffer between the battlefield and the transportation corridor to the north.

Air pollution and its effect on the unit's vegetation and cultural resources will be researched and monitored.

The National Park Service will work with St. Bernard Parish to develop a long-term strategy to preserve the historic setting of the battlefield and to ensure that land uses surrounding the Chalmette unit do not adversely affect the scene. Of particular interest is the approximately 40-acre parcel immediately to the northwest (upstream) side of the battlefield that separates the site from the Chalmette Slip industrial area. In cooperation with St. Bernard Parish the National Park Service will seek dedication of a sufficient amount of acreage of this tract to provide a vegetation screen. In the event that the parcel is threatened with incompatible uses, the National Park Service will seek acquisition of all or part of the property.

The National Park Service will support any efforts of St. Bernard Parish to relocate the sewage treatment facility away from the historic battlefield, where it is now located. Overhead powerlines will be placed underground. Waterlines have been provided for fire protection.

Cultural Resources Management. Cultural resources management will remain as discussed in the 1982 plan, except for expanded research on the Beaugard house, as discussed below.

Historical research activities will continue, focusing on refinements in the interpretation of the battle and pinpointing the locations of key sites associated with the New Orleans campaign of 1814-15. The mud rampart is a historical reconstruction intended to heighten the interpretive experience by enabling the visitor to visualize a key feature of the otherwise almost featureless battlefield landscape. Since the reconstruction of the

rampart took place, historical research, confirmed by archeological excavation, has revealed that the location and numbering of the batteries is inaccurate. A careful evaluation will be made to determine how these defects in the reconstructed rampart should be corrected.

The Beauregard house was constructed in 1833, 17 years after the Battle of New Orleans. This important transitional Louisiana riverhouse was extensively remodeled for use as a visitor center in 1957-58. Consequently, the historical and architectural importance of the building has never been properly interpreted. Research and investigation will be undertaken to develop a plan that will restore its architectural integrity and properly interpret the building's architectural evolution and historical significance.

At the Isleño Center, a preservation plan for the circa 1840 house, the grounds, and interpretive exhibits will be developed in cooperation with the parish.

Management Zoning. Since the 1982 plan, no significant changes have been made to the zoning for the lands of the Chalmette unit. A brief description of the revised zones for those properties owned by the National Park Service follows. (See Management Zoning — Chalmette Unit map.)

Cultural Resources Zone — This zone coincides with the boundary that delimits this national register property. Management emphasis will be on preservation, protection, and interpretation of the cultural resources and their settings.

There are three subzones. Resources included in the preservation subzone are the battlefield proper, the Rodriguez canal, the mud rampart, and the Beauregard house. The adaptive use subzone includes the two-story brick structure and one-story garage/carriage house located in the adjacent national cemetery; the former caretaker's residence serves as administrative offices;

and garage/carriage house serves as maintenance facilities. The Chalmette National Cemetery and the Chalmette Battlefield Monument are included in the commemoration subzone and will be managed to create a commemorative setting rather than a particular historic period.

Park Development Zone — This zone encompasses the areas where unit facilities and visitor use alters the cultural resources or setting. Facilities are provided for maintenance and operation of the unit and for visitor needs.

Three subzones are included under this zone. The maintenance area located in the national cemetery is included in the administrative subzone. The visitor facility subzone includes visitor use and interpretation provided at the visitor center and comfort station. Additional facilities may include an entrance wayside, interpretive structure, and river overlook. Unit roads, including the battlefield and cemetery entrances, the tour road, wayside pulloffs, and battlefield parking area, comprise the access/circulation subzone. The house will be used as a setting to interpret the lives of the people who live in the area, both before and after the battle.

Other Use Zones — Lands that are owned by St. Bernard Parish and used for a sewage disposal plant are included in the utilities subzone. The levee protection subzone consists of a manmade levee that abuts the unit's southern boundary adjacent to the Mississippi River.

Acadian Unit

Designated in 1988, the Acadian unit recognizes the contributions of the Acadian culture to the Mississippi Delta. Cultural centers have been developed at Eunice, Lafayette, and Thibodaux to recognize the contributions of Acadian culture to the Mississippi Delta's cultural diversity.

THE PLAN

The three cultural centers will continue to interpret the Acadian culture and other area cultures and offer a variety of programs for the visiting public. Over the next 10 years little is envisioned in the way of new development actions for the Acadian unit, other than minor refinements necessary to improve the visitor experience and operational efficiency.

Two affiliated sites operated under cooperative agreements that are components of the cultural experience of this unit are Chitimacha Tribal Cultural Center and Tunica-Biloxi Regional Indian Center.

PLANNING AND RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS

Broad objectives and general guidelines for visitor use and resources management programs are included in this general management plan amendment. To implement these general directions, a number of more specific action plans will be prepared. Action plans will include the following studies:

General Studies

Boundary Study/Environmental

Assessment. The Barataria Preserve unit boundary will be assessed, including potential boundary adjustments for the park protection zone and an evaluation of resources in the Bayou aux Carpes drainage.

Multicultural Interpretation Feasibility

Study. A special study will be conducted to develop and assess alternative methods of interpreting the diversity of cultures in the Mississippi Delta region. The feasibility study will explore the potential for a multicultural center.

Land Protection Plan. The 1984 land protection plan for the park will be updated.

Interpretive Plan. A new interpretive plan will be developed which will identify goals

and objectives for visitor experiences in the park. The plan will guide interpretive programs and media and will assess opportunities for partnerships for park interpretation with public and private entities.

Transportation Plan. A transportation plan will be prepared that will include an assessment of existing commercial and public transportation linkages among and within park units. The plan will identify opportunities for expanding or improving such linkages, particularly through partnerships with public and private carriers.

Cultural Resources Preservation Guide. A cultural resources preservation guide will be prepared to direct preservation maintenance activities for historic and ethnographic structures and other properties (e.g., grave markers, boats). The guide is a reference for programming, periodic inspection, and routine and cyclic maintenance.

Recreation Corridor Study. A feasibility study will assess the recreational opportunities along the Westwego to Harvey Canal hurricane protection levee. The Park Service is conducting this study for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to identify feasible alternatives for meeting study objectives.

Environmental Education Plan/

Environmental Assessment. A plan will be developed to address the need for overnight facilities and any addition to the environmental education center.

Resource Management Plan. The resources management plan is the programming and budgeting vehicle for specific research, monitoring, and management actions dealing with park cultural and natural resources. The plan contains a series of project statements for individual actions. Topics addressed by project statements will include the following cultural and natural resources studies:



Cultural Resource Studies

- an ethnographic overview and assessment to update the 1978 *Mississippi Delta Ethnographic Overview*
- a traditional use study of the Barataria Preserve unit to establish an ethnographic data base on traditional resource uses by residents and other local groups
- rapid ethnographic assessment studies in the Mississippi Delta region to determine the variety of community views on managing park resources and identify ethnographic resources
- ethnohistory studies, oral histories, and life histories of people and communities with traditional associations with park resources to identify interpretation materials, expressive cultures, and aspects of community life
- assessment and management of archeological resources in the Barataria Preserve unit
- historic resource studies of the Chalmette and Barataria Preserve units to identify and document properties potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places; the studies will also include a cultural resource base map identifying historic, ethnographic, and archeological resources for the units; the HRS for the Chalmette unit will include an inventory of associated regional sites and an investigation of a supposed mass grave of British soldiers; a historic base map will also be included for the Chalmette battlefield for January 1815 to guide to interpretation and development
- an administrative history of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

Parkwide Natural Resource Studies

- assessment of air quality and air pollution effects on cultural and natural resources and visitors' health
- assessment, monitoring, and management of vegetation communities, including wetlands
- assessment and control of exotic plants and animals
- establishment of a geographic information system (GIS)

Barataria Preserve Unit Natural Resource Studies

- assessment, monitoring, and management of water resources, including hydrology and water quality
- assessment of erosion, subsidence, and salinity changes and, to the extent practical, management of human-caused disturbances
- research on the role of fire and its effects
- assessment of the effects of hunting, trapping, and fishing and cooperation with the state of Louisiana to manage these activities
- inventory and monitoring of natural communities and populations

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS REQUIREMENTS

Proposed visitor use facilities such as parking areas and visitor access points at the Barataria Preserve Unit will require filling approximately 2 acres of wetlands. All development will also be located within the floodplain. There are no alternatives to locating these facilities within wetlands

THE PLAN

because wetlands are the dominant landform in Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve and are integral to the interpretive and recreational experience. Proposed facilities will enhance public enjoyment and understanding of wetland values and the critical role they play in maintaining a healthy ecosystem and their role in flood control. The adverse effects of filling will be mitigated to the extent possible. To meet NPS guidelines for complying with Executive Order 11990 and Executive Order 11988, statements of findings will be prepared for each development site at the time the development concept plan/environmental assessment is developed rather than with this document. Specific sites for proposed development have not been identified, therefore, a statement of findings will not accompany this plan.

A statement of findings for wetland compliance will be prepared for the following actions:

Constructing a fishing dock, trail and picnic area at Jones Point.

Constructing trails in the Barataria unit.

Stabilizing the Jones Island/Gulf Intracoastal shoreline.

Constructing fishing facilities, canoe launch, trailhead, parking lot, and storage facility at Twin Canals.

Constructing tent platforms and any addition to the Barataria Environmental Education Center.

Constructing a parking area at Kenta Canal canoe area.

Constructing a ranger station along the Bayou Segnette Waterway near the northern edge of the park.

