



CHALMETTE UNIT

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve



General Management Plan Amendment/Development Concept Plan/
Environmental Assessment

HOW TO COMMENT ON THIS PLAN

Comments on this *General Management Plan Amendment/Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment* are welcome and will be accepted during the 30-day public review and comment period. During the comment period, comments may be submitted using several methods as noted below.

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Hand deliver: at public meetings to be announced in the media following the release of this plan.

Our practice is to make comments, including names, home addresses, home phone numbers, and email addresses of respondents, available for public review. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their names and/or home addresses, etc., but if you wish us to consider withholding this information, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. In addition, you must present a rationale for withholding this information. This rationale must demonstrate that disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy. Unsupported assertions will not meet this burden. In the absence of exceptional, documentable circumstances, this information will be released. We will always make submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives of or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety. You should be aware that we may still be required to disclose your name and address pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

SUMMARY

In 2015, the 200th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans will be celebrated at the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, which includes the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery.

The goal of the General Management Plan (GMP) Amendment is two-fold: establish a 20-year management strategy; and, create a schematic site design and development program (Development Concept Plan) that enhances the historic environment and improves visitor service infrastructure in ways that can be implemented prior to the 2015 celebration.

The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 requires the NPS to prepare a GMP for every area that it administers. The purpose of a GMP is to ensure that each park has a clearly defined direction for resource preservation and visitor use. It focuses on why a park was established and what resource conditions and visitor experiences should be achieved and maintained over time. The GMP is designed to provide guidance for park managers for 15 to 20 years into the future assuming that conditions affecting management and operations remain relatively unchanged during this period.

This GMP Amendment amends prior documents, including the 1982 GMP, 1990 DCP and 1995 GMP Amendment. This GMP Amendment consolidates prior planning, development and interpretive recommendations that were not implemented.

The approved GMP Amendment will be the basic document for managing the Chalmette Unit for the next 15 to 20 years. The purposes of this GMP amendment are as follows:

- Confirm the purpose, significance, and special mandates of the Chalmette unit.
- Clearly define resource conditions and visitor uses and experiences to be achieved at the Chalmette Unit consistent with the site's purpose and significance statements.
- Provide a framework for NPS managers to use when making decisions about how to best protect Chalmette Unit resources, how to provide quality visitor uses and experiences, how to manage visitor use, and what kinds of facilities, if any, to develop in/near the Unit.
- Ensure that this foundation for decision making has been developed in consultation with interested stakeholders and adopted by the NPS leadership after an adequate analysis of the benefits, impacts, and economic costs of alternative courses of action.

Legislation establishing the NPS as an agency and governing its management provides the fundamental direction for the administration of all units and programs of the national park system. This GMP will build on these laws and the legislation that established the Chalmette Unit to provide a vision for this historic site's future.

This GMP Amendment/Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment (GMPA/DCP/EA) presents four alternatives for future management of the Chalmette Unit. The No-Action Alternative presents a continuation of existing management direction and is included as a baseline for comparing the consequences of implementing each alternative. The action alternatives are Alternative A, Alternative B, and Alternative C, and present different ways to manage resources and visitor use and improve facilities and infrastructure at the Chalmette Unit. These action alternatives embody the range of what the public and the NPS want to see accomplished with regard to cultural and natural resource conditions, visitor use and experience, socioeconomic conditions, and NPS operations.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE (CONTINUE CURRENT MANAGEMENT)

Under this alternative, Chalmette Unit management direction would continue as guided by the 1982 GMP and 1995 GMP Amendment. "No action" does not imply the discontinuation of present uses or management practices. Instead, there would be no important change in interpretation and management of the Chalmette Unit. NPS staff would continue to protect and maintain known cultural and natural resources as time and funding allow. Cultural and natural resource inventory work and monitoring would continue. NPS staff would continue to encourage and seek funding for the research that is needed to fill the gaps in knowledge about resources

following the park's strategic plan.

ALTERNATIVE A

Alternative A seeks to improve park operations and visitor opportunities with minimal changes to most current unit facilities. The tour road would be improved to help it safely accommodate both vehicles and pedestrians. A small (250 square feet) un-staffed Visitor Information Station would be added adjacent to a re-routed tour boat pedestrian entrance. Additional parking and staging areas would be added.

ALTERNATIVE B, AGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Alternative B seeks to improve park operations and enhance visitor opportunities with changes to most current unit facilities. The changes would be designed to provide for greater opportunities for interpretation and visitor education. The tour road would be converted to a pedestrian only path for visitors, though it would continue to serve as a service road for NPS and emergency operations. A large (500 square feet) unstaffed Visitor Information Station would be added adjacent to a rerouted tour boat pedestrian entrance. Traffic would be rerouted for safer pedestrian access from the Visitor Center (VC) to the restrooms, Malus-Beauregard House, and Rodriguez site. A new road would connect Monument Road with River Road, and parking would be added along the new road for access to the VC and Malus-

Beauregard (M-B) House. Special event staging areas would be added. The Maintenance Area would be moved to the Fazendeville Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) site, and the Carriage House would be converted to interpretive use for the Cemetery visitor, with adjacent parking.

ALTERNATIVE C

Alternative C seeks to restore the historic character of the battlefield with changes to most current unit facilities. The changes would be designed to remove modern features and restore elements of the cultural landscape integral to the story of the battle. The tour road would be removed. A new linking road would connect Monument Road to the River Road, and River Road would resume its historic place as the site's primary transportation artery, providing access between and among the Monument, Visitor Center, Rampart Display, Rodriguez Site, Malus-Beauregard House, battlefield trails, and the cemetery. All trace of the Fazendeville STP site would be removed and the battlefield topography restored.

THE NEXT STEPS

After the distribution of this GMPA/DCP/EA, there will be a 30-day public review and comment period after which the NPS planning team will evaluate comments from other federal agencies, tribes, organizations, businesses, and individuals regarding the plan and incorporate substantive comments into a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The FONSI will document the NPS selection of an

alternative for implementation. With the signed Record of Decision, the plan can then be implemented. The implementation of the approved plan, no matter which alternative, will depend on future NPS funding levels and servicewide priorities, and on partnership funds, time, and effort. The approval of a GMP does not guarantee that funding and staffing needed to implement the plan will be forthcoming. Full implementation of the plan could be many years in the future.

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INTRODUCTION



BACKGROUND

This General Management Plan Amendment/Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment (GMPA/DCP/EA) presents and analyzes four alternative future directions – the No-Action Alternative, and Action Alternatives A, B, and C – for the management and use of the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. The No-Action Alternative describes a continuation of current management and is presented as a basis for comparing the three “action” alternatives. Alternative A seeks to improve park operations and visitor opportunities with minimal changes to most current unit facilities. Alternative B seeks to improve park operations and enhance visitor opportunities with changes to most current unit facilities. The changes would be designed to provide for greater opportunities for interpretation and visitor education. Alternative C seeks to restore the historic character of the battlefield with changes to most current unit facilities. The changes would be designed to remove modern features and restore elements of the cultural landscape integral to the story of the battle. The potential environmental impacts of all alternatives have been identified and assessed.

The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978, Public Law 95-625, requires the NPS to prepare a GMP for every area that it administers. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that each park has a clearly defined direction for resource preservation and

visitor use. General management planning is the first step in a multi-staged planning process. It focuses on why the park was established and what resource conditions and visitor experiences should be achieved and maintained over time. Decisions about site-specific actions such as the design and footprint of administrative and/or visitor facilities will be deferred to subsequent implementation planning. A GMP is designed to provide guidance for park managers for 15 to 20 years into the future assuming that conditions affecting management and operations remain relatively unchanged during this period.

The implementation of the approved plan (approval of one of the alternatives in this document) will depend on future funding. The approval of a plan does not guarantee that the funding and staffing needed to implement the plan will be forthcoming. Full implementation of the approved plan could be many years in the future. The national historic site must compete with other units of the national park system for limited implementation funding.

This GMPA/DCP/EA has been developed in consultation with NPS program managers, other Federal agencies, state, local, and regional agencies, tribal representatives, interested organizations and individuals, and the general public. It is based upon an analysis of existing and potential resource conditions and visitor experiences, environmental (including natural, cultural, and

socioeconomic) impacts, and costs of alternative courses of action.

HOW THIS DOCUMENT IS ORGANIZED

This GMPA/DCP/EA is organized in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality's implementing regulations for the National Environmental Policy Act and the NPS' Director's Order on "Environmental Analysis" (DO-12), *NPS Management Policies 2006* (Chapter 2), and the *NPS Planning Program Standards*.

Chapter 1: Introduction sets the framework for the entire document. It describes why the plan is being prepared and what needs it must address. It gives guidance for the alternatives that are being considered, which are based on the park's legislated purpose, the significance of its resources, special mandates and administrative commitments, service-wide mandates and policies, and other planning efforts in the area.

The chapter also details the planning opportunities and issues that were raised during initial planning team efforts and public meetings; the alternatives in the next chapter address these issues and concerns to varying degrees. This chapter concludes with an overview of the environmental impact analysis – specifically what impact topics were or were not analyzed in detail.

Chapter 2: Alternatives describes the management prescriptions that will be used to manage the national historic site in the future. It also describes the baseline for management and the continuation of current practices (the No-Action Alternative). The

action alternatives are presented in detail. Mitigation measures proposed to minimize or eliminate the impacts of some proposed actions are described just before the discussion of future studies and/or implementation plans that will be needed. The chapter concludes with a discussion of alternatives or actions that were dismissed from detailed evaluation.

Chapter 3: The Affected

Environment describes those areas and resources that would be affected by implementing actions in the various alternatives – cultural resources, natural resources, visitor use and experience, and socioeconomic environment.

Chapter 4: Environmental

Consequences analyzes the impacts anticipated to occur as a result of implementing the alternatives on topics described in the "Affected Environment" chapter. Methods that were used for assessing the impacts in terms of the intensity, type, and duration of impacts are also outlined in this chapter.

Chapter 5: Consultation and

Coordination describes the process for informing the general public about the Chalmette planning process. Agencies and stakeholder groups that were consulted are listed. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act and Coastal Zone Management Act consultation.

The **Appendices** present supporting information for the document, along with public and agency involvement, references, and a list of the planning team and other consultants.

COMMEMORATION OF THE WAR OF 1812 AND ANDREW JACKSON IN THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM

In comparison to the number of Revolutionary and Civil War sites preserved in the National Park System, War of 1812 sites are rare. In addition, there is no site in the system specifically set aside for the primary purpose of preserving or commemorating areas associated solely with the life of Andrew Jackson, the sixteenth president. However, in addition to the Chalmette Battlefield, three other parks commemorate and preserve sites important to the War of 1812 and the military career of President Jackson.

Other NPS Sites Commemorating the War of 1812 and Andrew Jackson

- *Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine*, Baltimore, Maryland. Fort McHenry came under siege during the Battle of Baltimore, September 13-14, 1814. The valiant defense of the fort by 1,000 dedicated Americans inspired Francis Scott Key to write "The Star-Spangled Banner." The park preserves the Star Fort, associated structures, material culture, archeology, and landscapes and provides for their use in a way that leaves them protected for future generations. These cultural and natural resources, representing a continuum of our nation's military history, and pivotal in the defense of Baltimore during the War of 1812, are preserved as a perpetual national monument and as a shrine of the birthplace of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

- *Horseshoe Bend National Military Park*, Daviston, Alabama. The park commemorates the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, the people involved in the battle, and interprets the cultural relationships and conflicts leading to the Creek War. The park also commemorates the War's impact on the Creek people, the War of 1812, the western expansion of the United States and the role this war played in the career of Andrew Jackson and the development of our nation.
- *Perry's Victory and International Peace Park*, Put-in-Bay, Ohio. On September 10, 1813, Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry defeated and captured a British squadron of warships at the Battle of Lake Erie. The battle, fought during the War of 1812, secured control of Lake Erie for the United States and enabled General William Henry Harrison to conduct a successful invasion of Western Upper Canada.

Significance of the Chalmette Battlefield

The Chalmette Battlefield preserves a portion of the site of the Battle of New Orleans, a massive engagement fought between the United States and Great Britain on January 8, 1815. The battle was the culmination of a military invasion of the Gulf Coast by overwhelming and highly experienced British forces in the closing months of the War of 1812. It represented the last significant action seen by the British Army in the war, though the British Navy would engage in one final and ultimately futile battle to take Fort St. Phillip at the mouth of the Mississippi

River, in order to mount a naval assault on the city.

The Battle of New Orleans, as it came to be called, was the last in a series of land engagements fought as the British advanced towards New Orleans. General Andrew Jackson had been charged with organizing the defense of the city, seen as crucial to controlling the Mississippi River and thus the future of the western United States. Jackson was outmanned and outgunned by the superior British forces, and arrived to take up the defense of the city uncertain of the loyalties of the former French and Spanish subjects of Louisiana. In the end, Jackson fashioned a disciplined fighting force made up of U.S. Army Infantry and Artillery regular units; Navy and Marine forces; militias from Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana; affiliated Indian allies from the Choctaw Nation; and irregular forces including Baratavia privateers allied with Jean Lafitte. For the first time in American history, the force he assembled included not only free persons of European and American Indian descent, but a significant number of men of African descent as well, in the form of units comprised of Free Men of Color in the Louisiana militias.

Jackson's strategy was to take advantage of the difficult delta topography. The British were struggling forward with heavy artillery on a narrow band of rain soaked and river flooded farmland along the natural levee of the Mississippi River. Behind a canal that lay between the Rodriguez and Chalmette plantations, perpendicular to the line of British advance four

miles below the city, Jackson directed the construction of an armored earthen rampart. Soldiers, militiamen and African slaves stripped nearby plantations of fence posts and staves, confiscated cotton bales, and dug and hauled large quantities of mud and clay to construct the rampart under the guidance of skilled army engineers. The British made camp on the Chalmette Plantation, facing Jackson's American Line, flanked by the river three quarters of a mile wide on their left and deep swamp forest on their right, and prepared for battle. The only path to New Orleans was straight ahead, across the canal and over the rampart. See Figure 1 for a historic map of the battlefield depicting the delta topography and its role in Jackson's strategy.

The battle on January 8 also involved engagements in the river and on both banks. But it was the assault by about 6000 British soldiers against about 1500 American defenders behind the rampart on the Rodriguez Plantation, a three pronged attack along the river road, through the flanking swamp but primarily across the soggy Chalmette Plantation fields—what came to be called "the plains of Chalmette"—that proved decisive. In little more than two hours the British, exposed to withering musket and artillery fire as they assaulted the canal and rampart from the open field, suffered between two and three thousand casualties, of which more than 800 died on the field or were mortally wounded. Those dead included the commander Lieutenant General Edward Pakenham, two major generals, and 86 officers.

The American defenders that day delivered the worst and most lopsided defeat suffered by a British force in the Napoleonic era. Six Americans died and seven suffered wounds on Jackson's American Line.

Throughout the entire course of the British invasion in late 1814, representatives of the United States and Great Britain were meeting in Europe negotiating a treaty at Ghent in Belgium to end the war. Indeed, the negotiators had agreed upon the final text of a treaty prior to the battle, but neither side had ratified the treaty giving it the force of law. In fact, no one in the U.S. had yet seen the text of the treaty or knew it had been negotiated, as the news was making its slow way across the Atlantic by ship. The proposed treaty in essence returned the combatants to the *status quo ante bellum*—it for the most part restored conditions that had been in existence prior to the start of the war. In light of the stunning defeat of British forces at Chalmette, the British eagerly ratified the treaty. The Americans, relieved to have withstood the invasion and held on to the Louisiana Territory, were equally anxious to ratify the treaty, and in March 1815 the war ended.

In no small measure the Battle of New Orleans proved a pivotal event for the young Republic. For one thing, it restored a measure of American pride. For the first time, unaided by European allies as at Yorktown, a large American force had taken on and decisively defeated a fully fledged British expeditionary force. The small triumphs and bitter defeats of both the Revolutionary War and

the War of 1812, including the embarrassing sack of the American capitol by the British when they burned Washington D.C., were overshadowed by the glorious victory. Andrew Jackson became a national hero, with a stature comparable only to General Washington of an earlier generation. He parlayed that stature and popularity into getting elected president, and his election marked a decisive change in American politics, the rise of populism.

The victory also secured the Mississippi River, the Louisiana Purchase, and the path to westward expansion. Thomas Jefferson's vision was in a sense vindicated, and lingering doubt about the wisdom of the purchase, and about the advisability of incorporating the French-speaking Catholics of Louisiana, white and Free Black, into the union, lessened. Until the outbreak of the Civil War, January 8th was celebrated as a national holiday second only to July the Fourth.

History and Description of the Chalmette Unit

The Rodriguez estate was purchased by the State of Louisiana in 1855 for the purpose of erecting a monument to the American soldiers who had fought in the Battle of New Orleans. Chalmette Monument, a marble obelisk erected on the site between 1855 and 1909 represents an early manifestation of the sentiment which would produce the first military parks. In a sense, it was the prototype to the commemorative battlefields studded with monuments created after the Civil War. During the years 1855-1939, before NPS involvement, the Chalmette

Monument on the wedge-shaped Rodriguez parcel constituted the full extent of the commemorative park.

On June 14, 1894, the state turned over custodianship of the incomplete Chalmette Monument to the Louisiana Society of the United States Daughters of 1776 and 1812. After fitful progress, Congress appropriated funds for its completion March 4, 1907, and the state turned over ownership to the Federal Government on May 24, 1907. The Chalmette Monument was capped and completed in late 1908, well short of its design elevation, and a ceremony commemorating its completion was held in March 1909.

On June 2, 1930, Congress transferred responsibility for the Chalmette Monument to the War Department. Then, on August 10, 1939, by act of Congress, the site was formally designated a National Historical Park and subsequently transferred to the administration of the NPS.

On November 11, 1861 a portion of the battlefield about one third of a mile (0.5 km) downriver from the monument tract was purchased by the City of New Orleans. As part of the city's defenses, earthworks were thrown up and occupied by Confederate forces, much as had been done by Jackson. In 1862 Admiral Farragut shelled the Confederate works while moving his fleet successfully past the position, resulting in the capitulation and surrender of the City of New Orleans. The Union had accomplished what the British had not.

In May, 1864 the city granted to the United States use of the property as a cemetery for the

Union dead. The land was formally donated to the United States by the city on May 26, 1868. The War Department administered the Chalmette National Cemetery until August 10, 1933, when it was transferred to the NPS. It was made an official part of the Chalmette National Historical Park at the park's establishment on August 10, 1939.

Between 1939 and the battle's sesquicentennial in 1965, the NPS gradually acquired all of the tracts of the former Chalmette Plantation located between the Chalmette Monument and the Cemetery, except for the Fazendeville Sewage Treatment Plant. The land acquired included the site of the Malus-Beauregard House, which was restored and preserved, and a number of other structures, including the former residences of the African American community in the village of Fazendeville, which were razed or removed. A facsimile rampart display was constructed, and the tour road built by 1965. The current public restroom building replaced an older building in 1972.

The Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1966 as the Chalmette National Historical Park. In 1978 Congress established Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve:

"In order to preserve 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 incorporated Chalmette National Historical Park into Jean Lafitte as the Chalmette Unit, the most important historical resource managed by the new park with its broader mission. Figure 2 presents a map of existing conditions at the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

Location and Setting

Today, the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery is a unit of the larger Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, one of six separate geographic sites managed by the park. The unit is located in Chalmette, Louisiana, approximately six miles southeast of downtown New Orleans, in a highly industrialized corridor along the east bank of the Mississippi River (see Figure 3 for a regional map). It is bounded to the south by the Mississippi River. A man-made levee, part of the system maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, divides the primary site from a narrow strip of forest along the river bank, the *batture*, subject to annual inundation. To the north, an approximately 200-foot wide strip—containing the Norfolk Southern Railroad, an abandoned railroad embankment, one active and one abandoned gas line right-of-way—separates the park from the St. Bernard Highway (LA Highway 46). The former Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation's processing plant bounds the park to the east, and Chalmette Slip, a ship docking

and storage facility, bounds the park to the west. Both of these properties are now owned by the St. Bernard Port, Harbor and Terminal District, and a service road utilizes the River Road corridor along the landward toe of the levee, providing cross-park access between them. A sewage treatment facility, owned by St. Bernard Parish, stands as a 1.5-acre in-holding at the park's southern end along the levee and River Road. Surrounding industrialization has eliminated the agricultural setting that existed at the time of the battle and has significantly changed the natural setting surrounding the preserved portion of the battlefield and cemetery.

Chalmette Battlefield is the larger of two contiguous landscapes that comprise the 142.9-acre Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. The battlefield, a 125.6-acre commemorative and interpretive site, preserves a portion of the former agricultural landscape on which the Battle of New Orleans was fought. The adjacent 17.3-acre Chalmette National Cemetery occupies a portion of the historic battlefield landscape, but is distinct from the commemorative battlefield. The battlefield contains an assortment of features associated with the Battle of New Orleans. These include the Rodriguez Canal and the archeological site of the Rodriguez Plantation (late 18th-early 19th century), traces of battle era ditches and roads, the reconstructed American rampart (1815; 1964), and Chalmette Monument (1855-1908). The battlefield zone also includes some significant features not connected with the Battle of New

Figure 2: Existing Conditions Map

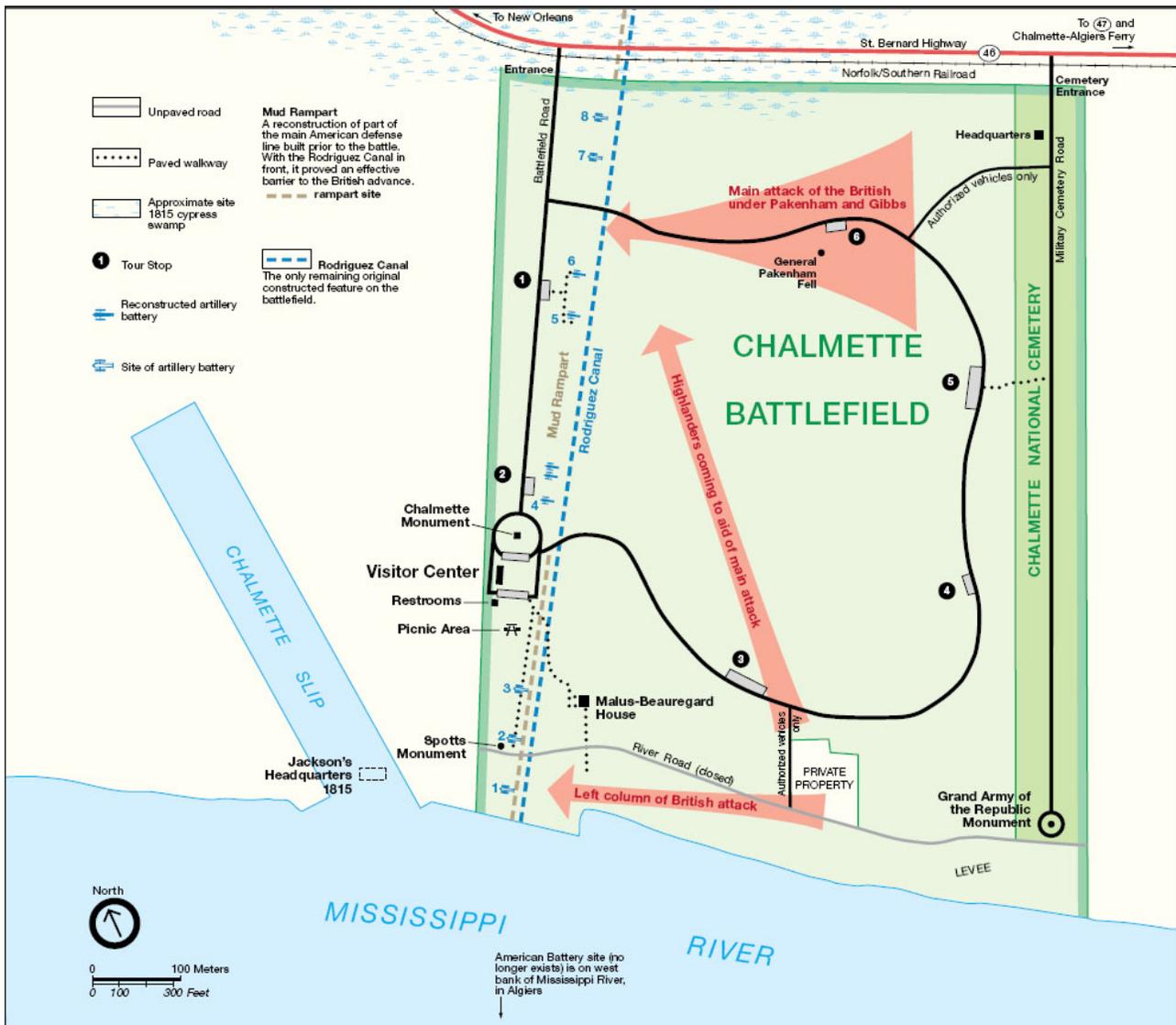
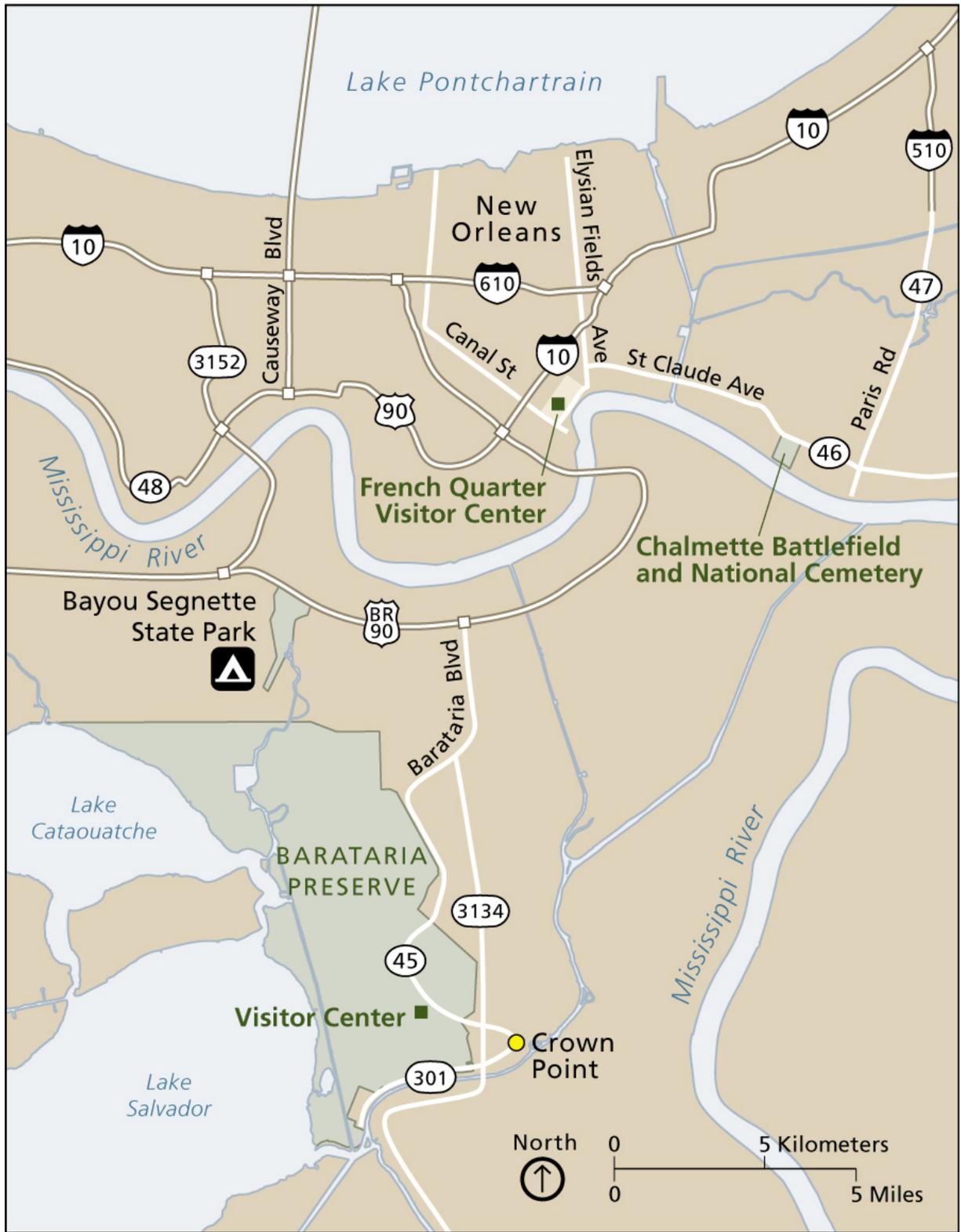


Figure 3: Regional Map



Orleans, notably the Malus-Beauregard House (c.1833), as well as archeological resources related to land uses no longer apparent. For example, a trace of Fazendeville Road, a remnant of the African-American subdivision of Fazendeville that existed on site from the late nineteenth century until 1964, remains within park boundaries. The interpretation of these latter non-battle-related features has proven problematic to the park's primary mission of interpreting the historic battlefield landscape, yet they represent features of historical and cultural significance in their own right.