Modifying Bayou Coquille trail.

A separate statement of findings for floodplain compliance will be prepared, or will be combined with the wetland statement of findings, for the following actions:

Constructing a storage facility at Twin Canals.

Constructing an addition to the Barataria Environmental Education Center.

Constructing a ranger station along the Bayou Segnette Waterway near the northern edge of the park.

Stabilizing the Jones Island/Gulf Intracoastal shoreline.

Constructing tent platforms near the environmental education center as long as they are determined to not be in a high hazard area.

The following actions are excepted actions under NPS Guidelines for implementing Executive Order 11988:

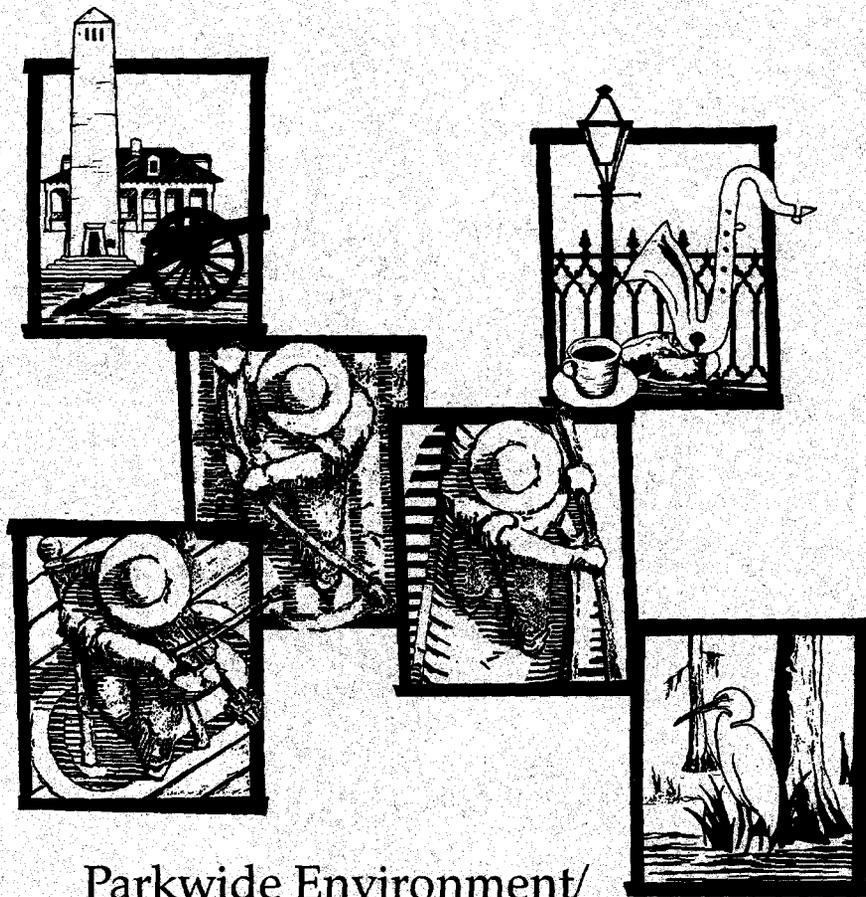
Constructing a canoe launch, trailhead, and parking lot at Twin Canals.

Constructing a fishing dock, trail, and picnic area at Jones Point.

Constructing trails in the Barataria Preserve unit.

Stabilizing the Jones Island shoreline.

Constructing parking areas at Kenta Canal.



Parkwide Environment/
Unit Descriptions



PARKWIDE ENVIRONMENT

The enabling legislation for Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve defined the region of concern as the Mississippi Delta. During the course of developing the 1982 *General Management Plan*, the area of concern was further defined to cover much of the southern half of Louisiana — from Alexandria south to the Gulf Coast, and from the Mississippi state line west to beyond Lafayette (see the Location map at the beginning of the document). As the mouth of the Mississippi River and the gateway to the interior of the North American continent, the region has long been a focus of economic, political, and cultural activities.

The Mississippi River drains the fourth largest basin in the world, and the wetlands of the Delta are among the most extensive and productive in the United States. Significant natural areas in the Delta region are home to unusual biological communities and rare species, and they exhibit unique geological formations.

Human use of the Delta occurred almost as soon as islands and streambanks formed, and the region is rich in archeological resources. Throughout history a variety of ethnic groups have exploited specific ecological habitats or socioeconomic niches. From these groups coalesced a unique regional culture that evolved in response to the Delta environment. The groups that came together in this regional melting pot retain much of their separate heritage, but it is their cultural blending which manifests itself in the region's diverse character. The present-day Delta population is engaged in a variety of economic activities, which are largely based on the region's natural resources. Major industries include petroleum and natural gas extraction, agriculture, fish and shellfish, river commerce, apparel manufacture, as well as travel and tourism.

Each unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve is described in the "Unit Descriptions" section that follows. Specific descriptions of each of the sites found in the units follow the general descriptions of each unit. Air and water quality is a resource topic for which the discussion encompasses the entire park area. Therefore, it is discussed separately below, rather than as a topic under each unit of the park.

According to the last three years of data, the park's air quality is in attainment for all pollutants designated by the Environmental Protection Agency. St. Bernard, Jefferson, Orleans, Lafourche and Lafayette parishes are in the process of being officially designated as being in attainment for ozone. The park's water quality is generally within national and state standards. However, several nearby sources discharge water pollutants into the Barataria Preserve. These include large stormwater pumping stations at Lake Cataouatche, Bayou Segnette, Westwego, and Ames, and smaller pumps at Willowdale, Oak Cove, Crown Point, and Isle Bonne.

UNIT DESCRIPTIONS

BARATARIA PRESERVE UNIT

The Delta of the Mississippi River is an area of dynamic geological processes and highly productive ecosystems. The Barataria Preserve unit contains within its 20,000 acres a representative sample of the Delta's underlying physical structure and the diverse natural habitats built thereon. The preserve also contains evidence of a succession of human occupations dating back to the very creation of the land by deltaic processes 2,500 years ago. It compliments the other units of the park and fulfills the park's mission by helping to preserve an important part of the Delta, and by providing a framework for interpreting the interrelationship between culture and environment that has shaped this region.

Geology, Hydrography, and Soils

The Barataria Preserve unit is in the upper freshwater zone of the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary, the largest and most productive estuary in the United States. This broad, low-lying estuary is situated between the two active distributary arms of the Mississippi River, and contains within it several sub-deltaic lobes (subdeltas) built and abandoned by distributary arms of the river over the last 5,000 years. The preserve is situated on the Bayou des Familles-Bayou Barataria lobe, which was occupied and built from roughly 3,500 to 1,500 years ago. An abandoned arm of the river, Bayou des Familles, forms the backbone of the preserve. Once a third of a mile wide and carrying a third of the river's flow, it is now a narrow tidal stream. Its channel was filled in by sediments as the river slowly abandoned the Bayou des Familles course. The filled streambed is flanked by natural levees, reaching an elevation of about 5 feet above mean sea level, which were formed by deposition of sediments during annual spring floods. Soils change and elevations decrease to near sea

level perpendicular to the line of the levees. The land is actively subsiding because the modern Delta sits atop thousands of feet of unconsolidated sediments deposited during previous Delta-building episodes.

Originally, the area's hydrology was controlled by three forces — rainfall, tides, and the Mississippi River. Beginning with the first French settlements along the river in 1718, the river's contribution has been steadily diminished by human changes, including the construction of artificial levees and the closing of distributary channels. Since 1927 no river water has entered the upper Barataria Basin. Hydrology is now controlled entirely by rainfall (more than 60 inches yearly) and tides. The daily lunar tidal range is quite small, less than one foot on average, but climatic factors, including wind direction and speed, frontal passages, and tropical cyclonic events, can greatly amplify tidal ranges.

Hydrological conditions have also been altered by the building of levees and canals. Most of the "uplands" in the preserve's watershed have been developed and surrounded by storm protection levees. Rain falling inside these levees no longer flows evenly to lowlands, but is instead collected and carried over the levees by stormwater drainage pumps and discharged at discrete points. The preserve's wetlands have also been modified by canals, beginning with small plantation drains in the 18th century, and progressing through the logging canals of the 19th century, and the oilfield, navigation, and drainage canals of the 20th century.

These changes have resulted in a fundamentally altered hydrology. No freshwater or sediments from the river now reach the preserve; runoff from uplands is restricted to channels and contains urban pollution; rainwater concentrates in canals rather than flowing as a sheet; saline waters follow

canals northward from the gulf and invade former freshwater areas; and tidal ranges are amplified by the canal network.

These hydrological problems are not restricted to the preserve, and actions are underway to restore the hydrology of the entire basin through diversion from the Mississippi River and other techniques. These alterations, taking place outside the preserve, will nevertheless profoundly affect the preserve's hydrological functions.

Four major soil types are found in the unit: Sharkey-Commerce, Barbary, Lafitte-Clovelly, and Kenner-Allemands. The Sharkey-Commerce soils are firm mineral soils associated with the natural levee and silted river channel and are the best for development and agriculture. Barbary soils are semifluid mineral soils deposited on the backslope of the natural levee and associated with swamps. Kenner-Allemands soils consist of thick organic layers underlain with thin clays and are associated with fresh marshes; and Lafitte-Clovelly soils are semifluid organic soils associated with more saline intermediate marshes. These other soils are generally poorly suited for development and will not readily support foot traffic. Only the Sharkey-Commerce soils could be considered prime farmland, but, due to subsidence, high water tables, and frequency of flooding, the soils in the preserve are generally unsuitable for agriculture.