The Chalmette National Cemetery is incorporated into the Chalmette Unit and is located on the east side of the battlefield. The cemetery was established as a National Cemetery in 1864. The Chalmette Unit, including the National Cemetery, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1966.

PURPOSE OF THE PLANS

In 2015, the 200th anniversary of the battle will be celebrated at the park. The purpose of this plan is twofold:

1. establish a 20-year management strategy (GMP Amendment); and
2. develop a schematic site design and development program (Development Concept Plan) that enhances the historic environment and improves visitor service infrastructure in ways that can be implemented prior to the 2015 celebration.

In August 2002, Secretary of the Interior Norton established the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force (Task Force), a Federal Advisory Committee to advise the NPS on suggested improvements to the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery. The Task Force completed a report with a series of recommendations for the planning team, which has helped inform the scoping process for this document (see Appendix A: Public and Agency Involvement).

The primary goal of scoping is to identify issues and determine the range of alternatives to be addressed. During scoping, the NPS staff provides an overview of the proposed project, including purpose and need and alternatives. The public is asked to submit comments, concerns, and suggestions relating to these goals.

This GMPA/DCP/EA will be the basic document for managing the Chalmette unit for the next 15 to 20 years. The objectives of this GMPA/DCP/EA are as follows:

- Confirm the purpose, significance, and special mandates of the Chalmette unit.
- Clearly define resource conditions and visitor uses and experiences to be achieved at the Chalmette unit consistent with the site's purpose and significance statements.
- Provide a framework for NPS managers to use when making decisions about how to best protect Chalmette unit resources, how to provide quality visitor uses and experiences, how to manage visitor use, and what kinds of

facilities, if any, to develop in or near the unit.

- Ensure that this foundation for decision making has been developed in consultation with interested stakeholders and adopted by the NPS leadership after an adequate analysis of the benefits, impacts, and economic costs of alternative courses of action.

Legislation establishing the NPS as an agency and governing its management provides the fundamental direction for the administration of all units and programs of the national park system. This GMPA/DCP/EA will build on these laws and the legislation that established the Chalmette unit to provide a vision for this historic site's future.

The "Servicewide Mandates and Policies" section calls the reader's attention to topics that are important to understanding the management direction at the national historic site. Table 1 summarizes the topics and the conditions to which management is striving. The alternatives in this GMP amendment address the desired future conditions that are not mandated by law and policy and must be determined through a planning process.

Planning History

A surprising number of planning documents have been produced for Chalmette over the past 40 years. While it is generally true that the goal of each past plan was to improve resource protection and visitor experience, the park still continues to struggle with many of the same planning and development issues identified by NPS over thirty years ago.

This section presents a brief synopsis of past NPS plans for Chalmette. While not normally included in a GMP, it is hoped that the discussion will provide a helpful context from which to better understand the scope and complexity of current planning issues.

1960 General Development Plan

In 1930, the monument and cemetery areas of the present day park were separated by private land holdings that covered much of the historic battlefield. Early NPS long range management plans envisioned the eventual incorporation of all intervening properties into the park. Included among these properties was a linear village of small African-American owned homes called Fazendeville (c. 1870). Design elements in the General Development Plan indicate that by 1960, all land, with the exception of the Fazendeville properties and the sewage treatment facility, had come under NPS control.

Encouraged by the prospect of land consolidation and the upcoming 150th anniversary celebration of the Battle of New Orleans, the plan proposed the most significant infrastructure development program since the 1908 completion of Chalmette Monument. Site improvements recommended include:

1. Reconstruction of the American rampart along the Rodriguez canal including four artillery batteries.
2. A 5,600 foot concrete motor tour road with five interpretive wayside pullouts and a small cemetery parking area.

3. A Visitor Center within the Malus-Beauregard House.
4. Two interpretive wayside pullouts along the entrance drive.

It is difficult to know what political or administrative prerogatives were exercised to elevate the sesquicentennial celebration to such prominence but, in 1962, a presidential commission was established to oversee the event. The commission was composed of eight members of the U.S. Senate, eight members of the U.S. House of Representatives, one NPS official, and six other persons appointed by the President of the United States. Given the commission's high-profile membership and a public expectation of new facilities suitable for the event, it is not surprising that the Fazendeville properties were quickly acquired, many through the exercise of eminent domain, and the American rampart and motor tour road were constructed.

Pushed to meet politically charged deadlines, negative impacts to the park's historic character associated with the new tour road were apparently underestimated. In an unrelated, yet equally unfortunate turn of events, false assumptions about the position of the Mississippi River at the time of the Battle led to incorrect placement of artillery batteries along the reconstructed American rampart.

1969 Master Plan

A multi-disciplinary team from the NPS Western Service Center completed a Master Plan for Chalmette in 1969. The following analysis of existing conditions,

excerpted directly from the final document, is commendable for its frankness, if not its clarity. The narrative describes a park environment very much in need of a new approach to historic resource and visitor services management.

"This present 141-acre battlefield contains only a two-third portion of the main American position, and the land in front of it on which the point of the British assault crumpled. Non--associated encroachments on the battlefield include a Mississippi River levee, a 17-acre National Cemetery, the reconstructed* [sic] Beauregard House [c. 1835] and about 15 acres of its grounds, the 100-foot-high Chalmette Monument, a 5,600-foot concrete tour road and parking areas, and a 1.5 acre in-holding east of the Beauregard House that accommodates a St. Bernard Parish sewage disposal plant, two and a half stories high.

In addition, the park is surrounded by an area which has felt the impact of expansion and industrial growth of New Orleans. The off-site audio-visual encroachments include a ship-loading facility, a sugar factory, a horse ranch, a four-lane divided highway, a railroad, and this hemisphere's largest aluminum reduction plant.

The present facilities are woefully inadequate for effective interpretation - both from the standpoint of developing a coherent, effective presentation of the Chalmette story, and from the

standpoint of providing public-use space sufficient for visitors to enjoy them in comfortable, dignified, and compatible environments.

Much of the fault in the present interpretation results from the necessity of fitting as much interpretive treatment as possible into inadequate space in an unfortunate location, on a development schedule sandwiched between the essential land acquisition programs and the Sesquicentennial Celebration deadline."

Please note that this quote mistakenly implies the Malus-Beauregard House is a reconstruction. In actuality, the structure was originally built in the French Creole style c.1835, was modified to the Greek Revival style during the 1860's, received additions by subsequent owners, and was restored to its presumed 1860's appearance by the NPS in 1958.

The 1969 Master Plan was well intended but proved impossible to implement because a key property on the western boundary could not be acquired. Albeit not feasible, the plan's design concept still appeals to some stakeholders because it simultaneously reduces the impact of vehicles on the historic scene and adds needed visitor circulation and facility infrastructure. Recommendations of the plan included:

1. Acquire additional property along the western boundary of the park. The plan targeted approximately 40 acres for future acquisition. It was anticipated that new visitor, vehicle circulation,

- administrative, and maintenance infrastructure would be relocated to this property once it was acquired.
2. Buffer the historic scene from its surrounding industrial landscape using selective tree planting and other landscape management techniques.
3. Remove specific contemporary intrusions from the historic landscape. Once new facilities were in place, the plan envisioned removing non-contributing structures from the battlefield area. The concrete motor tour loop road, sewage treatment plant, overhead power lines, and the levee service road were identified as structures whose removal would greatly enhance the historic scene. All of the noted intrusions can be seen from the battlefield today.
4. Construct a new visitor center near the park entrance. Accommodations for vehicle parking and circulation would be placed on the newly acquired property along the western boundary. As noted previously, failure to acquire the western property made construction of the facility unfeasible.
5. Restore and refurnish the first floor of Malus-Beauregard House as an antebellum plantation residence and rehabilitate the second floor as an employee apartment. The first floor of the structure was never furnished as an antebellum residence because an accurate description of the home's historic contents could not be documented. The house functioned as an interpretive facility until a new visitor center was built in 1984. The second floor has been occupied

intermittently for administrative uses.

6. Construct a connecting road between entrance to proposed visitor center and national cemetery. The road was never built. Failure to acquire the western property and implement the visitor center concept made this road connection unnecessary.

1982 GMP and DCP

Legislation creating Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve in 1978 envisioned one NPS management authority to service a multi-unit park composed of Big Oak Island, Barataria Marsh, selected sites within the French Quarter and Garden Districts of New Orleans, a variety of culturally significant sites in the delta region, and Chalmette. At the time of the park's legislative creation, Chalmette was the only operational unit in the new park.

It is conceivable that failure of the 1969 Master Plan to acquire essential property prompted the 1982 GMP and DCP to embed all new infrastructure within the existing boundary of the park. The plan's most significant proposal takes a bold "lemons to lemonade" approach to the presence of vehicles in the historic landscape by integrating them into the orientation and interpretative program of the battlefield.

Other recommendations in the plan included:

1. The possibility of acquiring additional property is apparently abandoned as improvements to park infrastructure are confined to

areas within the existing boundary. Management zones are created and existing resources and facilities tightly spot zoned into place.

2. An area slightly south of the existing comfort station was identified as suitable for a new visitor center. Prior to construction, however, preliminary archeological investigations at the recommended site uncovered buried artifacts associated with the Rodriguez Estate. Pressed by a park commitment to have the Visitor Center in place prior to the 1984 New Orleans World Fair and the tight zoning scheme adopted in the plan, few alternative sites were available. A smaller facility ended up being constructed on a parking lot island near the Chalmette Monument. The substitute facility has, in some sense, become a symbol of public frustration with the progress of park planning and development over the years.
3. Diverting vehicles away from the monument's axis entry road is a key element of the plan. This is accomplished by a realignment of the axis entry road at the intersection of the tour road, addition of two wayside pullouts near the entrance, and a reversal of the traffic direction on the tour road. The proposed changes were never implemented, perhaps due to a variety of implications brought on by discovery of the Rodriguez Estate in 1983 or a significant rethinking of potential impacts associated with vehicles in the historic landscape.
4. Construction of an NPS docking facility, walkway connection

between dock and Beauregard House, and an interpretive levee overlook are proposed in recognition of the potential for visitors to arrive by boat. A docking facility and a walkway connection were constructed by the Port Authority in 1983 and continue in service today.

- Unfortunately, the walkway is neither attractive, universally accessible, nor optimally placed for convenience and visibility. No interpretive displays or river overlook were constructed on or near the levee as proposed.
5. The plan acknowledges a lack of the required historical documentation necessary to accurately restore and refurbish the Malus-Beauregard House and recommends it be adaptively reused for a variety of other interpretive and administrative uses. The structure served as a visitor contact point until construction of the new visitor center. It has been sparingly used for interpretive programs since that time.
 6. Recommendations to screen adjacent industrial development, remove the sewage treatment facility, and bury overhead power lines similar to the 1969 Master Plan are included in this plan. The plan also recommends an area north of the loop road be allowed to re-vegetate naturally to function as a buffer and a representation of the former cypress swamp believed to have grown there at the time of the battle.

1990 DCP

Discovery of the Rodriguez Estate in 1983 compromised the foundation upon which many decisions in the 1982 GMP and DCP were built. Subsequent research and archeological surveys conducted in 1984 and 1985 revealed a 600-foot discrepancy in the alignment of features along the north-south axis of the battlefield. Simply stated, the new information indicated over seventeen battlefield features significant to the accurate interpretation of the site may have actually taken place 600 feet north of where historians previously believed. Of profound impact was the realization that artillery batteries placed along the reconstructed American rampart in 1964 were incorrectly located and that Battery 7 - a focal point of the battle - was most likely north of the tour road and not included in the reconstructed section of the rampart at all.

The intent of the 1990 DCP was to revise visitor use decisions made in the 1982 GMP and DCP that were no longer feasible in light of this new information. It recommended:

1. The monument entrance road would not be realigned as proposed in the 1982 plan. Instead, a traffic island near the front entrance would be constructed and incorporate a small turnout and wayside exhibit near the historic location of Battery 7. Battery locations would be adjusted to better represent their historic locations. Ultimately, the traffic island concept and turnout was never implemented.

2. The tour road would not change as proposed in the 1982 plan. The center turnout would be enlarged slightly and three additional waysides, including one within the cemetery, are proposed. The central turnout was enlarged and additional waysides installed in the 1980s. The cemetery wayside was never implemented.
 3. The forested area north of the tour road, which had been allowed to re-vegetate according to the 1982 plan, would have its trees removed to expose more of the historic battlefield. This recommendation was reconsidered in a subsequent plan and the trees in this area were not removed as proposed.
 4. The 1990 DCP did not make significant changes to management zoning and park resources remained tightly spot zoned in place.
1. The amendment slightly modified the park's existing management zone descriptions but left in place a zone configuration that primarily spot zoned existing conditions.
 2. As in all previous plans, adaptive use of the Malus-Beauregard House, acquisition and removal of the sewage treatment plant, screening the battlefield from visual influences of surrounding development, and the burying of power lines is encouraged.
 3. The need for universal accessibility across the levee from the tour boat dock to the park is recognized but alternative solutions are not identified.
 4. The plan acknowledges the potential impact of inaccurately located batteries along the American rampart on visitor understanding and suggests additional study be undertaken before appropriate corrective actions are recommended.
 5. The plan recommends acquisition of 40 acres on the western boundary. These are the same 40 acres whose failure to be acquired scuttled the 1969 Master Plan and presumably influenced design proposals in the 1982 GMP and DCP.

1995 GMP Amendment

The most current planning document at Chalmette is the 1995 park GMP Amendment. The amendment's primary focus was: 1) the creation and management of folk life centers in the Acadian region; 2) management of park-wide cooperative agreements; 3) management strategies for the Barataria Preserve Unit; and 4) acknowledgement of uncompleted actions proposed in the 1982 GMP.

While making substantial recommendations for the Park's other units, the amendment does little more at Chalmette than reconfirm past recommendations in the 1982 GMP and the 1990 DCP. The plan included the following elements:

NEED FOR THE PLAN

Significant planning issues remain unresolved at Chalmette. Acknowledging this should not, however, suggest that past planning recommendations were inadequate, poorly thought out, or executed. Indeed, the 1969 Master Plan and 1982 GMP and DCP both proposed very clear and

decisive strategies that, if not for fate (failure to acquire a key property in 1969 and discovery of the Rodriguez Estate in 1983), would have made this planning effort unnecessary.