Wetlands and Floodplains

More than 95% of the Barataria Preserve unit is wetlands. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetlands Inventory (1992) has mapped the area and approximately 40% of the unit is classified as a palustrine emergent wetland. Other major wetland types include palustrine forested, palustrine scrub-shrub, and estuarine intertidal emergent.

The entire unit is within the 100-year floodplain. The probable flood elevation of a

100-year storm is 6 feet above mean sea level in the vicinity of the visitor center on LA 45.

Plants and Wildlife

The natural communities of the preserve fall into three broad types, reflecting the underlying geological structure: hardwood forest, swamp, and marsh. These major plant communities are associated with natural levee ridge, backslope swamp, and interlevee marsh. Characteristic ecological communities occupy each of these habitats, with over 340 species of native vascular plants and 350 species of vertebrate animals thus far identified in the preserve.

On ribbons of firm natural levee alluvial soils, the only ground above sea level, supports a hardwood forest of ridge and bottomland species, including oak, elm, ash, maple, and sweetgum, with an understory of palmetto, hawthorne, and holly and complex associations of vines and epiphytes. On the backslopes of these natural levees, where the soils are inundated much of the year, grows a swamp forest of baldcypress, tupelo and ash, with wax myrtle and maple, and a floating herbaceous understory. Portions of both the ridge and swamp forests are nearing maturity and both contain a number of ancient specimens. The preserve's forest are among the finest examples remaining in the Delta of this original forest ecosystem. The preserve's marshes occur beyond the swamps, where alluvial soils have subsided well below sea level. Above this sunken surface, generations of marsh plants laid down a layer of peat, often many feet thick. The peat supports a unique floating marsh characterized by annual grasses, sedges, rushes, and forbs, known as *flotant*. The preserve anchors the eastern end of one of the largest regions of floating marsh in the world, stretching westward in a broad band to the Atchafalaya. In places the *flotant* is so thick that it supports a unique floating community of shrubs and small trees.

UNIT DESCRIPTIONS

Each of the preserve's plant communities supports a characteristic fauna, and wildlife is particularly abundant in the Delta. Sub-tropical warmth, high rainfall, and fertile soils combine to create a highly productive ecosystem. Important components include furbearers, wading birds, wintering waterfowl, neotropical migrants, alligators and other semiaquatic reptiles, amphibians, and juvenile estuarine fish. Invertebrate primary consumers, including crawfish, crabs, and shrimp, help anchor an intricate food chain that supports the more visible wildlife.

Threatened or Endangered Species

Federally listed endangered animal species recorded in the park are brown pelican (*Pelicanus occidentalis*), which occasionally wanders to Lake Salvador from its habitat in lower Barataria Bay; least tern (*Sterna antillarum*), an uncommon migrant, individuals of which are presumed to be from the endangered interior population (*S. a. athalassos*); and peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), an uncommon migrant and winter visitor, not identified to subspecies, but perhaps including the endangered subspecies (*F. p. anatum*). Federally threatened species are arctic peregrine (*F. p. tundrius*) and bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), an uncommon migrant and regular winter visitor. At least two active nests of the southern bald eagle (*H. l. leucocephalus*), a winter breeder, are within 10 miles of the Barataria Preserve unit. Federal category 2 candidate species recorded from the park include alligator snapping turtle (*Macrolemys temminckii*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanus ludovicianus*), and cerulean warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*), which does not breed. The preserve is within the known range of the southeastern myotis bat (*Myotis austroriparius*), but there are as yet no records. No federally listed threatened or endangered plant species are known to occur in the unit.

State animal species of special concern found within the preserve include the saltmarsh

topminnow (*Fundulus jenkinsi*), a species of unknown status within the state; and cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), a species of concern as a breeder in Louisiana, which has been recorded on numerous occasions during the breeding season in the preserve and is presumed to breed. Other bird species of special concern as breeders that have been recorded in the preserve are American white pelican (*Pelicanus erythrorhynchos*), reddish egret (*Egretta rufescens*), glossy ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*), osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), American swallow-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), broad-winged hawk (*Buteo platypterus*), least tern (*Sterna antillarum*), caspian tern (*S. caspia*), gull-billed tern (*S. nilotica*), warbling vireo (*Vireo gilvus*), yellow warbler (*D. petechia*), worm-eating warbler (*Helmitheros vermivorus*), and Louisiana waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*). None of these species have been found breeding in the preserve; only osprey and swallow-tailed kite will appear to be candidates for eventual breeding.

The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program has identified two rare plants that were found within or near the boundaries of the Barataria Preserve. Swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) and floating antler-fern (*Ceratopteris pteridoides*) are considered to be imperiled in Louisiana because of their rarity or some other factor making them vulnerable to extirpation. Floating antler-fern is common within the preserve, but its population fluctuates and may be affected by cold winters. Swamp milkweed has not yet been found within the boundary. Creeping spike-rush (*Eleocharis fallax*), a species of unknown status in the state, has been recorded within the preserve.

Archeological Resources

This fertile estuarine system has provided a rich matrix for human beings throughout its short geologic existence. Within the Barataria Preserve unit prehistoric sites represent a nearly complete chronology of habitation within the Mississippi Delta dating back

more than 2,000 years. These include major midden complexes at: the Bayou Coquille Site, located at the confluence of Bayou des Familles and Bayou Coquille, dating from the Marksville period (from 200 B.C.); the Isle Bonne Site on Jones Island at the confluence of Bayou Villars and Bayou Barataria, Troyville to Coles Creek period (A.D. 400 – 1000); and the Cheniere Grand Coquille Site, on Lake Salvador near Bayou Bardeaux, dating from the period Coles Creek to Historic, from about A.D. 1200. Many of these archeological sites are contributing elements of the Barataria Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic Resources

Historic sites include Isleño house sites from the late 18 century, colonial and plantation era agricultural remains, a late 19th and early 20th century commercial swamp logging canal system, the ditch system excavated by trappers (trenasses) in the mid 20th century, and 20th century oil and gas exploration roads and canals. The early sites are contributing elements for the Barataria Historic District listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Existing Development

Development on the west bank has basically followed levee ridge transportation corridors and has been constricted by waterways, marshes, and swamps. Land north and east of the unit is being increasingly used for residential purposes. No major commercial or industrial facilities are in the immediate vicinity. Water, electric, and telephone service parallel the highway south to Jones Point.

The Harvey Canal, Bayou Segnette Waterway, Bayou Barataria Waterway and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway provide navigable routes to the unit for both recreational and commercial purposes.

Site Descriptions

Jones Point. Jones Point is bounded by the Intracoastal Waterway on the south and east, the Bayou Segnette Waterway on the west, and the marsh on the north. The site sits atop spoil deposited as a byproduct of the dredging of a cut-off to straighten the Intracoastal Waterway in the 1930s. The original landform was a forested natural levee, but the area was settled and probably cleared before dredging took place. The soil is classified as Sharkey clay (poorly drained, very slowly permeable, firm mineral soils), but the spoil areas may be somewhat mixed in terms of soil types. Elevations are 5 to 10 feet above mean sea level along the waterway, sloping away from the waterway to about 3 feet above mean sea level. Some remnant spoil piles are higher and several depressions exist, which are intermittently flooded.

Recent usage of the area has been light industrial, with an abandoned 4-acre shipyard and a functioning microwave radio tower and building in a fenced compound. The site also has some abandoned house sites, concrete foundations, abandoned roads, an abandoned wharf, and a powerline right-of-way.

The original vegetation will have been natural levee "bottomland" hardwoods, sloping back down to a fringing swamp. Currently much of the site is cleared and covered with clam shells, riprap along the shoreline, and abandoned equipment in the old shipyard. About 1 acre is mowed within the fenced radio tower yard. Much of the formerly cleared shipyard is growing up in "weedy" early successional vegetation (such as goldenrod, ragweed, elderberry, and various grasses and sedges).

Forested portions of the site are comprised of young natural levee hardwoods, including live oak, water oak, American elm, hackberry, box elder, green ash, red mulberry, and sweetgum. There has been considerable invasion by exotic species, especially the

UNIT DESCRIPTIONS

Chinese tallow tree and the chinaberry tree. However, even in areas of heavy exotic growth, vigorous young live oaks promise to eventually dominate the canopy.

Most of the site is not classified as a wetland.

Wildlife is typical for a natural levee area of the preserve, but past disturbance and the nearby Isle Bonne settlement make it less than ideal habitat.

Jones Island. The site is an approximately 10-acre island that was created when Jones Point, which was formed by the confluence of Bayou Barataria and Bayou Villars, was cut off by dredging to straighten the Intra-coastal Waterway in the 1930s. The site has been uninhabited since the dredging, but before that, it was the location of a ferry that crossed Bayou Villars, connecting the communities of Isle Bonne and Barataria. Several families lived on what is now the island, but they were relocated by the Corps of Engineers before the dredging. Remnants of some of the old homesites are still evident, as is much of the old road and ferry landing.

A prehistoric Indian mound and midden complex, dating from about A.D. 400 - 1200 is also present. It is part of a mound complex that is still extant on three points of land created by the Bayou Barataria/Villars confluence. The other two sites are on private property. Midden material is eroding along all three banks of the island.

The island is composed primarily of natural levee soils (Sharkey clays), with elevations between 2 to 5 feet above mean sea level; elevations on the mounds are up to 10 feet. A wet swale occupies the center of the island. Some of the vegetation includes cultivated plants that persist from previous gardens, especially wild petunia. Wildlife is typical for natural levee areas of the preserve, but because it is a small island near developed areas, species diversity is low.

Twin Canals. The Twin Canals were dredged about 1974 as part of a scheme to drain swamps and marshes on the west side of the Bayou des Familles ridge for subdivision development. A system of parallel canals was excavated, and the spoil was piled between them to use for levee construction. As planned, the interior canal (the northern canal) was to serve as the drainage canal within the levee system, and the exterior canal (the southern canal) was to serve as the outfall for pumped drainwater. The system was never completed due to legal entanglements that eventually led to a court-ordered end to the project. The interior area was never completely enclosed by the levee system because of breaks at Bayou Bouef, Kenta Canal, and elsewhere. A pumping station was installed linking the interior canal system with the exterior outfall system. This pumping station and related developments were installed near LA 45 on spoil on the natural levee. The pump building has been removed, but the slab, girders, and sheet piling remain.

The project area consists of about 5 acres situated atop the western natural levee of Bayou des Familles. The original contours are indiscernible because the spoil from the excavation of the interior canal and the pump sluice channel was piled on the natural levee. Original elevations before canal construction were approximately 2 to 4 feet above mean sea level. The depth of added spoil atop the original ground level is from 1 to 8 feet deep. The elevation of the project area averages about 6 feet above mean sea level. The soil is Sharkey clay, but it is classified as non-wetland because of the spoil elevation.

The habitat that existed before excavation of the canals was a forested natural levee back-slope. The vegetation in the undisturbed forest adjacent to the site consists of a mature second-growth forest dominated by live oak, water oak, hackberry, American elm, sweetgum, green ash, and box elder, with an understory of dwarf palmetto, green hawthorne, rough-leaved dogwood, and

deciduous holly. This forest type occupies a strip of land west of LA 45 that is about 850 to 900 feet wide. The entire project area is situated within this zone. Eventually this forest type will dominate the project area.

Vegetation on the spoil area is a combination of pioneer species and species recruited from adjacent natural levee forest. In addition to the species listed above there are grasses, sedges, black willow, wax myrtle, dewberries and blackberries, roadside wildflowers, vines, and shrubs. Exotics include Chinese tallow trees and several roadside grasses and forbs.

Wildlife is typical for this area of the preserve, but the extensive disturbance and continued human activity make it less than ideal habitat.

Wagner Bridge Area. The site is the raised approach ramp to a bridge built around the 1930s. The ramp was built from excavated fill from an adjacent borrow pit and from material brought in from elsewhere. The bridge was dismantled and the highway rerouted to a new bridge in the 1970s. There is a deteriorating asphalt surface on the old roadbed and deteriorating creosote and concrete bulkheads where the fill juts into Bayou Barataria.

Vegetation growing on the fill is largely recruited from the adjacent forest, with a significant mixture of introduced species. Saplings of native trees are generally less than 20 years old.

Bayou Coquille Trail and Parking Area. The site is a linear cross-section trail about 0.5-mile long, which runs from LA 45 on the crest of the natural levee to the spoil bank of Kenta Canal at the marsh/swamp interface. Habitats encountered include natural levee crest hardwood forest, levee backslope bottomland hardwoods, levee flank swamp forest, and floating freshwater marsh. Most species of plants and animals known in the preserve are encountered somewhere along the trail.

The parking area is located on relatively high Commerce and Sharkey soils 3 to 5 feet above mean sea level. The trail begins there and immediately crosses a clamshell prehistoric Indian midden, with deposits dating from about A.D. 100. It then follows an abandoned oil exploration roadbed (c. 1960) through soils classified as Barbary muck and Allemands muck, to the Kenta Canal spoil-bank (elevation 2 feet above mean sea level).

Cheniere Grand Coquille. This site is an approximately 30-acre clamshell midden on the northeast shore of Lake Salvador between the openings to Bayou Bardeaux and an access canal. It is bounded to the west by Lake Salvador and to the east by an open freshwater marsh. Even though elevations of 2 to 5 feet above mean sea level will usually result in a wetland classification, neither soil nor vegetation is typical of any wetland type, and flooding of the lowest areas only takes place during abnormally high tides.

The site marks a prehistoric Indian settlement at the former mouth of Bayou Coquille. Deposits date back to at least A.D. 700, but no thorough excavations have been done. The midden itself has been extensively occupied up until the present. Four dilapidated hunting/fishing camps remain, with associated structures (sheds, cisterns, and septic tanks), along with numerous refuse piles and dilapidated piers. Much of the midden was removed by shell dredgers, and the remaining midden is eroding severely.

Vegetation is a characteristic marsh midden association, dominated by mature live oaks. Some plants growing here are unique within the preserve and may have a cultural origin, but no threatened or endangered plant species are known.

Wildlife includes typical freshwater marsh and lakeshore species, and the cheniere serves as a refuge for a few higher ground (natural levee) species. Brown pelicans, bald eagles, and peregrines have all been observed in the vicinity of the cheniere.

UNIT DESCRIPTIONS

Kenta Canal Canoe Area. At the junction of Kenta Canal and LA 45, this is a wetland site with a young natural levee hardwood forest, which has recolonized cleared fields over the last 50 years. The soil is classified as Sharkey clay and was levelled by past clearing. Some furrows and field ditches remain. Standing water is only temporary, except during periods of very heavy rains and high tides.

The forest growing on the site is a mix of young overstory species, mature shrubs, and small early successional trees. No threatened or endangered plant or animal species are known.

NEW ORLEANS UNIT

New Orleans has a multiracial, multiethnic population of approximately 1.2 million people. The city's rich history has given it a remarkable variety of resources, attractions, features, and cultural events. The city was founded in 1718 by French colonists. In 1767 the French formally gave New Orleans to the Spanish in exchange for their alliance during the French and Indian War. Louisiana was ceded back to France in 1800, but the actual transfer was delayed until November 30, 1803. In the meantime President Thomas Jefferson started negotiations to purchase the territory, and on December 20, 1803, the French formally turned over Louisiana to the United States.

New Orleans has always had a cosmopolitan population because of its location at the mouth of the Mississippi River. Even though the French colonized Louisiana, settlers from Africa, Germany, Canada, Spain, and the Caribbean soon began to arrive. During the period of Spanish rule, a great number of Americans came downriver to settle, and this number increased after the Louisiana Purchase. Some stayed in the city, while others moved farther west. Between 1820 and 1860 some 550,000 immigrants officially came through New Orleans, which was second only to New York City as a U.S. entry point. The rate of immigration

remained high into this century, and successive waves of Irish, Italian, Asian, Central American, and other immigrants from around the world have added to the cultural diversity.

The people of New Orleans and Louisiana have long recognized the significance of the French Quarter, also known as the Vieux Carre ("old square"). Designated as a national historic landmark, the French Quarter is an important visible reminder of the events, persons, places, and objects that have affected broad patterns of American history, as well as a reflection of evolving culture in the United States. The assemblage of historic structures in the French Quarter represents the special character of a uniquely American urban environment.

In addition to the nationally significant French Quarter, the unit provides a context for experiencing the Garden District and its historic resources, for interpreting the city's rich maritime history, for featuring Mardi Gras and other festivals, and for providing visitor access to folklife demonstrations and performances that spotlight local musicians, cooks, and craftpersons. These individuals are continuing local cultural traditions so that visitors may become familiar with and have greater appreciation for the richness of this area. The unit consists of a folklife/visitor center near the French Market.

Cultural Resources

Founded in 1718 on the east bank of the Mississippi River as the new colony's principal city, the district now known as the French Quarter is the cultural heart of New Orleans. As mentioned above it is a national landmark and is a historic/cultural area of local, regional, national, and international significance. It encompasses approximately 80 city blocks and is listed as the Vieux Carre National Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places. Some claim that the French Quarter is the most

significant urban historic district in the United States.

Of the quarter's 3,070 buildings, 90% are considered to be architecturally significant. They represent French Colonial, Spanish Colonial, Post-Colonial, Transition, Greek Revival, Antebellum, Late Victorian, and 20th century architectural periods. Sites such as Jackson Square and the Cabildo figured in important historic events of the city and the nation. The French Quarter is also significant because of its long-term prominence as a crossroads for commerce, a focus for cultural cross-fertilization, a seat of government, and a social center. Cultural diversity continues to characterize the French Quarter.

Existing Development

The French Quarter combines an active urban life within its historic setting. It is governed by specific ordinances and supervised by a special agency of the city, the Vieux Carre Commission. The commission is charged with protecting the architectural character and the historic integrity of the city-designated Vieux Carre, which is slightly smaller than the national historic district. The commission has zoned the French Quarter in sections that emphasize business or residential uses. The streets are narrow and the buildings close, lending a pedestrian character to the area. It is served by a local transportation system.

Currently, the unit's office and visitor center is housed in a leased space within the city-owned French Market complex. The historic 419 Rue Decatur building complex (1845-1882) is being adaptively renovated to serve as unit headquarters and park visitor center. The headquarters and administrative offices of the entire park will also be housed there.

CHALMETTE UNIT

Chalmette is 5 miles downriver from New Orleans, and its purpose is to commemorate the victory of American forces over the British in 1815, in the culminating battle of the War of 1812. This victory preserved the nation's fledgling hold upon the Louisiana Territory, and made possible its westward expansion in the 19th century. Chalmette was established as a unit of the national park system in 1933 and thus predates the legislation authorizing Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve in 1978. The unit's size is limited by law to 500 acres, and certain uses are permitted from the previous legislation, such as a road right-of-way, utilities, docks, and the river levee.