A GMP Amendment is needed to consolidate the positive recommendations of past plans, reexamine core planning issues that continue to negatively impact park management, and establish new goals and strategies to improve resource protection and enhance visitor experience. The planning process will give everyone with a major stake in the park an opportunity to revalidate Chalmette's role in the nation, region, and local area. It will also give stakeholders a role in assessing whether the kinds of resource conditions and visitor experiences being pursued now are the best possible mix for the future and, if they are not, to influence how conditions might be changed.

Undertaking a Development Concept Plan gives stakeholders an opportunity to influence park infrastructure development. Once completed, the DCP will provide architects and engineers with the direction they need to design and construct any roads, buildings, trails, and other physical improvements called for in the plan.

Preparation of an Environmental Assessment will enhance stakeholder understanding of the advantages and disadvantages associated with different alternatives and, ultimately, provide the rationale for selecting a preferred course of action. Given the involvement of a Federal Advisory Committee,

full and open public participation is critical if a sense of public ownership and confidence in the decision making process is to be created.

In addition to the unfinished planning matters and inconsistencies outlined above, a GMP is required by the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 and NPS policy, which require an up-to-date GMP for each unit in the national park system.

In 2015, the United States will close the bicentennial of the War of 1812 with a commemoration of the final battle of that war, the Battle of New Orleans, which took place on the fields preserved at the Chalmette Unit. That battle was a pivotal moment in the development of the new Republic's identity. For years afterward, January 8 was celebrated as a national holiday second in importance only to July 4. The Civil War overshadowed the Battle of New Orleans, and the nation's collective memory of the battle dwindled. This new GMPA/DCP/EA is needed to create a blueprint for the physical preparation of the battlefield to make it a fitting location for the two hundredth anniversary of that seminal event.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

Actions directed by GMPs or in subsequent implementation plans are accomplished over time. Budget restrictions, requirements for additional data or regulatory compliance, and competing national park system priorities might prevent immediate implementation of many actions.

The implementation of the approved plan also could be affected by other factors. Once the GMP has been approved, additional feasibility studies and more detailed planning and environmental documentation would be completed, as appropriate, before any proposed actions can be carried out. For example,

- appropriate federal and state agencies would be consulted concerning actions that could affect threatened and endangered species
- the State Historic Preservation Officer would be consulted during implementation for those actions affecting sites either eligible or in the National Register of Historic Places (see Table 1 for further compliance requirements)

The GMP does not describe how particular programs or projects should be prioritized or implemented. Those decisions would be addressed during the more detailed planning associated with strategic plans and implementation plans. All of those future more detailed plans would tier from the approved GMP and would be based on the goals, future conditions, and appropriate types of activities established in the approved GMP.

GUIDANCE FOR THE PLANNING EFFORT

Each unit of the NPS is provided guidance for how it is to be managed by the Presidential proclamation or Congressional legislation that authorizes and establishes it. The Presidential or Congressional intent for a park unit is further interpreted by the park and expressed as its mission. The park's mission contains three kinds of statements: mission, purpose, and significance, which collectively provide the foundation for sound decision-making at the park. Park mission statements are always reviewed and sometimes refined as part of the GM Planning process.

Mission Statement

The Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve is dedicated to commemorating the lives and stories of the soldiers and civilians who participated in the Battle of New Orleans in 1815. The legacy of their contribution to American independence is honored through the interpretation of historic and contemporary cultural resources at the Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery.

Purpose Statements

Purpose statements reaffirm the reasons for which the park was set aside as part of the national park system. They are intended to document NPS' assumptions about what the park's establishing legislation really means so that those assumptions can be understood by others.

The purpose of Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery is:

- to honor and commemorate those who fought and died to preserve American independence at the Battle of New Orleans
- to care for and manage the archeological artifacts, historic structures, and other objects of historic and scientific importance for the benefit of future generations through preservation, interpretation, education, and inspiration

Significance Statements

Significance statements clearly describe the regional, national, or global significance of those park resources that preserve a portion of America's heritage. In addition, these statements help NPS personnel prioritize park management alternatives by identifying what is most important when allocating limited funding and staff resources.

The Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery are significant because they:

- contain the archeological and cultural landscape remnants of one of the most significant battlefields of the War of 1812
- commemorate a dramatic turning point in the development of the United States where European influence on the Mississippi River was ended and the path for western migration and settlement opened
- are associated with the military actions of Andrew Jackson who, as a result of his stunning victory at Chalmette, became a national

hero and began his political journey to the 7th U.S. Presidency

- honor and memorialize the military service of over 10 generations of Americans

SERVICEWIDE LAWS AND POLICIES

This section identifies what must be done at Chalmette Unit to comply with federal laws and policies of the NPS. Many national historic site management directives are specified in laws and policies guiding the NPS and are therefore not subject to alternative approaches. A GMP is not needed to decide, for instance, that it is appropriate to protect endangered species, control exotic species, protect archeological sites, or provide for handicap access. Laws and policies have already decided those and many other things for us. Although attaining some of these conditions set forth in these laws and policies may have been temporarily deferred in the national historic site because of funding or staffing limitations, the NPS will continue to strive to implement these requirements with or without a new GMP.

Some of these laws and executive orders are applicable solely or primarily to units of the national park system. These include the 1916 Organic Act that created the NPS, the General Authorities Act of 1970, the act of March 27, 1978, relating to the management of the national park system, and the National Parks Omnibus Management Act (1998). Other laws and executive orders have much broader application, such as the Endangered Species Act, the National Historic Preservation

Act, and Executive Order 11990 addressing the protection of wetlands.

The NPS Organic Act (16 USC § 1) provides the fundamental management direction for all units of the national park system:

"[P]romote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations . . . by such means and measure as conform to the fundamental purpose of said parks, monuments and reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

The National Park System General Authorities Act (16 USC § 1a-1 et seq.) affirms that while all national park system units remain "distinct in character," they are "united through their interrelated purposes and resources into one national park system as cumulative expressions of a single national heritage." The act makes it clear that the NPS Organic Act and other protective mandates apply equally to all units of the system. Further, amendments state that NPS management of park units should not "derogate . . . the purposes and values for which these various areas have been established."

The NPS also has established policies for all units under its stewardship. These are identified and explained in a guidance

manual entitled NPS *Management Policies 2006*. The alternatives considered in this document incorporate and comply with the provisions of these mandates and policies. To truly understand the implications of an alternative, it is important to combine the service wide mandates and policies with the management actions described in an alternative.

Table 1-1 shows some of the most pertinent service wide mandates and policy topics related to planning and managing the Chalmette unit. Under each topic are the *desired conditions that the staff is striving to achieve* for that topic and thus the table is written in the present tense. The alternatives in this GMPA/DCP/EA address the desired future conditions that are not mandated by law and policy and must be determined through a planning process.

Table 1-1: Servicewide Laws and Policies Pertaining to the Chalmette Unit

TOPIC	Current Laws and Policies Require That the Following Conditions Be Achieved at the Chalmette Unit
<p>Relations with Private and Public Organizations, Owners of Adjacent Land, and Government Agencies</p>	<p>Chalmette is managed as part of a greater ecological, social, economic, and cultural system.</p> <p>Good relations are maintained with owners of adjacent property, surrounding communities, and private and public groups that affect, and are affected by, Chalmette. The park is managed proactively to resolve external issues and concerns and ensure that its values are not compromised.</p> <p>Because the park is an integral part of the larger regional environment, the NPS works cooperatively with others to anticipate, avoid, and resolve potential conflicts, protect its resources, and address mutual interests in the quality of life for community residents. Regional cooperation involves federal, state, and local agencies, neighboring landowners, and all other concerned parties.</p>
<p>Sustainable Design/ Development</p>	<p>NPS facilities are harmonious with the park’s resources, compatible with natural processes, aesthetically pleasing, functional, as accessible as possible to all segments of the population, energy-efficient, and cost-effective.</p> <p>All decisions regarding NPS operations, facilities management, and development in Chalmette – from the initial concept through design and construction – reflect the principles of resource conservation. Thus, all park developments and operations are sustainable to the maximum degree possible and practicable. New developments and existing facilities are located, built, and modified according to the <i>Guiding Principles of Sustainable Design</i> (NPS 1993) or other similar guidelines.</p> <p>Management decision-making and activities throughout the National Park System use a structured decision-making process that looks at all aspects of the decision equally for each alternative. Results are documented and become part of the public record.</p>
<p>Land Protection</p>	<p>Land protection plans are prepared to determine and publicly document what lands or interests in land need to be in public ownership and what means of protection are available to achieve the purposes for which the unit was created.</p>
<p><u>Natural Resources</u></p>	
<p>Air Quality</p>	<p>Air quality in the park meets national ambient air quality standards for specified pollutants. The park’s air quality is maintained or enhanced with no significant deterioration.</p>
<p>Ecosystem Management</p>	<p>The park is managed holistically as part of a greater ecological, social, economic, and cultural system.</p>
<p>Exotic Species</p>	<p>The management of populations of exotic plant and animal species, up to and including eradication, are undertaken wherever such species threaten the park’s resources or public health and when control is prudent and feasible.</p>
<p>Fire Management</p>	<p>The park’s fire management programs are designed to meet resource management objectives prescribed for the various areas of the park and to ensure that the safety of firefighters and the public are not compromised.</p>

TOPIC	Current Laws and Policies Require That the Following Conditions Be Achieved at the Chalmette Unit
General Natural Resources/ Restoration	<p>Native species populations that have been severely reduced in or extirpated from the park are restored where feasible and sustainable.</p> <p>Populations of native plant and animal species function in as natural condition as possible except where special considerations are warranted.</p>
Native Vegetation and Animals	<p>The NPS strives to maintain all native plants and animals in the unit as part of the natural ecosystem keeping in mind the purposes for which the park was created.</p>
Soils	<p>The NPS actively seeks to understand and preserve soil resources and to prevent, to the extent possible, erosion, physical removal, or contamination of the soil or its contamination of other resources.</p> <p>Natural soil resources and processes function in as natural a condition as possible, except where special considerations are allowable under policy. When soil excavation is an unavoidable part of an approved facility development project, the NPS will minimize soil excavation, erosion, and offsite soil migration during and after the development activity.</p>
Threatened and Endangered Species	<p>Federally listed and state-listed threatened and endangered species and their habitats are protected and sustained.</p> <p>Native threatened and endangered species populations that have been severely reduced in or extirpated from the park are restored where feasible and sustainable.</p>
Water Resources	<p>Surface water and groundwater are protected, and water quality meets or exceeds all applicable water quality standards.</p> <p>NPS and NPS-permitted programs and facilities are maintained and operated to avoid polluting surface water and groundwater.</p>
Wetlands	<p>The natural and beneficial values of wetlands are preserved and enhanced. The NPS implements a “no net loss of wetlands” policy and strives to achieve a longer-term goal of net gain of wetlands across the National Park System through the restoration of previously degraded wetlands.</p> <p>The NPS avoids to the extent possible the long-term and short-term adverse impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands, and the NPS avoids direct or indirect support of new construction in wetlands wherever there is a practicable alternative.</p> <p>The NPS compensates for the remaining unavoidable adverse impacts on wetlands by restoring wetlands that have been previously degraded.</p>
Natural Soundscapes	<p>The NPS will preserve, to the greatest extent possible, the natural soundscapes of parks and the NPS will restore to the natural condition wherever possible those parks soundscapes that have become degraded by unnatural sounds (noise), and will protect natural soundscape from unacceptable impacts according to 4.9 Soundscape Management of the Management Policies, 2006.</p>

TOPIC	Current Laws and Policies Require That the Following Conditions Be Achieved at the Chalmette Unit
	<u>Cultural Resources</u>
Archeological Resources	<p>Archeological sites are identified and inventoried and their significance is determined and documented. Archeological sites are protected in an undisturbed condition unless it is determined through formal processes that disturbance or natural deterioration is unavoidable. When disturbance or deterioration is unavoidable, the site is professionally documented and excavated and the resulting artifacts, materials, and records are curated and conserved in consultation with the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Some archeological sites that can be adequately protected may be interpreted to the visitor.</p>
Cultural Landscapes	<p>Cultural landscape inventories are conducted to identify landscapes potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and to assist in future management decisions for landscapes and associated resources, both cultural and natural.</p> <p>The management of cultural landscapes focuses on preserving the landscape's physical attributes, biotic systems, and use when that use contributes to its historical significance.</p>
Historic Structures	<p>Historic structures are inventoried and their significance and integrity are evaluated under National Register of Historic Places criteria. The qualities that contribute to the listing or eligibility for listing of historic structures on the NRHP are protected in accordance with the <i>Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties</i> (unless it is determined through a formal process that disturbance or natural deterioration is unavoidable).</p>
Ethnographic Resources	<p>Appropriate cultural anthropological research is conducted in cooperation with tribes and groups associated with the park, including American Indian tribes historically associated with the Battle of New Orleans: Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians and the descendents of the African American community of Fazendeville.</p> <p>Future study and research could reveal that other American Indian tribes are historically or culturally associated with JELA, in addition to the Choctaw warriors' participation at the Battle of New Orleans. If so, these tribes will be added as participants in park planning and management.</p> <p>To the extent practicable, permitted by law, and not clearly inconsistent with essential agency functions, the NPS accommodates access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners and avoids adversely affecting the physical integrity of these sacred sites.</p> <p>NPS general regulations on access to and use of natural and cultural resources in the unit are applied in an informed and balanced manner that is consistent with National Park purposes and does not unreasonably interfere with American Indian use of traditional areas or sacred resources and does not result in the degradation of National Park resources.</p> <p>Historically associated American Indian tribes and other</p>