Natural Resources

The terrain of Chalmette is the natural river levee. The battlefield area is almost flat, with an elevation of 10 feet above sea level except for the man-made levee, which is 20 feet above sea level. Because of the man-made levee, most of the unit is outside the 100-year floodplain; however, approximately 5 acres of the unit, located between the man-made levee and the river, is subject to frequent inundation. The battlefield is predominantly an open grassy field that is maintained by mowing. The unit soils are in the Commerce series, which are considered prime agricultural soils.

Cultural Resources

The Chalmette battlefield was the site of the Battle of New Orleans on January 8, 1815, when the British hoped to gain control over the lower Mississippi Valley and to block American westward expansion. During the battle, the victorious American cause was aided by Jean Lafitte's men, who offered their services in return for pardons for their past smuggling activities. The battle brought fame to General Andrew Jackson and helped give a fledgling nation permanency.

UNIT DESCRIPTIONS

Portions of the American defense line and the fields of the Chalmette plantation are within the boundary; other parts of the battlefield have been lost to the river or other encroachments. The site is on the National Register of Historic Places. About 1,300 feet of the Rodriguez Canal (associated with the battle) and the American defense line have been reconstructed.

Approximately 18 years after the battle, the Beaugard house was built on the battlefield as a country home. The brick and wood house was acquired by the National Park Service in 1948.

The Chalmette Monument is a 100-foot-tall granite obelisk overlooking the battlefield. It was planned in 1840, following a visit by Andrew Jackson on the 25th anniversary of the battle and built between 1855 and 1909.

Chalmette National Cemetery occupies the eastern portion of the unit on the British field of attack. It was established in 1864 as a burial ground for federal soldiers of the Civil War and subsequent wars. All available plots have been assigned.

Existing Development

Intense commercial development surrounds Chalmette, but the 141 acres in the unit are open and relatively free from development. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers levee is on the south edge of the unit. St. Bernard Parish operates a sewage disposal plant on an inholding within the unit.

Access is by means of tour boats on the Mississippi River and automobiles on LA 45. A one-way tour road provides access to the battlefield.

The historic superintendent's lodge built in 1929 now serves as the unit's administrative headquarters. The carriage house now serves as the unit's maintenance building.

ACADIAN UNIT

The Acadian unit consists of three distinct sites in southern Louisiana. A cultural center in Thibodaux is dedicated to the interpretation of wetlands Acadian culture, the center in Eunice to the interpretation of prairie Acadian culture, and the center in Lafayette to the interpretation of general Acadian culture. At each site a building houses an interpretive center and is surrounded by a small amount of property. Both the Thibodaux and Lafayette centers have associated parking. All three sites can be characterized as urban in nature. A new building was constructed at Lafayette to serve as a visitor center and administrative headquarters. At Eunice an existing nonhistoric building was incorporated into the visitor center/headquarters design. At Thibodaux the historic Percy-Lobdell building (circa 1890) was adaptively rehabilitated for use, with a theater addition.

Little if any natural vegetation or wildlife remains at any of the three sites, except in a narrow band along Bayou Lafourche at Thibodaux. A small grove of hardwoods with a mowed understory is present at Lafayette. The Lafayette and Thibodaux sites are within the 100-year floodplain. None of the sites contain wetlands or are located within the Louisiana coastal zone.

BIG OAK ISLAND

Northeast of downtown New Orleans is Big Oak Island, which, after a series of title transfers and bankruptcies is now held by a private landowner. The lands surrounding the island have been drained in preparation for subdivision development. The island consists of beach ridge deposits capped by shell middens. No prime or unique agricultural soils are present.

The site is a prehistoric Indian clamshell midden, 300 feet long and about 7 feet high. The midden sits atop a subsided barrier island or spit known as the Pine Island

Beach Trend, which separated the so-called Pontchartrain Embayment from the open gulf some 3,000 years B.C. In the interim, the beach trend was stranded in marsh by the encroachment of alluvial deposits of the Mississippi River. Most of the barrier island beach trend has subsided below marsh level. The middens at Big Oak Island, Little Oak Island, and Middle Island, and the beach sands themselves at Pine Island, remain above sea level.

About 40 years ago the marsh around Big Oak Island (but not around Little Oak, Middle, and Pine Islands) was impounded, leveed, and drained. The marsh soils rapidly subsided and the former marsh was invaded by early-successional upland vegetation. Thus the present aspect of Big Oak Island is of a rise of land topped with live oaks, in a sea of young trees and shrubs, forming dense thickets and invading the understory of the former island. Eventually, the surrounding canopy will mature to a height that visually obliterates the island. On the other hand, Little Oak, Middle, and Pine Islands are east of the Maxent Levee, about a mile east of Big Oak, in undrained freshwater marsh (within the new Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge). Their aspect is of true tree-covered islands in a treeless freshwater marsh. This is how Big Oak appeared before drainage.

Because most of the area around Big Oak remains undeveloped, wildlife common to southeast Louisiana remains abundant. Should development encircle the island, wildlife populations will disappear unless an undeveloped corridor is maintained to the Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge. Much of the unique "island" character of this midden has been lost, and could only be recreated by restoration of some semblance of original hydrology. This is very important midden because it is one of the only large middens in the Delta which was not raided by shell dredgers, or is not now being eroded away.

Pine Island supports an assemblage of plant species absolutely unique in the Delta. Its affinities are with the mainland in coastal Mississippi, because the barrier beach trend was anchored to the mainland near Mississippi Sound. Big Oak Island has not been found to support these unique species, probably because of its midden soils, as opposed to Pine Island's sandy beach soils. It is possible that the species were missed on earlier inventories, or that they have disappeared due to competition with invading vegetation since drainage.

Big Oak Island is in the 100-year floodplain, with a flood elevation of 5 feet above mean sea level. It is not classified as a wetland.

COMPLIANCE ACTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Before implementing any action for Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve, the National Park Service will comply with all applicable laws and executive orders, including the following:

Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (42 USC 4151 et seq.) and Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 701 et seq.) — All facilities and programs developed will be accessible to disabled visitors.

Clean Air Act, as amended (42 USC 7401 et seq.) — Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve is designated as a class II clean air area. Maximum allowable increases (increments) of sulfur dioxide (SO₂), particulate matter (TSP), and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) beyond baseline concentrations established for class II areas cannot be exceeded. Section 118 of the Clean Air Act requires all federal facilities to comply with existing federal, state, and local air pollution control laws and regulations. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve will work with the State of Louisiana and the Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that all park activities meet all requirements. During the design phase for proposed development, an analysis of anticipated emissions from construction activities will be conducted to ensure that the attainment designation recently reached by parishes in the area will not be adversely affected.

Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.) — Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act requires all federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by the agency does not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or critical habitat. It is the conclusion of the National Park Service that the proposed actions will not jeopardize any listed species or critical habitat.

Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management — This order requires all federal agencies to avoid construction within the 100-year floodplain, unless no other practical alternative exists. Certain actions are exempt from compliance with this executive order. Those actions are found under the National Park Service guidelines for implementing Executive Order 11988. Where adverse impact will occur to floodplains and cannot be avoided, National Park Service policy requires that a statement of findings be completed. This will accompany the site design/environmental assessment.

Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands — This order requires federal agencies to avoid, where possible, impacts on wetlands. In cases where avoidance is not possible, National Park Service policy requires that a statement of findings be prepared. This will accompany the site design/environmental assessment.

Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 USC 1451 et seq.) This act requires that federal actions be consistent with state coastal zone management plans. All units of Jean Lafitte, except the Acadian unit, are within the designated Louisiana coastal zone. The Louisiana plan's relevant goals and policies for the coastal zone encourage public access, recreational use, and the preservation of cultural heritage and related sites. The actions of the preferred alternative (alternative A) appear to be consistent with the state's coastal zone management plan. To ensure consistency, the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Zone Management Division, will be consulted before implementing any action.

Analysis of Impacts on Prime and Unique Agricultural Lands in Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (45 CFR 59189) — Federal agencies are

required to analyze the impacts of federal actions on agricultural lands, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. This policy was developed to minimize the effect of federal programs in converting prime, unique, or locally important farmland to nonagricultural uses.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (PL 101-601; 104 stat. 3049) — This act assigns ownership or control of Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony that are excavated or discovered on federal lands or tribal lands to lineal descendants or culturally affiliated Native American groups.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 USC 470, et seq.) — Under section 106 federal agencies with direct or indirect

jurisdiction over actions must take into account the effect of those actions on properties listed on or which are eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, and they must give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) an opportunity to comment.

Toward that end, the National Park Service will work with the state historic preservation officer (SHPO) for Louisiana and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to meet the requirements of the August 1990 programmatic agreement among the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Park Service. That agreement provides for a number of "programmatic exclusions" or actions that may be implemented without further review by the state historic preservation officer or the advisory council. Those actions not programmatically excluded must be listed in the plan so that further consultation may be undertaken during the design phase to ensure any effects are adequately mitigated. The actions for the preferred alternative (alternative A) are listed below.

TABLE 2. GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN ACTIONS AND CULTURAL COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

General Management Plan Amendment Actions	Compliance Requirements
Barataria Preserve Unit	
Kenta Canal parking lot redesign	Further SHPO and ACHP review
Jones Point visitor development	Further review
Wagner Bridge restoration	Further review
Bayou de Coquille trail modifications	Further review
Big Woods group picnicking site and campground	Further review
Twin Canals recreation facilities	Further review
Jones Island erosion control	Further review
New Orleans Unit-Cultural Center	Further review
Chalmette Unit	Further review
Acadian Unit	None

ESTIMATED COSTS

The costs shown on the following table are gross cost estimates for implementation, including advance planning, project design, compliance, construction supervision, contingencies and actual construction costs.

No change in staff or park operations, other than for the multicultural center, will result from implementation of the plan.

TABLE 3: COST ESTIMATES

Unit Development	Estimated Cost
Barataria Preserve Unit	
Twin Canals restoration and redevelopment	\$105,000
Jones Point restoration and redevelopment	280,000
Jones Island/Gulf Coast Intracoastal erosion control	300,000
Kenta Canal parking redesign	7,000
Bayou Coquille trail and parking	15,000
Campground tent platforms	50,000
Ranger station	150,000
Remove navigational hazards	50,000
Group picnic site	25,000
Subtotal	\$971,000
New Orleans Unit	
Multicultural Center*	
Chalmette Unit	
Bury overhead power lines	90,000
Construct interpretive wayside exhibits	23,000
Landscaping	125,000
Subtotal	238,000
Big Oak Island	
No development proposed	
Acadian Unit	
No additional development	
Total	\$2,429,000

*The multicultural center is only a conceptual proposal; consequently, construction and operational costs and staffing needs cannot be determined at this time.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Discussion about revising the 1982 *General Management Plan* began early in 1992 and involved many different offices of the National Park Service as well as the Delta Region Preservation Commission.

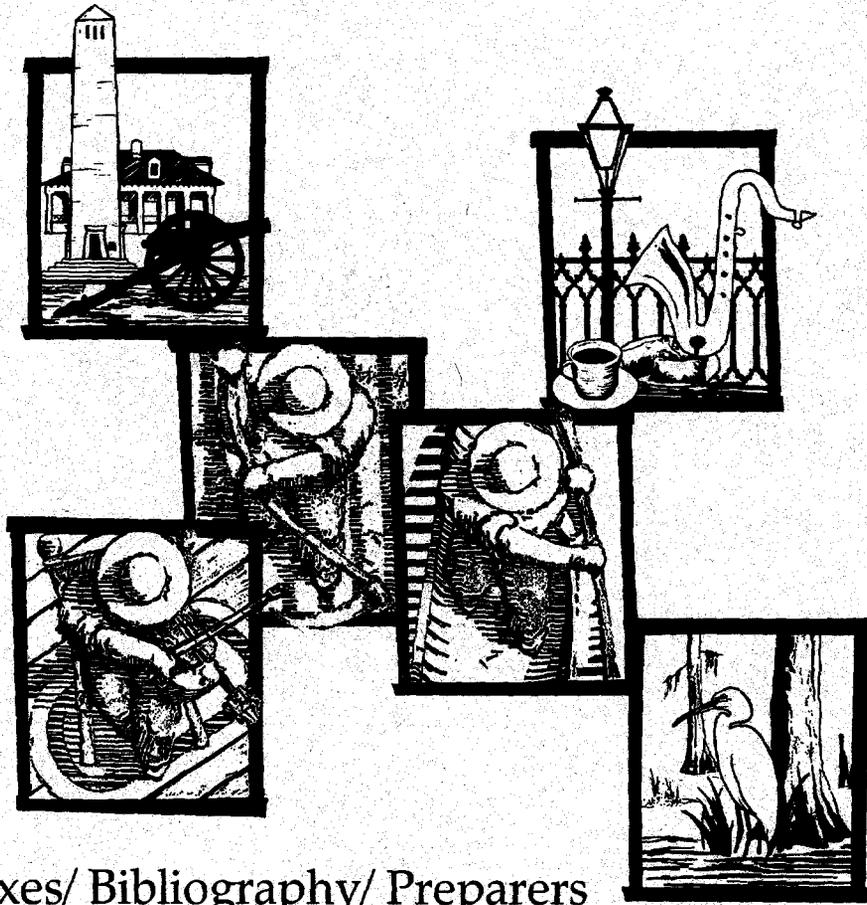
Consultation was conducted with the following agencies:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Department of the Army, Corps of
Engineers
Environmental Protection Agency
Louisiana State Department of
Environmental Quality
Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
State Historic Preservation Officer
State Department of Natural Resources,
Coastal Zone Management Division

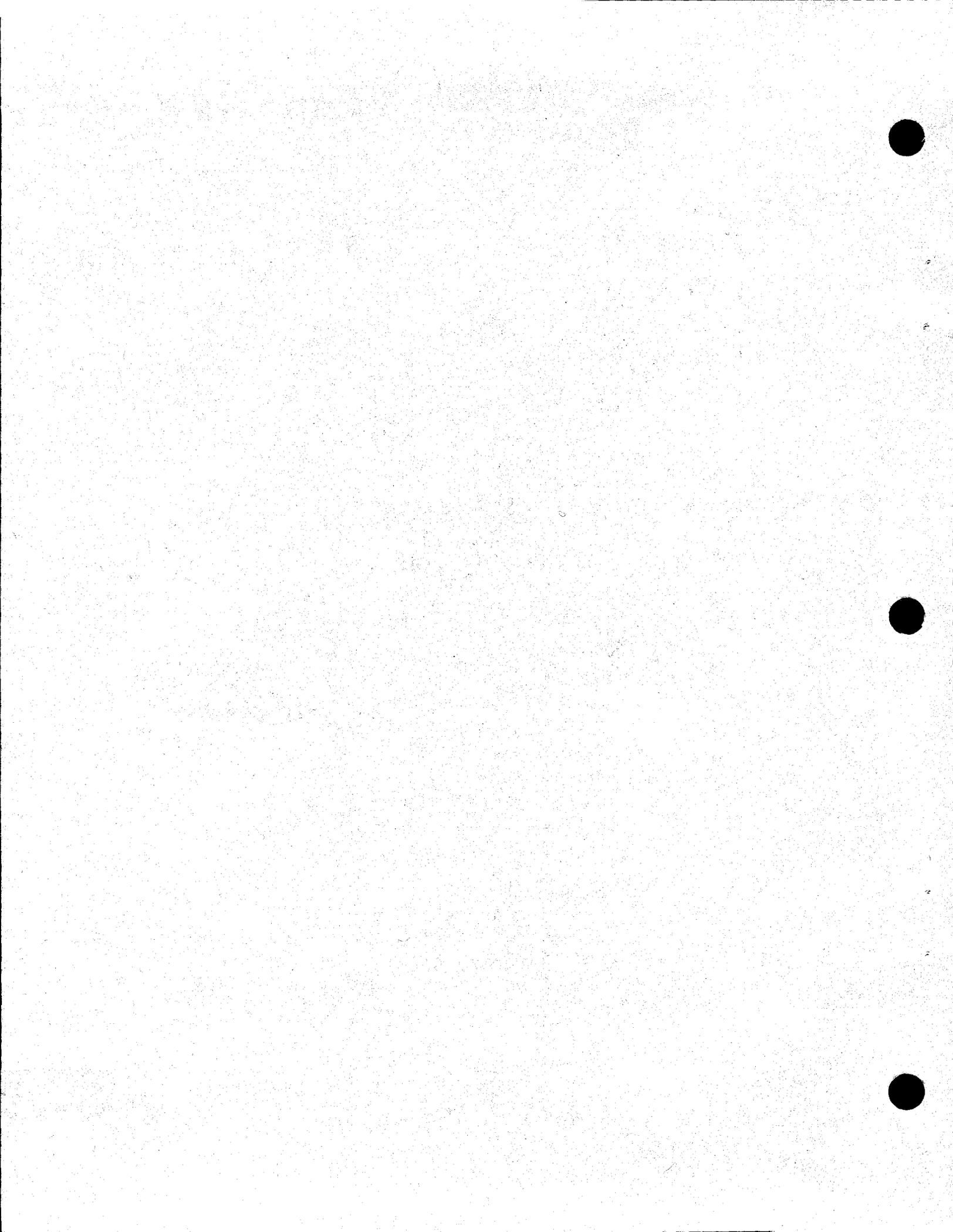
The Delta Region Preservation Commission was also consulted during development of this *General Management Plan Amendment*. The commission held public scoping meetings on January 14, 1990, a meeting devoted to the plan amendment on March 7, 1990, and a meeting on the revised amendment on July 6, 1994.

Copies of this document are being sent to the above list of federal and state agencies as well as individuals on the park's mailing list.





Appendixes/ Bibliography/ Preparers



APPENDIX A: LEGISLATION

PUBLIC LAW 95-625, AS AMENDED

JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE

Sec. 901. In order to preserve for the education, inspiration, and benefit of present and future generation significant examples of natural and historical resources of the Mississippi Delta region and to provide for their interpretation in such manner as to portray the development of cultural diversity in the region, there is authorized to be established in the State of Louisiana the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve (hereinafter referred to as the "park"). The park shall consist of (1) the area of approximately twenty thousand acres generally depicted on the map entitled "Barataria Marsh Unit-Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve" numbered 90,000B and dated April 1978, which shall be on file and available for public inspection in the office of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior; (2) the area known as Big Oak Island; (3) an area or areas within the French Quarter section of the city of New Orleans as may be designated by the Secretary of the Interior for an interpretive and administrative facility; (4) folk life centers to be established in the Acadian region; (5) the Chalmette National Historical Park; and (6) such additional natural, cultural, and historical resources in the French Quarter and Garden District of New Orleans, forts in the delta region, plantations, and Acadian towns and villages in the Saint Martinville area and such other areas and sites as are subject to cooperative agreements in accordance with the provisions of this title.