TOPIC	Current Laws and Policies Require That the Following Conditions Be Achieved at the Chalmette Unit
	<p>individuals and groups, including the descendents of the Fazendeville Community, linked by ties of kinship or culture to ethnically identifiable human remains, sacred objects, objects of cultural patrimony, and associated funerary objects are consulted when such items may be disturbed or are encountered on park lands.</p> <p>Access to sacred sites and park resources by American Indians continues to be provided when the use is consistent with Chalmette's purposes and the protection of resources.</p> <p>All ethnographic resources determined eligible for listing or listed on the NRHP are protected. If disturbance of such resources is unavoidable, formal consultation with the SHPO and the ACHP, and with American Indian tribes as appropriate, is conducted.</p> <p>All executive agencies are required to consult, to the greatest extent practicable and to the extent permitted by law, with tribal governments before taking actions that affect federally recognized tribal governments. These consultations are to be open and candid, and confidential as needed, so that all interested parties may evaluate for themselves the potential impact of relevant proposals.</p> <p>In addition to the inadvertent discoveries of cultural resources, NPS Management Policies 2006 states in part that a park unit's "traditionally associated peoples should be consulted about ... other proposed NPS actions that may affect the treatment of, use of, and access to park resources with cultural meaning to a group."</p>
Museum Collections	<p>All museum collections (objects, specimens, and manuscript collections) are identified and inventoried, catalogued, documented, preserved, and protected, and provision is made for access to and use of collections for exhibits, research, and interpretation according to the servicewide Park Museum Collection Storage Plan (2007).</p> <p>The qualities that contribute to the significance of collections are protected in accordance with established standards.</p>
Cultural Soundscapes	<p>The NPS will preserve soundscape resources and values of the parks to the greatest extent possible to protect opportunities for appropriate transmission of cultural and historic sounds that are fundamental components of the purposes and values for which the parks were established according to 5.3.1.7 Cultural Soundscape Management of the Management Policies, 2006.</p>

TOPIC	Current Laws and Policies Require That the Following Conditions Be Achieved at the Chalmette Unit
Visitor Use and Experience	<p>Cultural and natural resources are conserved “unimpaired” for the enjoyment of future generations. Visitors have opportunities for forms of enjoyment that are uniquely suited and appropriate to the superlative natural and cultural resources found in the park. No activities occur that would cause derogation of the values and purposes for which the unit has been established.</p> <p>For all zones, districts, or other logical management divisions in the park, the types and levels of visitor use are consistent with the desired resource and visitor experience conditions prescribed for those areas. To the extent feasible, programs, services, and facilities in the park are accessible to and usable by all people, including those with disabilities.</p> <p>NPS staff will identify implementation commitments for user capacities for all areas of the unit.</p>
Interpretation and Education	<p>Instill in park visitors an understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the significance of the unit and its resources. Interpretive and educational programs encourage the development of a personal stewardship ethic, and broaden public support for preserving park resources by foraging a connection between park resources, visitors, the community, and park management.</p>
Commercial Services	<p>Same as Visitor Use and Experience and Park Use Requirements, above.</p> <p>All commercial services require authorization and must be shown to be necessary and/or appropriate and economically feasible. Appropriate planning is done in support of commercial services authorization.</p>
Public Health and Safety	<p>NPS <i>Management Policies 2006</i> says that the saving of human life will take precedence over all other management actions as the NPS strives to protect human life and provide for injury-free visits.</p>

**RELATIONSHIP OF OTHER PLANNING EFFORTS
TO THIS GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT**

**HURRICANE KATRINA AND
CHALMETTE'S POST-RECOVERY
PLANNING**

While the planning team was finalizing the development of the alternatives, Hurricane Katrina struck Chalmette on August 29, 2005. The Chalmette Unit was located near the western eye-wall of the hurricane, and experienced sustained winds in excess of 100 miles per hour. These winds uprooted trees and grave markers, damaged roofs and chimneys, and battered the Chalmette Monument. More seriously, Hurricane Katrina's storm surge overwhelmed the hurricane levee system that protected the unit and the surrounding communities from rising Gulf of Mexico waters. The entire unit was briefly flooded to depths ranging between four and ten feet, and lower portions of the unit, especially buildings in the cemetery, remained in standing floodwaters for days.

The flood destroyed much of the interpretive media in the Visitor Center (VC). Floodwaters so severely compromised the structural integrity of the building that the decision was made to demolish the damaged structure. The Malus-Beauregard House was flooded briefly to a depth of almost four feet. The wind damaged the roof, brick chimneys, galleries, and exterior paint and shutters. The surge swept away picnic tables, footbridges and other outdoor objects including signs and trashcans.

The force of the surge toppled large sections of the century-old

brick wall that surrounded the National Cemetery. The historic Superintendent's Lodge, which served as the unit headquarters building, had more than seven feet of water above the floor. Though the surge elevation dissipated, most of the downstairs sat in pooled floodwater for weeks. Floodwater ruined office equipment, computers, copiers, furniture, files, books, carpets; the heating, air conditioning, plumbing, alarm, phone, data and electrical systems; and, employees' personal possessions.

Paint and other finishes, wallboard, plaster, molding, flooring, carpets, doors and windows, framing, electrical outlets, and anything else affected by floodwaters or rainwater seepage is being remediated or replaced.

The surge destroyed the unit's fleet of trucks, automobiles and electric vehicles. Tractors, mowers, power tools, hand tools, and other equipment met a similar fate. A one hundred foot high sycamore with a diameter of over five feet smashed the roof of the historic Carriage House, which served as the unit maintenance building. As a result, rainwater damaged tools, supplies and equipment stored above the height of the surge.

The Chalmette Monument was surrounded by scaffolding erected prior to the storm by a contractor doing re-pointing and vegetation removal work. Though secured in anticipation of the hurricane, sections of

scaffolding broke loose and chipped the exterior marble surface. Because the monument itself swayed in the high winds, the hardware that held the interior brass staircase in place was loosened and pulled from the walls.

The landing dock on the Mississippi River, owned and operated by the St. Bernard Port, Harbor and Terminal Authority (Port Authority), was irreparably damaged by a separate surge confined within the Mississippi River levees. The Port Authority replaced the dock in kind in 2009.

All of the damaged structures except the Visitor Center are being rehabilitated. Equipment is being replaced as funds and operational requirements dictate. The Visitor Center was replaced by a temporary modular building. Congress also appropriated funds to replace the Visitor Center. After analysis of future unit requirements, the decision has been made to proceed with the replacement of the old 1440 square foot (s.f.) Visitor Center with a 3500 s.f. Visitor Center. At the present time NPS has completed the construction of a 3500 s.f. building in place of the lost VC as part of a separate planning and design effort.

As a consequence of the effects of Hurricane Katrina, all of the GMPA Alternatives were modified to include this 3500 s.f. Visitor Center, rather than to look at a range of Visitor Center sizes in the different alternatives. The environmental effects of the new Visitor Center were analyzed in a separate document, and a FONSI was signed on August 26, 2008.

Analysis of conditions at the Chalmette Unit and in neighboring communities by NPS staff, along with consultation with other agencies and interested parties since Hurricane Katrina, led to the conclusion that the remainder of the range of concepts outlined in the alternatives remain appropriate. As a consequence, NPS and the planning team resumed development of this GMPA/DCP/EA.

The general management planning process creates uncertainties about the long term uses that will ultimately be selected for certain existing and damaged facilities. In many cases, therefore, the goal of post-hurricane recovery efforts will be to repair and stabilize structures in a manner that will leave them unfinished until a final alternative is chosen through this planning process.

SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES AND POST-RECOVERY PLANNING

The extensive damage to the Chalmette Unit is reflective of what the hurricane and flood did to surrounding communities. The same levee system that surrounded the lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans also protected Arabi, Chalmette, Meraux, Violet and the settlements along upper Bayou Terre aux Bouefs in St. Bernard Parish. This area suffered the most catastrophic damage in the New Orleans metropolitan region. Worse damage occurred only in leveed areas of lower Plaquemines Parish and areas completely outside the levee systems, such as eastern St. Bernard Parish and the Mississippi Gulf Coast, which took the brunt of the surge and the eye wall. Katrina depopulated the entire area surrounding the

Chalmette unit, with more than 99% of buildings flooded. The U.S. Census Bureau estimated the July 2005 pre-Katrina population of St. Bernard Parish as 64,683. Almost a year after the storm, in July 2006 the population was estimated at 13,875. The July 2007 estimate was 33,439 (U.S. Census Bureau). The July 2007 estimate represents only 51% of the pre-storm figure.

In such an atmosphere of uncertainty, planning has to remain flexible and adaptive, both for the park and the surrounding communities.

ST. BERNARD PARISH TOURISM CENTER

During the scoping process, the proposal to create an offsite visitor center to be managed by St. Bernard Parish, with possible support from NPS and other partners, generated considerable interest and enthusiasm. The purpose of such a center would be not only to orient visitors to the Chalmette Unit, but to interpret some of the broader themes of area history, culture, and natural history, and to provide a venue to more fully interpret that part of the British Campaign of 1814-15 that took place outside the confines of NPS property.

Discussions about possible locations of such a center focused on the Meraux Estate fields on the north side of St. Bernard Highway from the unit, and on the St. Bernard Port, Harbor and Terminal Authority's properties that occupy the old Kaiser Aluminum lands both upstream and downstream of the unit.

Decisions about such a facility are not within the authority of NPS or the Federal government. Considerable uncertainty surrounds the future priorities of St. Bernard Parish post Hurricane Katrina. However, NPS remains committed to continuing to explore possibilities for such a facility with the parish and other partners.

PLANNING ISSUES/CONCERNS

INTRODUCTION

Planning issues for this GMPA/DCP/EA were derived from an examination of the full range of comments and ideas solicited from the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force, park staff, other agencies, special interest groups, and the general public during scoping (early information gathering). An understanding of the site's purpose and significance and important planning issues helped the planning team develop potential management alternatives that respond to current and future resource and visitor experience conditions.

From August 2002 to August 2004, the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force Federal Advisory Committee met and formulated a series of recommendations (see Appendix A). In 2003 and 2004, NPS met with stakeholders, park staff, and other government agencies and conducted GMPA/DCP/EA public meetings and open houses to identify issues and to solicit preliminary public input on the development of the GMPA/DCP/EA. Based on these meetings, the planning team developed a set of management alternatives that provide strategies for addressing the issues. The planning process was interrupted by Hurricane Katrina in late 2005, and could not be resumed until late 2007 while the park and community dealt with more pressing issues.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

The following issues and management concerns were

identified by the public and NPS staff for the Chalmette Unit.

Historic Integrity of the Site

- The historic core of the battlefield should continue to be maintained to evoke the scene from 1814-15.
- Should the Tour Road be made a pedestrian-only road to limit the presence of contemporary vehicles in the historic core?
- Should the Tour Road be removed?
- All the historic buildings should be restored and adaptively re-used.
- How should vegetation on the battlefield, in the re-created "swamp" and in buffers be maintained?
- Should the woodland buffer be removed to open up the site of the British Charge? Or, should more buffer be planted?
- Should the Tour Road be removed to restore the historic scene?
- A more historically appropriate riverboat dock design is needed.
- Archeological resources need to be protected and interpreted.
- Is the British Monument in the proper place?
- Should additional commemorative markers be put in place?
- Should the VC be moved?
- Many historic, battlefield-era features, such as ditch and road traces, need to be identified and interpreted.
- The site needs to be reconnected to the river, in part by removing trees and re-

opening the view from the levee.

- What should be done about the riverfront in general?
- How should the non-battle era Malus-Beauregard House and landscape be managed? Should missing elements be restored?
- Should missing historic features in the cemetery be restored? Should the historic river road entrance be re-opened? Should the trail to the British Monument be removed?

Natural Resources

- The wooded buffers and batture vegetation on the river should be maintained as habitat.
- Battlefield mowing should be minimized to keep vegetation high in winter and during peak migratory seasons and timed so as not to disturb nesting birds.
- Wetlands should be left undisturbed and enhanced.
- Exotic invasive plants should be removed.
- Exotic insect pests such as fire ants and Formosan termites should be treated.

Visitor Services

- A larger Visitor Center is needed.
- A way to more effectively accommodate large groups on the battlefield and in the monument area for special events such as the anniversary celebration is needed.
- Use wayside exhibits to improve visitor understanding.
- Repair the rampart and canal display and make it more historically accurate. Add cannons to all of the

artillery emplacements at the historic locations.

- Additional access is needed for special events in the Malus-Beauregard House and at the National Cemetery.
- The staircase in the monument should be kept open.
- Additional seating for walkers along the tour route is needed.
- The levee elevation should be used to provide visitors with an enhanced, raised view of the battlefield, especially those arriving by riverboat.
- Riverboat operators should be encouraged to allow visitors to remain longer, perhaps by adding enhanced interpretation.
- After hours parking near the gates is needed.
- More consistent maintenance of vegetation, buildings and visitor facilities is needed.
- The battlefield should be kept closely mowed.
- Install a tram system on the tour road for visitors.
- Repair cemetery wall and headstones.
- Improve drainage.
- Consider lighting the monument.
- Restore River Road for visitor use and cemetery access.

Recreational Activities

- What types of community and special events are appropriate in the site's historic core? In the cemetery? The Malus-Beauregard House?
- Maintaining a place for local recreational use, including walking and jogging, and after hour use, is important.
- Should the public have access to the river?

Partnership Development

- The park must involve and promote partnerships to be successful.
- The park must work cooperatively with St. Bernard Parish Government.
- Volunteers and re-enactors are important partners that must be involved in future decision-making.
- Can a friends group be established?
- Can NPS partner with St. Bernard Parish to tell the history of the whole region? Can a joint visitor center be built?
- Better highway signage and a new, landscaped entrance sequence are needed.
- Public transportation from downtown New Orleans is needed.

Local and Regional Economies

- More visitors mean more tourism dollars. How will local businesses benefit?
- Will the park provide tourists information for other attractions in the local area?
- What can be done about controlling development on undeveloped land adjacent to the park?
- What impact will park development have on surrounding industrial, commercial and residential properties?

Sharing the Story inside and Outside the Boundaries of the Park

- The Battle of New Orleans story is a national story. It needs to be told to a national

audience, not only to visitors of the park.

- The NPS property represents only a small part of the historic landscape over which the campaign was fought. How will the remainder of the story be told? How will other sites be protected and interpreted?
- Through consultation, historically associated American Indian tribes can become more involved in telling the story of their participation in the Battle of New Orleans.
- How will the Fazendeville oral histories collected by the park service be used to tell the story to a wider audience?
- How will the Malus-Beauregard House be used to tell the post-battle story of the site?
- Can an interpretive component be added to the Chalmette National Cemetery?

KEY ISSUES

The comments and ideas solicited from park staff, other agencies, special interest groups, and the general public were analyzed and filtered, resulting in key issues to be addressed. Other issues are either outside the scope of the GMPA/DCP/EA have been addressed by other means. Post-Hurricane Katrina replacement of the Visitor Center and repairs to the historic buildings, cemetery walls, and headstones have addressed many of the original scoping concerns raised by the public.

The key issues are:

- What is the best way to preserve the historic landscape and interpret the

battle given the limited size of the unit and surrounding encroachments?

- How should the battlefield itself be accessed by visitors? Should the Tour Road remain or be closed to automobiles?
- How can additional visitor access needs, especially for special events, be accommodated?
- How is visitor access addressed through size and location of parking facilities and trails?
- To what extent are visitor interpretive and recreational opportunities to be provided in the cemetery and in the Malus-Beauregard House?
- How can administration and maintenance needs be addressed without encroaching on the historic area?

IMPACT TOPICS - RESOURCES AND VALUES AT STAKE IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

IMPACT TOPICS

An important part of planning is seeking to understand the consequences of making one decision over another. To this end, NPS GMPs are accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement or an Environmental Assessment depending on the proposed action alternatives. These environmental studies identify the anticipated impacts of possible actions on resources and on park site visitors and neighbors.

Impact topics serve to focus the environmental analysis and to ensure the relevance of impact evaluation. The impact topics identified for this GMPA/DCP/EA are outlined in this section; they were identified based on federal laws and other legal requirements, Council on Environmental Quality guidelines, NPS management policies, staff subject-matter expertise, and issues and concerns expressed by the public and other agencies early in the planning process. Also included is a discussion of some impact topics that are commonly addressed, but that are not addressed in this plan for the reasons given.

IMPACT TOPICS TO BE CONSIDERED

The following impact topics are considered and fully analyzed in Chapter 3: Affected Environment and Chapter 4: Environmental Consequences of this document. For a detailed description of these resources, please refer to Chapter 3.

Cultural Resources

- Historic Sites and Structures
- Archeological Resources
- Cultural Landscape
- Ethnographic Resources

Natural Resources

- Floodplain
- Coastal Zone
- Soils
- Wetlands
- Vegetation
- Wildlife

Socioeconomic Environment

Visitor Use and Experience

NPS Operations

TOPICS TO BE DISMISSED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION

Some impact topics that commonly are considered during the planning process were not relevant to the development of this GMPA/DCP/EA due to the following: (a) implementing the alternatives would have no effect or a negligible effect on the topic or resource, or (b) the resource does not occur at the Chalmette Unit. A brief description of these topics and rationale for their dismissal follows.

Cultural Resources

Museum Collections

With the exception of artifacts and displays in the Visitor Center, all Chalmette museum

collections are housed off-site at 419 Decatur Street or at the Southeast Archeological Center in Tallahassee, Florida. Therefore this topic is being dismissed from further analysis.

Indian Trust Lands

No lands comprising the park are held in trust by the secretary of the interior solely for the benefit of American Indians due to their status as American Indians. Therefore this topic is being dismissed from further analysis.

Natural Resources

Air Quality

The 1963 Clean Air Act, as amended (42 USC 7401 et seq.), requires federal land managers to protect air quality, while the NPS Management Policies 2006 address the need to analyze air quality during planning.

There are no major air pollution sources in the park. Vehicle exhaust is the most common pollutant resulting from visitor use and management activities.

Should any of the action alternatives be selected, local air quality might be temporarily affected by construction-related activities. Hauling material and operating construction equipment would result in increased vehicle emissions in a localized area. Volatile organic compounds, nitrogen compounds, carbon monoxide, and sulfur dioxide emissions would generally disperse fairly quickly from the construction area. This degradation would last only as long as construction activities occurred and would most likely have a negligible effect on

regional pollutant levels. Fugitive dust from construction could intermittently increase airborne particulate concentrations in the area near the project site but mitigating measures would reduce potential adverse effects to a negligible level. No long-term impacts on air quality would be expected to occur from implementing any action alternative.

In summary, if any action alternative is implemented, local air quality would be temporarily degraded by dust and emissions from construction equipment and vehicles. Regional air quality would not be more than negligibly affected. For these reasons, air quality is dismissed as an impact topic in this document.

Prime or Unique Farmlands

The Council on Environmental Quality's 1980 memorandum on prime and unique farmlands states that prime farmlands have the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. Unique agricultural land is land other than prime farmland that is used for production of specific high-value food and fiber crops. Both categories require that the land be available for farming uses. Lands within the park are not available for farming uses, nor do they meet these definitions. This impact topic was dismissed from further consideration.

Geologic Resources

NPS Management Policies 2006 require the lead agency to analyze the impacts of the proposed action and alternatives on geologic resources. Impacts on soils are assessed separately

in the "Environmental Consequences" chapter. NPS policy prohibits the surface mining of soil, gravel, cinder, or rock materials for any operations purposes, including the construction of roads or facilities. None of the alternatives described in this document would affect the geology of the region; therefore, this topic has been excluded from further environmental analysis.

Water Quality

There are no water resources (i.e., streams, creeks) located within the park boundary; however, the Chalmette Unit is located adjacent to the Mississippi River. The engineered levee acts a barrier to the Mississippi River for any activities occurring within the park boundary that could potentially impact the water quality of the river. Although the topography of the Chalmette Unit is relatively flat, there is a slight down slope toward the north so that water draining from the site moves to the north (away from the river), ultimately collecting in the St. Bernard Parish storm drain system along St. Bernard Highway. As part of the St. Bernard Parish stormwater system the water is ultimately pumped to receiving wetlands. As a result, sediments from activities at the Chalmette Unit would not impact water quality. This topic is removed from further consideration.

Groundwater

Groundwater would not be affected by any actions proposed in the alternatives. No septic systems or domestic wells are planned within the park boundary. This

topic is removed from further consideration.

Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers

Wilderness areas and wild and scenic rivers are congressional designations. There are no such designations in or near the Chalmette Unit, and no areas or rivers that would be potentially eligible for designation. Thus this topic is dismissed from further analysis.

Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Plants and Animals and their Habitats

Federal agencies must assess the effects of their actions on rare, threatened or endangered (RTE) species as classified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. No endangered or threatened plants or animals are known to inhabit the Chalmette Unit or its vicinity. Consultation with the USFWS on the impacts of the final selected alternative on RTE species was completed September 24, 2009.

Soundscapes

The Chalmette Unit is located in a developed industrial and residential area that does not provide opportunity for enjoying a soundscape of natural sounds or a contemplative experience related to sounds produced by nature. The cultural soundscape associated with living history demonstrations and other interpretive events will be maintained. The park will make every effort to use vegetative buffers to reduce the impact of adjacent sounds, and will work with neighbors to improve the soundscape. However, inasmuch as most of the sounds affecting the

unit are outside of NPS management control, this topic is dismissed from further analysis.

Night Sky (Lightscapes)

NPS policy requires the NPS to preserve, to the extent possible, the natural lightscapes and to seek to minimize the intrusion of artificial light (light pollution) into the night scene (NPS Management Policies 2006). The clarity of night skies can be important to visitor experience as well as being ecologically important. Artificial light sources outside the Chalmette Unit have the potential to diminish the clarity of night skies.

Following NPS policy, any outdoor lighting that is found to be contributing to nighttime light pollution at the Chalmette Unit will be replaced with appropriate fixtures that are downcast. In addition, any new outdoor lighting installed as a result of implementing any of the alternatives in this document would be the minimum necessary for safety or security and of a design that prevents stray light from spreading upwards into the sky (best lighting practices). Given these considerations and the fact that the Chalmette Unit is open for daytime use only, the topic of night sky is dismissed.

Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898, "General Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," requires all federal agencies to incorporate environmental justice into their missions by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or

environmental effects of their programs and policies on minorities and low-income populations and communities. None of the alternatives in this plan would have disproportionate adverse economic, health, or environmental effects on socially or economically disadvantaged populations or communities as defined in the Environmental Protection Agency's "Environmental Justice Guidance." Therefore, this topic is dismissed from further analysis.

Energy Requirements and Conservation Potential

The actions proposed in the alternatives would not result in any new energy needs (i.e., rehabilitated landscapes, parking lots, un-staffed Visitor Information Station). The staff offices, refurbished administration buildings and relocated maintenance facility would be designed with long-term sustainability in mind including energy efficient utilities resulting in equal or less energy use. The NPS has adopted the concept of sustainable design as a guiding principle of facility planning and development (NPS Management Policies 2006). The objectives of sustainability are to design facilities to minimize adverse effects on natural and cultural values, to reflect their environmental setting, and to require the least amount of nonrenewable fuels or energy.

Since the action alternatives would not result in an increased energy need, this topic is being dismissed from further analysis.

Natural or Depletable Resources Requirements and Conservation Potential

Consideration of these topics is required by 40 CFR 1502.16. The NPS has adopted the concept of sustainable design as a guiding principle of facility planning and development (NPS Management Policies 2006). The objectives of sustainability are to design facilities to minimize adverse effects on natural and cultural values; to reflect their environmental setting and to maintain and encourage biodiversity; to operate and maintain facilities to promote their sustainability; and to illustrate and promote conservation principles and practices through sustainable design and ecologically sensitive use. Essentially, sustainability is the concept of living within the environment with the least impact on the environment. Through sustainable design concepts and other resource management principles, all of the alternatives analyzed in this document would conserve natural resources and would not result in an appreciable loss of natural or depletable resources. Thus, this topic is dismissed from further analysis in this document.

Urban Quality and Design of the Built Environment

Consideration of this topic is required by 40 CFR 1502.16. Existing period architecture at the Chalmette Unit would be maintained for any building rehabilitation or new structures built under the action alternatives. In addition, emphasis would be placed on designs, materials, and colors that do not detract from the natural and built environment

providing minimal intrusion into the landscape and viewshed. Given these considerations, no further analysis of this topic is necessary.

ALTERNATIVES

INCLUDING THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE



INTRODUCTION

Many aspects of the desired future condition of the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, including the Battlefield, Chalmette Monument, Rampart, Malus-Beauregard House and National Cemetery, are defined in the park's enabling legislation, its purpose and significance statements, and servicewide mandates and policies (as described in Chapter 1). Within these parameters, the NPS solicited input from the public, the Chalmette Task Force, NPS staff, government agencies, and other organizations regarding issues and desired conditions for the park. Planning team members gathered information about existing visitor use and the condition of the park's facilities and resources. They considered which areas of the Chalmette unit attract visitors and which areas have sensitive resources.

Using the above information the planning team developed a set of four management zones and three action alternatives plus a "no action" alternative to reflect the range of ideas proposed by the planning team and the public. This chapter describes the management zones and the alternatives for managing the Chalmette Unit for the next 15 to 20 years. It concludes with summary tables highlighting the key differences between the alternatives and the key differences in the impacts that are expected from implementing each alternative (The summary of impacts table is based on the analysis in "Chapter 4: Environmental Consequences").

This chapter also describes mitigative measures that would be used to lessen or avoid impacts.

MANAGEMENT ZONES AND ALTERNATIVES

The building blocks for reaching an approved plan for managing a national park system unit are the prescriptive management zones and the alternatives. All are developed within the scope of the park unit's purpose, significance, mandates, and legislation.

Management Zones

Prescriptive Management Zones influence the management of park resources by specifying the desired visitor experiences, desired cultural and natural resource conditions, and appropriate kinds of activities and facilities necessary to achieve those goals in designated areas of the park over time. PMZs are developed by the planning team with the assistance of other NPS personnel and input from the general public.

The formulation of zones is based in large part on the cultural and natural resource management priorities of the park and a desire to maintain a diversity of high quality visitor experiences. While the definition of management zones remains the same in all alternatives, each alternative accommodates them in different combinations and locations to best represent its own particular intent or focus.

Four zones have been developed for use in this GMPA/DCP/EA:

1. Historic Interaction Zone
2. Cultural Landscape Zone
3. Visitor Services Zone
4. Park Services Zone

Description of Historic Interaction Zone

Desired Visitor Experiences

The zone would host a variety of interpretive opportunities that help visitors learn about the historic importance of the site and its resources. Interpretive experiences would be self-guided or led by a NPS staff ranger or trained volunteer. The sights and sounds of people actively engaged in interpretive programs would be evident during periods of moderate to high visitation. The probability of encountering other visitors would be high at most times. The probability of encountering park staff and other evidence of NPS management would be high at most times. Visiting most areas in this zone would require a low to moderate level of physical exertion. Interpretive programs would be provided in ways that respect and maintain the historic ambiance of the zone.

Desired Resource Conditions or Character

The historic landscape would be managed to represent the period of significance. The presence of appropriately sited interpretive waysides and trail-side site amenities like benches and trash receptacles would be evident.

Appropriate Kinds of Activities or Facilities

Primary activities include viewing cultural and natural resources and participating in interpretive programs. Historic landscape and historic structure exteriors will remain accurate to the period of significance. The exteriors of architectural resources are preserved or restored to the period of significance. Interiors of historic architectural resources (or portions thereof) may be preserved, restored and furnished, or rehabilitated to support interpretation or operational goals as described in the specific alternative management concept being considered.

Description of Cultural Landscape Zone

Desired Visitor Experiences

Visitors to the cultural landscape zone would experience a historic scene similar to the period of significance. Few visitors will choose to enter the zone since no trails or other facilities will be provided. Interaction between visitors and park resources would be predominantly informal and self-guided. Visitors could explore cultural and natural resources by foot as they move through the zone at their own pace.

The introduction of visible non-period-of-significance elements in the landscape would be minimized as much as possible. In particular, the view and presence of motor vehicles would be minimized. Interpretation of cultural and natural resources would be provided in ways that

maintain and enhance the historic ambiance of the zone. Opportunities for solitude or a contemplative experience would be possible at times.

The probability of encountering other visitors would be low, though the view of visitors in other zones would be moderate to high. Visiting some areas in this zone would require a moderate to high level of physical exertion, especially during the summer when the weather is hot. Visitors could expect to be more than a 20 minute walk from the nearest water fountain or comfort station in certain areas of this zone.

Desired Resource Conditions or Character

Cultural and natural resources would be maintained and preserved to reflect the historic character of the landscape. The introduction of non-period elements in the landscape is minimized. The presence of trail-side site amenities like benches, trash receptacles, and water fountains would not be found in this zone.

Appropriate Kinds of Activities or Facilities

Walking, hiking, and viewing cultural and natural resources would be the primary activities. Use would be limited to foot traffic except to for park maintenance activities, and emergency vehicle use.

Indicators of unacceptable impacts to resources and visitor experiences

The following indicators are signals to park management and the public that other management

actions may be necessary to sustain the resources and visitor experiences described in the Cultural Landscape management zone.

- Perceived crowding becomes high enough to compromise the contemplative nature of the area for a majority of visitors in the zone.
- The volume and frequency of recreational activity in the zone has a direct and significant negative impact on the visitor experience or resource protection objectives of an adjacent zone.

Description of Visitor Services Zone

Desired Visitor Experiences

Non-historic additions to the landscape are expected but their designs are sensitive and complimentary to the historical context of the areas in which they occur. Minimizing visual and sound impacts to adjacent zones is very important. Visitor facilities and services are intensively managed for resource protection and visitor safety in this zone.