Sec. 902. (a) Within the Barataria Marsh Unit the Secretary is authorized to acquire not to exceed eight thousand six hundred acres of lands, waters, and interests therein (hereinafter referred to as the "core area"), as depicted on the map referred to in the first section of this title, by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange. The Secretary may also acquire by any of the foregoing methods such lands and interests therein, including leasehold interests, as he may designate in the French Quarter of New Orleans for development and operation as an interpretive and administrative facility. Lands, waters, and interests therein owned by the State of Louisiana or any political subdivision thereof may be acquired only by donation. In acquiring property pursuant to this title, the Secretary may not acquire right, to oil and gas without the consent of the owner, but the exercise of such rights shall be subject to such regulations as the Secretary may promulgate in furtherance of the purposes of this title.

Establishment.
16 USC 230.

Description.

Lands, waters and in-
terests, acquisition.
16 USC 230a.

(b) With respect to the lands, waters, and interests therein generally depicted as the "park protection zone" on the map referred to in the first section of this title, the Secretary shall, no later than six months from the date of enactment of this Act, in consultation with the affected State and local units of government, develop a set of guidelines or criteria applicable to the use and development of properties within the park protection zone to be enacted and enforced by the State or local units of government.

Guidelines or criteria, consultation.

(c) The purpose of any guideline developed pursuant to subsection (b) of this section shall be to preserve and protect the following values within the core area:

Values, preservation and protection.

- (1) fresh water drainage patterns from the park protection zone into the core area;
- (2) vegetative cover;
- (3) integrity of ecological and biological systems; and
- (4) water and air quality.

(d) Where the State or local units of government deem it appropriate, they may cede to the Secretary, and the Secretary is authorized to accept, the power and authority to confect and enforce a program or set of rules pursuant to the guidelines established under subsection (b) of this section for the purpose of protecting the values described in subsection (c) of this section.

Authority, ceding.

(e) The Secretary, upon the failure of the State or local units of government to enact rules pursuant to subsection (b) of this section or enforce such rules so as to protect the values enumerated in subsection (c) of this section, may acquire such lands, servitudes, or interests in lands within the park protection zone as he deems necessary to protect the values enumerated in subsection (c) of this section.

Acquisitions.

(f) The Secretary may revise the boundaries of the park protection zone, notwithstanding any other provision of law, to include or exclude properties, but only with the consent of Jefferson Parish.

Boundaries, revision.

(g) The Secretary is authorized to acquire lands or interests in lands by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds or exchange, not to exceed approximately 20 acres, in Acadian villages and towns. Any lands so acquired shall be developed, maintained and operated as part of the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park.

Sec. 903. Within the Barataria Marsh Unit, the owner or owners of improved property used for noncommercial residential purposes on a year-round basis may, as a condition of the acquisition of such property by the Secretary, elect to retain a right of use and occupancy of such property for noncommercial residential purposes if, in the judgment of the Secretary, the continued use of such property for a limited period would not unduly interfere with the development or management of the park. Such right of use and occupancy may be either a period ending on the death of the owner or

Use and occupancy right, retention.
16 USC 230b.

his spouse, whichever occurs last, or a term of not more than twenty-five years, at the election of the owner. Unless the property is donated, the Secretary shall pay to the owner the fair market value of the property less the fair market value of the right retained by the owner. Such right may be transferred or assigned and may be terminated by the Secretary, if he finds that the property is not used for noncommercial residential purposes, upon tender to the holder of the right an amount equal to the fair market value of the unexpired term. As used in this section, the term "improved property" means a single-family, year-round dwelling, the construction of which was begun before January 1, 1977, which serves as the owner's permanent place of abode at the time of its acquisition by the United States, together with not more than three acres of land on which the dwelling and appurtenant buildings are located which the Secretary finds is reasonably necessary for the owner's continued use and occupancy of the dwelling.

"Improved property."

Sec. 904. In furtherance of the purposes of this title, and after consultation with the Commission created by section 907 of this title, the Secretary is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with the owners of properties of natural, historical, or cultural significance, including but not limited to the resources described in paragraphs (1) through (6) of the first section of this title, pursuant to which the Secretary may mark, interpret, restore and/or provide technical assistance for the preservation and interpretation of such properties, and pursuant to which the Secretary may provide assistance including management services, program implementation, and incremental financial assistance in furtherance of the standards for administration of the park pursuant to section 906 of this title. Such agreements shall contain, but need not be limited to, provisions that the Secretary, through the National Park Service, shall have the right of access at all reasonable times to all public portions of the property covered by such agreement for the purpose of conducting visitors through such properties and interpreting them to the public, and that no changes or alterations shall be made in such properties except by mutual agreement between the Secretary and the other parties to such agreements. The agreements may contain specific provisions which outline in detail the extent of the participation by the Secretary in the restoration, preservation, interpretation, and maintenance of such properties.

Cooperative agreements.
16 USC 230c.

Sec. 905. Within the Barataria Marsh Unit, the Secretary shall permit hunting, fishing (including commercial fishing), and trapping in accordance with applicable Federal and State laws, except that within the core area and on those lands acquired by the Secretary pursuant to section 902(c) of this title, he may designate zones where and establish periods when no hunting, fishing, or trapping shall be permitted for

Hunting, fishing, and
trapping.
16 USC 230d.

reasons of public safety. Except in emergencies, any regulations of the Secretary promulgated under this section shall be put into effect only after consultation with the appropriate fish and game agency of Louisiana.

Sec. 906. The Secretary shall establish the park by publication of a notice to that effect in the Federal Register at such time as he finds that, consistent with the general management plan referred to in section 908, sufficient lands and interests therein (i) have been acquired for interpretive and administrative facilities, (ii) are being protected in the core area, and (iii) have been made the subject of cooperative agreements pursuant to section 904. Pending such establishment and thereafter the Secretary shall administer the park in accordance with the provisions of this title, the Act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535), the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666), and any other statutory authorities available to him for the conservation and management of natural, historical, and cultural resources.

Sec. 907. (a) There is established the Delta Region Preservation Commission (hereinafter referred to as the "Commission"), which shall consist of the following:

- (1) two members appointed by the Governor of the State of Louisiana;
- (2) two members appointed by the Secretary from recommendations submitted by the President of Jefferson Parish;
- (3) two members appointed by the Secretary from recommendations submitted by the Jefferson Parish Council;
- (4) two members appointed by the Secretary from recommendations submitted by the mayor of the city of New Orleans;
- (5) one member appointed by the Secretary from recommendations submitted by the commercial fishing industry;
- (6) three members appointed by the Secretary from recommendations submitted by local citizen conservation organizations in the delta region;
- (7) one member appointed by the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts;
- (8) two members appointed by the Secretary from recommendations submitted by the Police Jury of Saint Bernard Parish; and
- (9) one member who shall have experience as a folklorist and who is familiar with the cultures of the Mississippi Delta Region appointed by the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.

(b) Members of the Commission shall serve without compensation as such. The Secretary is authorized to pay the expenses reasonably incurred by the non-Federal members of the Commission in carrying out their duties.

Consultation.

Notice, publication in Federal Register.
16 USC 230e.

Administration
16 USC 1 *et seq.*
16 USC 461 note.

Delta Region Preservation Commission, establishment and membership.
16 USC 230f.

Compensation and expenses.

(c) The function of the Commission shall be to advise the Secretary in the selection of sites for inclusion in the park, in the development and implementation of a general management plan, and in the development and implementation of a comprehensive interpretive program of the natural, historic, and cultural resources of the region. The Commission shall inform interested members of the public, the State of Louisiana and its political subdivisions, and interested Federal agencies with respect to existing and proposed actions and programs having a material effect on the perpetuation of a high-quality natural and cultural environment in the delta region.

(d) The Commission shall act and advise by affirmative vote of a majority of its members: *Provided*, That any recommendation of the Commission that affects the use or development, or lack thereof, of property located solely within a single parish or municipality shall have the concurrence of a majority of the members appointed from recommendations submitted by such parish or municipality.

(e) The Directors of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service and the National Park Service shall serve as ex officio members of the Commission and provide such staff support and technical services as may be necessary to carry out the functions of the Commission. The Commission shall terminate twenty years from the date of approval of this Act.

Sec. 908. (a) There is authorized to be appropriated, to carry out the provisions of this title, not to exceed \$50,000,000 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for acquisition of lands, waters, and interests therein and such sums as necessary for the development of essential facilities.

(b) Within three years from the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary, after consultation with the Commission, shall submit to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a general management plan for the park indicating--

- (1) transportation alternatives for public access to the park;
- (2) the number of visitors and types of public use within the park which can be accommodated in accordance with the protection of its resources;
- (3) the location and estimated cost of facilities deemed necessary to accommodate such visitors and uses; and
- (4) a statement setting forth the actions which have been and should be taken to assure appropriate protection, interpretation, and management of the areas known as Big Oak Island and Couba Island.

Sec. 909. The area described in the Act of October 9, 1962 (76 Stat. 755), as the "Chalmette National Historical Park" is hereby redesignated as the Chalmette Unit of the Jean Lafitte

Functions.

Appropriation authorization. 16 USC 230g.