Desired Resource Conditions or Character

Cultural and natural resources can be modified to accommodate the needs of the visitor. Non-historic additions to the landscape are expected but their designs are sensitive and complimentary to the historical context of the areas in which they occur. Minimizing visual and sound impacts to adjacent zones is very important. Visitor facilities, services, and activities are intensively

managed for resource protection and visitor safety in this zone.

Appropriate Kinds of Activities or Facilities

Visitors exit their vehicles, are welcomed to the site, and receive introductory information about programs and facilities in this zone. Orientation and interpretation opportunities are provided through a variety of venues and formats. Visitor support facilities such as contact stations, museum exhibitions, interpretive media, parking areas, comfort stations, benches, water fountains, sidewalks, and walking trails are representative of types of facilities appropriate in this zone. Facilities in this zone would support park interpretive programs, lectures, and class rooms. Amplified sound could be incorporated into programs and events. Walking trails are created only for the purpose of connecting facilities to the main pedestrian system of the park.

Description of Park Services Zone

Desired Visitor Experiences

Visitors do not routinely enter this zone. The presence of NPS maintenance activity and its associated noises and smells would be apparent. Higher traffic densities could be expected.

Desired Resource Conditions or Character

Resources can be modified for park operational needs and non-historic additions to the landscape are expected. Facilities are intensely managed for safety purposes. Visual impacts of park operational

activities on the surrounding cultural landscape would be reduced by screening or other appropriate methods.

Appropriate Kinds of Activities or Facilities

All activities associated with park administration, museum preservation center, and maintenance operations would be appropriate in this zone so long as their impacts did not adversely affect the visitor experience in adjacent zones.

Indicators of unacceptable impacts to resources and visitor experiences

The following indicators are signals to park management and the public that other management actions may be necessary to sustain the resources and visitor experiences described in the Park Services Zone.

The sight, sound, and or smell of maintenance activity in the zone has a direct and significant negative impact on the visitor experience or resource protection objectives of an adjacent zone or park neighbor.

THE ALTERNATIVES

This General Management Plan Amendment/Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment (GMPA/DCP/EA) presents four alternatives for future management of the Chalmette Unit. The No-Action Alternative presents a continuation of existing management direction and is included as a baseline for comparing the consequences of implementing each alternative. The action alternatives are Alternative A, Alternative B, and Alternative C, and present different ways to manage resources and visitor use and improve facilities and infrastructure at the Chalmette Unit. These action alternatives embody the range of what the public and the NPS want to see accomplished with regard to cultural and natural resource conditions, visitor use and experience, socioeconomic conditions, and NPS operations.

As noted in the "Guidance for the Planning Effort" section in Chapter 1, the NPS would continue to follow existing agreements and servicewide mandates, laws, and policies regardless of the alternatives considered in this plan. These mandates and policies are not repeated in this chapter. However, other GMPA/DCP/EA proposed actions do differ among the alternatives. These alternative actions are discussed in this chapter.

The alternatives focus on what resource conditions and visitor uses and opportunities should be at the Chalmette Unit rather than on the details of how these conditions and uses/experiences should be achieved. Thus, the

alternatives do not include many details on resource or visitor use management. More detailed plans or studies will be required before most conditions proposed in the alternatives are achieved. The implementation of any alternative also depends on future funding and environmental compliance. This plan does not guarantee that that money will be forthcoming. The plan establishes a vision of the future that will guide day-to-day and year-to-year management of the Chalmette Unit, but full implementation could take many years.

NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE - CONTINUE CURRENT MANAGEMENT

This alternative is presented as a basis for comparing the three "action" alternatives. Examining the no-action alternative is also useful in understanding why the NPS or the public may believe that certain changes are necessary or advisable and is used as a baseline to compare proposed alternatives to a continuation of existing management trends. The three action alternatives (A, B, and C) present ways of exploring those changes.

Concept

Under this alternative, pre-Katrina Chalmette Unit management direction would continue as guided by the 1982 GMP and 1995 GMP Amendment. "No action" does not imply the discontinuation of present uses or management practices. Instead, there would be no important change in

interpretation and management of the Chalmette Unit.

Actions that are already funded are included in the no-action alternative. Actions identified in existing planning documents but not funded in the foreseeable future have not been considered in this alternative. NPS staff would continue to protect and maintain known cultural and natural resources as time and funding allow. Cultural and natural resource inventory work and monitoring would continue. NPS staff would continue to encourage and seek funding for the research that is needed to fill the gaps in knowledge about resources following the park's strategic plan.

Chalmette Battlefield Unit

There would be little change in visitor services or NPS operations facilities. Pre-Katrina conditions would be restored. Historical interpretation and education programs would be revived and continue. Staff would continue to answer visitor questions when asked. Visiting school groups would get the same services as now. Existing facilities (visitor center, headquarters building, parking, walkways, repaired rampart, Malus-Beauregard House, maintenance facility, picnic area, interpretive signage, picnic areas and tour road) would remain and continue to be maintained. The maintenance facility, located in the adjacent cemetery, would remain where it is.

Entrance, Monument Road, and Chalmette Monument

No change to the entrance approach, general landscaping and

configuration would take place. No additional parking would be added near the gate for after hours visitors or near the Visitor Center. The parking bays for the Rampart display would remain in their current location, and would continue to require pull-in parking, and backing out into traffic. Two-way traffic would continue.

Rampart and Rodriguez Canal Interpretive Display

The rampart and canal would continue to be maintained as at present, at the existing length and location. No attempt would be made to re-locate the batteries to their historically accurate position, nor would there be any attempt to correct the historically inaccurate design and dimensions of the rampart and canal display.

Battlefield

There would be no change in the management of the battlefield. Historic ditches and roads would remain obscured, and no pedestrian trails would provide access to historic features. The site of the main British attack where hundreds of British soldiers fell or died, including the commander General Pakenham, would continue to be obscured by trees.

Tour Road

Use of the tour road would continue as now. Visitors seeking to see the battlefield, whether by vehicle or on foot would continue to use the tour road, and pedestrians, vehicles, and recreational users—joggers, cyclists, etc., would continue to share the roadbed without a paved shoulder or designated pedestrian

lane. Pull-outs, including the British Memorial, would remain in the same location, and would continue to require pull-in parking, and backing out into traffic.

River Road and River Approach

No change to the road would be made. It would continue to serve solely as utility connection between the Port Authority's facilities upstream and downstream of the battlefield. No attempt would be made to incorporate the road into park operations, historical context or visitor experiences. The historic River Road entrance to the Cemetery would remain closed.

Visitors arriving from river boats by way of the dock would continue to have their view and entrance to the battlefield dominated by the post-battle Malus-Beauregard House, rather than the battlefield itself. No interpretive facility would be in place for these visitors.

Special Event Parking and Staging Area

There would be no parking area for volunteers, additional staff or visitors during special events. There would be no special event program or staging area provided.

Malus-Beauregard House

The Malus-Beauregard House would continue to be interpreted passively, with the unfurnished first floor open during visitor hours. The grounds would remain un-restored. There would be no opportunity to interpret the historic gardens, and this post-Battle of New Orleans structure would continue to dominate the

view from the Chalmette Monument, tour boat dock entrance and battlefield without a landscaping screen.

Chalmette National Cemetery

The Chalmette National Cemetery would continue to be operated without visitor services and with the maintenance facility and unit headquarters located within. No additional parking would be added. No re-connection to the River Road at the historic entrance would be made. The visitor entrance from the battlefield would remain the path from the British Memorial.

Maintenance Facility

The unit maintenance facility would remain in the historic Carriage House in the cemetery. The non-historic utility shed would remain next to the Carriage House.

Unit Administrative Offices

Administrative functions and offices for staff would remain in the historic Superintendent's Lodge in the cemetery.

Public Restrooms

The public restroom facility would continue to be in the current location, across the parking lot from the Visitor Center.

ACTION ALTERNATIVES

This section describes the three action alternatives for the Chalmette Unit. Alternative A seeks to improve park operations and visitor opportunities with minimal changes to most current unit facilities. Alternative B

seeks to improve park operations and enhance visitor opportunities with changes to most current unit facilities. The changes would be designed to provide for greater opportunities for interpretation and visitor education.

Alternative C seeks to restore the historic character of the battlefield with changes to most current unit facilities. The changes would be designed to remove modern features and restore elements of the cultural landscape integral to the story of the battle.

ASSUMPTIONS COMMON TO ACTION ALTERNATIVES

The following assumptions, concerning the actions of other government entities, are common to all of the action alternatives.

Removal of Fazendeville Sewage Treatment Plant (STP)

Prior to Hurricane Katrina, St. Bernard Parish made a decision to decommission and demolish the Fazendeville STP. The Parish was actively seeking funding to make it possible to re-route sewage to a different plant, and to demolish the existing facility.

Hurricane Katrina destroyed most of the existing sewage treatment infrastructure in the parish. Ironically, since the Fazendeville STP was located adjacent to the river on high ground, it was one of the first plants that could be brought back online after the storm. While the Parish completely rebuilds its sewage treatment system, it will be necessary to continue operation of the Fazendeville STP. However, the Parish remains committed to the eventual

decommissioning and demolition of the plant. Accordingly, all alternatives assume the eventual removal of the plant from the battlefield.

Replacement of River Boat Dock

The river boat dock operated by the St. Bernard Port, Harbor and Terminal Authority provided a means of access to the unit for a significant percentage of its visitors. A hurricane surge came up the Mississippi River during Katrina. It was independent of the surge that overwhelmed the hurricane protection back levees and floodwalls. It remained confined within the river levees at Chalmette and severely damaged the docking facility. All alternatives assume the rebuilding of the docking facility. The old dock and its replacement have a very basic, utilitarian design. NPS will work cooperatively with the Port Authority in the future to find a design that is more welcoming and more in keeping with the historic setting, if such a design can be achieved within funding limits.

Future Land Acquisitions

The park's current land holdings are not being affected by this GMPA; however, NPS remains open to future acquisitions based on the park's legislative purpose and earlier planning documents. During the public scoping process, many suggestions were made for NPS acquisition of adjacent undeveloped property. Chalmette's enabling legislation allows for the expansion of the unit from its present 143 acres to as much as 500 acres. Such expansion could only take place by donation or exchange in the case of public land, or by donation, exchange or purchase

from a willing seller in the case of private land. Because of these constraints, the GMPA/DCP/EA alternatives assume no change in the present land holdings. Earlier Chalmette planning documents which presupposed acquisition of adjacent land for facility placement floundered when adjacent land could not be acquired. The following descriptions highlight potential properties that could be acquired by the park under the appropriate circumstances.

Chalmette Slip – The park has long sought formal protection for the undeveloped wooded area between the Chalmette Monument and the Chalmette Slip. These woods serve as a vital visual and aural buffer between the park and the industrial operations at the port. The land is also located in an area that served to house an important part of Jackson's encampment and may preserve important archeological resources.

Meraux Estate – Jackson's historic defensive line extended beyond today's St. Bernard Highway. A trace of that line is still present in the undeveloped fields north of the highway. Preservation of this resource is important to the continuity of the historic resources of the Battle of New Orleans.

Railroad Property – Abandoned railroad and pipeline rights-of-way abut the north property line of the unit. The vegetation growing there helps to buffer the unit from highway and railroad traffic noise and screen visitors to the battlefield from visual intrusion. Maintenance of the visual screen is vital, especially if a portion of the

forest within the battlefield property is removed to expose the location of the main British charge on January 8, 1815.

Between the active pipeline and railroad rights-of-way nearest the highway are narrow strips that are kept mowed. Planting these strips with a screen of bald cypress trees could add additional buffer, improve the view from the highway, and, not incidentally, reduce mowing costs for those charged with keeping the strip cleared.

Former Kaiser Property – Downriver from the cemetery an old stormwater storage pond and a spent bauxite mound, formerly owned by Kaiser Aluminum, but now administered by the Port, provide some measure of buffer from the light industrial areas beyond. Opportunities may exist for enhancement of these areas as buffers through cooperation with Port authorities.

Morgan's Line, West Bank of the Mississippi River – Suggestions have been advanced on various occasions that NPS acquire or seek to protect and interpret Morgan's Line across the river from the unit. A remnant earthwork there is thought by some to date from the battle. It is more likely that this earthwork dates from the Civil War and does not occupy the precise location of Morgan's line. However, NPS will seek opportunities to more thoroughly study the question and seek means to suitably commemorate that vital part of the battle story.

NEW CONCEPTS COMMON TO ACTION ALTERNATIVES

As a result of public scoping, meetings with park staff and stakeholders, and subsequent conclusions reached by the planning team, several actions emerged as necessary pre-requisites to any of the alternatives.

Visitor Center (VC)

A new 3500 square foot Visitor Center to replace the building destroyed by Hurricane Katrina is common to all of the action alternatives. The funding for this replacement facility has been allocated. A separate Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact were prepared to determine potential impacts and gain environmental clearance for the facility's construction. Planning and construction for this new VC in the same location as the original building has been completed.

Entrances

Re-designed entrances to both the Monument and National Cemetery from the St. Bernard Highway, emphasizing visitor safety, traffic flow, gate design, signage and landscaping, are common to all of the action alternatives.

After Hours Parking

Safe after hours parking to accommodate recreational users is common to all of the action alternatives. Different sizes and locations are examined in the various alternatives.

Repaired Rampart and Rodriguez Canal Interpretive Display

Repair of a representative portion of the rampart and excavation of the Rodriguez Canal to more accurately depict historic dimensions and design is common to all of the action alternatives.

Rehabilitated Malus-Beauregard House and Landscape

Rehabilitation of the Malus-Beauregard House to add interpretive media to the ground floor and adaptive re-use capabilities to the upper floors is a proposal common to all of the action alternatives. If sufficient historical and archeological documentation is found to guide restoration, limited re-establishment of appropriate garden treatments may be undertaken to enhance the interpretive experience for visitors to the house. Historically appropriate fencing and tree planting will be installed to set the house apart as a distinct landscape. This will be done to emphasize that the house has a history separate from the battlefield and monument.

New Pedestrian Levee Crossing and Park Entrance for the Tour Boat Landing

The current pedestrian crossing of the Mississippi River levee from the tour boat landing is not handicapped accessible and is located in front of the Malus-Beauregard House. All action alternatives propose to create a fully handicapped accessible crossing and to re-route the crossing to an overlook point that will provide visitors with a raised view of the battlefield,

the unit's central historical feature.