General management plan, submittal to congressional committees.

Chalmette Unit, redesignation. 16 USC 230h.

APPENDIXES

National Historical Park. Any references to the Chalmette National Historical Park shall be deemed to be references to said Chalmette Unit.

Sec. 910. By no later than the end of the first full fiscal year following the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, a comprehensive report with recommendations as to sites within the Mississippi River Delta Region which constitute nationally significant examples of natural resources within that region.

Report to congressional committees.
16 USC 230i.

PUBLIC LAW 95-625, NOV. 10, 1978, 92 STAT.3534
AS AMENDED BY:
PUBLIC LAW 96-87, OCT. 12, 1979, 93 STAT. 665
PUBLIC LAW 100-250-FEB. 16, 1988, 102 STAT.16
PUBLIC LAW 100-355 [H.R.2203]; JUNE 28, 1988

APPENDIX B: FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

INTRODUCTION

The National Park Service has completed its Amendment to the General Management Plan for Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

The purpose of this document is to record the decision to adopt Alternative A, the preferred alternative, as described in the October 1994 Draft Amendment to the General Management Plan/Environmental Assessment, and to provide a "finding of no significant impact" pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1500).

COMPLIANCE

An Environmental Assessment was prepared that evaluated the impacts of implementing Alternative A, the preferred alternative, and Alternative B (No Action).

The US Fish and Wildlife Service concluded on April 22, 1992, that there are no plants or animals federally listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered that would be affected by the proposal. Consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act was concluded with the State Historic Preservation Office (February 13, 1995) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (March 16, 1995). The five suggestions submitted by the State Historic Preservation Officer have been incorporated into the final version of the General Management Plan Amendment.

The State of Louisiana, Department of Natural Resources has completed their consistency determination and have concluded (March 6, 1995) that the plan is consistent with the Louisiana Coastal Resource Program as required by Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972. Individual projects described in the General Management Plan will be submitted during the design phase to insure consistency with the State of Louisiana Coastal Zone Management Program.

Two letters were received from the public during the comment period, October 24 to December 27, 1994. One letter from the Smithsonian Institute contained strong support for the plan. The other letter, from the Delta Chapter of the Louisiana Archeological Society, objected to changing the emphasis of the Barataria Preserve Unit from cultural to natural and objected to some of the interpretive and research directions proposed at

Chalmette. Some revisions of the document were made in response to the concerns of the Delta Chapter of the Louisiana Archeological Society. At an open house, November 9, 1994, held by the park's Advisory Committee, the Delta Region Preservation Commission, the commission expressed strong support for the plan. Members of the audience who spoke about the General Management Plan voiced their support as well.

Because wetlands are the dominant landform in the Barataria Preserve Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, there are no alternatives to locating the proposed facilities within wetlands. Wetlands are integral to interpretive and recreational experiences within the park. Proposed facilities and interpretive programs will enhance public enjoyment and understanding of the critical role wetlands play in the health and maintenance of the coastal zone. None of the actions are excepted from compliance with NPS Guidelines for implementing Executive Order 11990. All the actions would adversely affect wetlands and would require that a statement of finding be prepared. These statements of findings will be prepared for each development site at the time the development concept plan/environmental assessment is developed. This will occur because specific sites for proposed development have not been identified. Statements of findings will be prepared for the following:

- * Constructing a fishing dock, trail and picnic area at Jones Point.
- * Constructing trails in the Barataria Preserve Unit.
- * Stabilizing the Jones Island and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway shoreline.
- * Constructing fishing facilities, canoe launch, trailhead, parking lot, and storage facility at Twin Canals.
- * Constructing any addition to the Barataria Environmental Education Center.
- * Constructing a parking area at Kenta Canal canoe area.
- * Constructing a ranger station along the Bayou Segnette Waterway near the northern edge of the park.
- * Modifying the Bayou Coquille trail.

Separate statements of findings will be prepared or will be combined with the wetland statement of findings for the following actions, to comply with Executive Order 11988. These will also be prepared during the development concept planning stage and environmental assessment:

- * Construction of a storage facility at Twin Canals.

- * Construction of any addition to the Barataria Environmental Education Center.
- * Construction of a ranger station along the Bayou Segnette Waterway near the northern edge of the park protection zone.

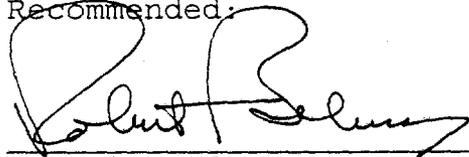
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment, I have determined that the project does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. An EIS will not be prepared.

DECISION

It is my decision to implement the project as described in the General Management Plan Amendment/EA. Implementation of Alternative A, the preferred alternative, will best meet the management and development needs of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. The statements of findings to address floodplain and wetlands compliance, as identified above, will be prepared. Site specific environmental assessments will be prepared for a parking lot at Kenta Canal and trail development in the Barataria Preserve Unit. To insure that emission levels will not adversely affect air quality, mitigation measures would be designed during any construction. A Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment will be prepared to locate overnight facilities at the Barataria Preserve Environmental Education Center. As requested by the state of Louisiana, during the design process (when more detailed information is available) individual projects described in the general management plan will be submitted for a determination of consistency with the State of Louisiana Coastal Zone Management Program.

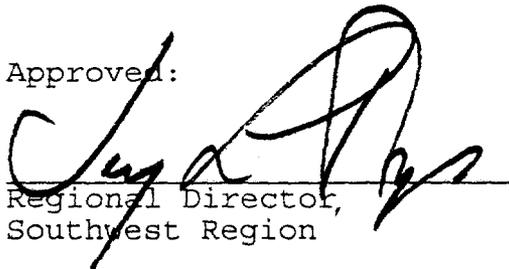
Recommended:



Superintendent,
Jean Lafitte National Historical
Park and Preserve

4/14/95
Date

Approved:



Regional Director,
Southwest Region

4/21/95
Date

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism

- 1977 *Louisiana State Comprehensive
Outdoor Recreation Plan.*
- 1980 *Outdoor Recreation Survey Summary
Report.* Prepared by Economic and
Industrial Research, Inc. Baton
Rouge, LA.

National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

- 1969 *Master Plan for Chalmette National
Historical Park.* Eastern Service
Center, Washington, D.C.
- 1971 *Interpretive Prospectus.* Chalmette
National Historical Park,
Louisiana.
Denver Service Center.
- 1973 *Proposed Jean Lafitte National
Cultural Park, Louisiana:
Suitability/Feasibility Study.* Denver
Service Center.
- 1980 "Expanded Background Paper for
General Management Planning for
Jean Lafitte National Historical
Park and Preserve, Louisiana."
Denver Service Center.

1982a *Draft General Management Plan /
Development Concept Plan /
Environmental Assessment for Jean
Lafitte National Historical Park and
Preserve, Louisiana.* Denver Service
Center.

1982b "Finding of No Significant Impact
- Draft General Management
Development Concept Plan /
Environmental Assessment, Jean
Lafitte National Historical Park
and Preserve, Louisiana."
Southwest Regional Office, Santa
Fe, NM.

1994 *Draft Amendment to the General
Management Plan / Environmental
Assessment, Jean Lafitte National
Historical Park and Preserve,
Louisiana.* Denver Service Center,
Denver, CO.

New Orleans, City of

1980 *Recreation in New Orleans: A
Recovery Action Program.* Prepared
by the Mayor's Recreation
Planning Team in conjunction
with the Recreation Policy
Advisory Board.

U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic Administration, Office of Coastal Zone Management

1980 *Coastal Zone Management Plan.*
Baton Rouge, LA.

PREPARERS, CONSULTANTS, AND ADVISORS

PREPARERS

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

Robert Belous, Superintendent
Steve Hickman, Assistant Superintendent
Kate Richardson, Management Analyst
David Muth, Chief, Division of Resources Management
Allison Peña, Cultural Anthropologist
Jim Miculka, Chief, Division of Interpretation
Jim Carson, Barataria Preserve Unit Manager
Gary Hume, Chalmette Unit Manager
Dale Phillips, Acadian Unit Manager
Sue Davenport, New Orleans Unit Manager
Byron Fortier, Park Ranger

Denver Service Center

Larry Beal, Former Team Captain
Harold Brown, Landscape Architect
Ron Johnson, Project Manager
Bill Koning, Former Team Captain
Nat Kuykendall, Former Team Captain
Larry Norris, Natural Resources Specialist
Mary McVeigh, Outdoor Recreation Planner
Mary Riddle, Team Captain/Natural Resource Specialist

Southwest Regional Office

Kevin Brandt, Acting Associate Regional Director for Planning and Professional Services

CONSULTANTS

George Esber, Former Regional Ethnographer, Southwest Regional Office
Bill Jewell, Former Realty Specialist, Southwest Regional Office
Joan Mitchell, Regional Liaison, Southwest Regional Office

ADVISORS

Delta Regional Preservation Commission
Frederick Wagner, Chairman
David Duplantis
John Eckerle
Frank J. Ehret, Jr.
Charlotte Fremaux
Frank Fernandez
Barbara Galiano
Roy Liner
John Edward Hasse
Mrs. Robert Kerrigan, Jr.
Leroy Demarest
Chris A. Lochbaum
John Scott
John Uhl
Edgar F. Veillon

PUBLICATION SERVICES

Sandy Schuster, Editor, Information and Production Services, Denver Service Center
Lori Yokomizo, Visual Information Specialist, Information and Production Services, Denver Service Center





As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