Redesigned British Memorial

All actions alternatives propose a re-designed British Memorial that more fittingly commemorates the huge sacrifice of British soldiers and the devastating loss of life suffered during the battle.

Paved River Road

All alternatives propose to pave the River Road and bury utility lines along that corridor, to improve the appearance of this historically important feature, minimize disruption caused by port traffic, and allow better integration of the road into park operations.

ALTERNATIVE A

CONCEPT

Alternative A seeks to improve park operations and visitor opportunities with minimal changes to most current unit facilities (see Figure 4: Alternative A on page 58). The tour road would be improved to help it safely accommodate both vehicles and pedestrians. A small (250 square feet) un-staffed Visitor Information Station would be added adjacent to a re-routed tour boat pedestrian entrance. Additional parking and staging areas would be added.

Battlefield

No changes would be made.

Woodland Buffer Between Battlefield and NPS Fence

No changes would be made.

Repaired Rampart and Rodriguez Canal Interpretive Display

The rampart and canal would retain their present length and would continue to be bisected by the Tour Road. They would be repaired to historically accurate design and dimensions. Research indicates that the canal was wider, deeper, and contained open water at the time of the battle. Today the canal is narrow, shallow, and contains emergent vegetation year round. Similarly, the historic rampart was higher, wider, and armored on its front face. Behind it was a raised banquette. Beyond the canal they constructed a glacis, an armored, low linear feature, designed to deflect incoming

ordinance. All of these features would be represented accurately in the new interpretive display, though the linear extent of the display would remain unchanged.

Tour Road

The tour road would remain a one way vehicular loop road, but it would be brought up to current safety standards. Shoulders would be paved, parking at waysides would be converted to a pull-through design, and a designated pedestrian lane added.

Chalmette Monument and Battlefield Entrance, Monument Road, Rodriguez Site

Improvements to the entrance common to all of the action alternatives would be implemented. In addition, a ten space parking area for after hours visitors would be added inside the NPS fence line. This would accommodate visitors who now park in an unsafe manner along the entrance road outside the gate. For security after hours, a second gate would be constructed on Monument Road beyond the new parking area.

A short trail linking the new parking area to rampart exhibit would be added. A new interpretive trail from the VC to River Road would be built through the oaks to interpret the Rodriguez House site. No other changes to the road or parking near the VC would be made.

River Road and River Approach

As in all action alternatives, the River Road would be paved. Utilities would be buried or removed. It would be used only as a utility road for NPS and for the Port Authority.

Fazendeville Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) Site

The Fazendeville STP road would be paved, and serve as the connector between the River Road and the Tour Road. Gates would be installed at either end of the connector road. A twenty space overflow and special event bus and automobile parking area would be built on the treatment plant site inside the vegetative screen. Because it would only be used intermittently, the parking area would utilize a permeable paving system to allow grass to grow and rainwater to percolate into the ground. A walking path from the staging area to the Malus-Beauregard House would be added.

A vegetative screen would be maintained between River Road and the battlefield in the stretch running from the connector road to the cemetery.

Special Event Staging Area

A program and special events staging area would be added in the southeast corner of the battlefield with access to an overflow parking area. The area, now a soggy field much of the year, would be made suitable for use with improved drainage, turf re-enforcement and maintenance, and the judicious use of fill if necessary. Historic ditch

traces would be left undisturbed. The modifications would be designed in such a way as to not affect the historic scene except when the staging area is in use--rare special events when very high levels of visitation would necessitate it. The location, in the southeast corner on the periphery of most lines of sight from visitor use areas, would minimize any effects.

Unstaffed Visitor Information Station

A new 250 square foot Visitor Information Station would be built to provide interpretive displays for visitors arriving via the river boat dock. The station would not be permanently staffed, but the interpretive media there could be utilized by staff meeting tour boat visitors to provide orientation. A walking path from the station to the Tour Road would be added.

Malus-Beauregard House

No changes except those common to all action alternatives would be made.

Chalmette National Cemetery

No changes would be made. The entrance from River Road to the cemetery would remain a utility entrance only.

Maintenance Facility

No changes would be made.

Unit Administrative Offices

No changes would be made.

Public Restrooms

No changes would be made.

Staffing

New positions in this alternative would include an additional interpretive position to staff the Visitor Center, an additional maintenance position, and an additional law enforcement ranger to promote visitor safety with increased visitation. This would result in three additional Full-time Equivalencies (FTEs).

Management Zoning

Management zoning at the Chalmette unit would reflect this alternative's concept of improving park operations and visitor opportunities with minimal changes to most current unit facilities (see Figure 5: Alternative A Management Zones on page 59). Visitor Services Zones would be applied to the Visitor Center, Chalmette Monument and the parking areas near the entrance to Monument Road, the new Visitor Contact station, overflow parking area and program and special event staging area, as well as the boat dock. The Rampart Display, Rodriguez Site, Monument Road and approaches, Malus-Beauregard House, Tour Road and Cemetery would be in a Historic Interaction Zone where visitors would have opportunities for self-guided discovery with passive interpretive displays and portable media.

Administrative offices and the maintenance facility would remain in the historic cemetery buildings in a Park Services Zone.

The remainder of the site including the fields of the Chalmette Plantation, the

woodland buffer and the river batture (the area between the levee and the river) would be managed as a Cultural Landscape Zone in harmony with the requirements of the historic scene and natural ecological functions.

Figure 4: Alternative A

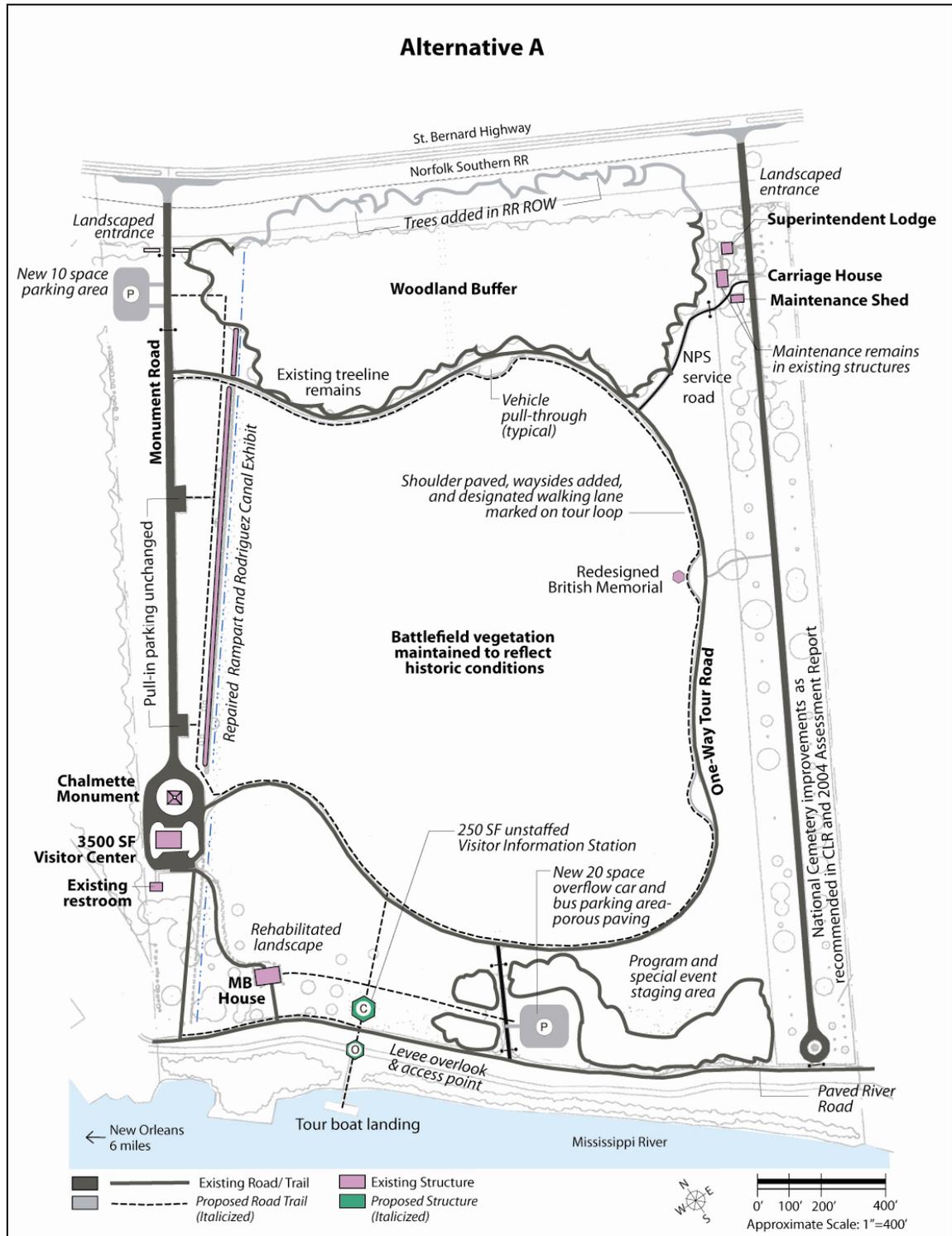


Figure 5: Alternative A Management Zones



ALTERNATIVE B - PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

CONCEPT

Alternative B seeks to improve park operations and enhance visitor opportunities with changes to most current unit facilities (see Figure 6: Alternative B on page 64). The changes would be designed to provide for greater opportunities for interpretation and visitor education. The tour road would be converted to a pedestrian only path for visitors, though it would continue to serve as a service road for NPS and emergency operations. A large (500 square feet) un-staffed Visitor Information Station would be added adjacent to a re-routed tour boat pedestrian entrance. Traffic would be rerouted for safer pedestrian access from the VC to the restrooms, Malus-Beauregard House, and Rodriguez site. A new road would connect Monument Road with River Road, and parking would be added along the new road for access to the VC and Malus-Beauregard House. Special event staging areas would be added. The Maintenance Area would be moved to the Fazendeville STP site, and the Carriage House would be converted to interpretive use for the Cemetery visitor, with adjacent parking.

Battlefield

No changes would be made.

Woodland Buffer Between Battlefield and NPS Fence

About twenty-five percent of the woodland buffer would be removed and the forest

converted to open field. The area to be removed would be concentrated in front of the rampart where the main British charge faltered and the majority of British officers and men fell. Also removed would be the wooded area on the left flank of the rampart near the Chalmette Monument entrance.

Repaired Rampart and Rodriguez Canal Interpretive Display

The rampart and canal would be extended to the property line or beyond if an agreement could be reached with the landowner. The purpose of the extension into the railroad and utility right-of-way between the NPS fence and the highway would be to make it visible from St. Bernard Highway and enhance the entrance sequence.

The rampart and canal would continue to be bisected by the Tour Road. They would be repaired to historically accurate design and dimensions. Research indicates that the canal was wider, deeper, and contained open water at the time of the battle. Today the canal is narrow, shallow, and contains emergent vegetation year round. Similarly, the historic rampart was higher, wider, and armored on its front face. Behind it was a raised banquette. Beyond the canal was a glacis, an armored, low linear feature, designed to deflect incoming ordinance. All of these features would be represented accurately in the new interpretive display. In addition, the new display would contain the batteries in their

accurate positions and built to accurate specifications.

Tour Road

The section of tour road between the monument circle and the Fazendeville Road would be maintained and improved with a second lane and a pedestrian lane. At the Fazendeville Road the traffic would turn toward the river and a new parking area. The remainder of the tour road would remain in place as a one way loop redesigned for pedestrians, with no public access for vehicles. Vehicular parking bays at waysides would be removed. During special events, busses or other visitor's vehicles might be directed down the tour road to facilitate programs. NPS vehicles would use the tour road when needed for maintenance or internal circulation.

Chalmette Monument and Battlefield Entrance, Monument Road, Rodriguez Site

Improvements to the entrance common to all of the action alternatives would be implemented. Visitor pulloffs are indicated on the drawings; locations of these may change during design if necessary for visitor safety. In addition, a 20-space parking area would be added inside the NPS fence line. This would accommodate visitors who now park in an unsafe manner along the entrance road outside the gate after hours and provide additional parking for those wishing to access only the north part of the battlefield walking loop and the British Memorial. For security after hours, a second gate would be

constructed on Monument Road beyond the new parking area.

A short trail linking the new parking area to the rampart exhibit would be added. A new interpretive trail from the VC to River Road would be built through the oaks to interpret the Rodriguez House site.

River Road and River Approach

As in all action alternatives, the River Road would be paved. Utilities would be buried or removed. It would be used only as utility road for NPS and for the Port Authority.

Fazendeville Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) Site

The maintenance facility would be moved to the Fazendeville STP site. The road would be paved, and serve as the connector between the River Road and the Tour Road for maintenance access to the cemetery and other facilities. Gates would be installed at either end of the connector road.

A vegetative screen would be maintained between River Road and the battlefield in the stretch running from the connector road to the cemetery, and would surround the maintenance area.

New Battlefield Parking

A twenty space overflow and special event bus turnaround and automobile parking area would be built near the Fazendeville STP site. The parking area would utilize a permeable paving system to allow grass to grow and rainwater to percolate into the

ground. The parking would provide access to the VC, Chalmette Monument, special event staging area, the Malus-Beauregard House and Carriage House, and the riverside Visitor Information Station. It would be linked to the Tour Road, Monument Road and the River Road via a new road connector along the Fazendeville Road trace. A gate would prevent visitor access beyond the parking area.

A walking path between the staging area and the Malus-Beauregard House would be added. This path would also link the tour road path with the VC via the Malus-Beauregard House. Another walking path would link to the Tour Road Pedestrian Lane and to a walking path along the River Road to the unstaffed Visitor Information Station, the Malus-Beauregard House and the Rodriguez Site.

Special Event Staging Area

Program and special events staging areas would be added between the new parking area near the Malus-Beauregard House and in the southeast corner of the battlefield. These areas, now soggy fields much of the year, would be made suitable for use with improved drainage, turf re-enforcement and maintenance, and the judicious use of fill if necessary. Historic ditch traces would be left undisturbed. The modifications would be designed in such a way as to not affect the historic scene except when the staging area is in use--rare special events when very high levels of visitation would necessitate it. The location, in the southeast corner on the

periphery of most lines of sight from visitor use areas, would minimize any effects.

Unstaffed Visitor Information Station

A new 500 square foot Visitor Information Station would be built to provide interpretive displays for visitors arriving via the river boat dock. The station would not be permanently staffed, but the interpretive media there could be utilized by staff meeting tour boat visitors to provide orientation. The contact station would also serve as an orientation point special events in the adjacent staging areas and Malus-Beauregard House.

Malus-Beauregard House

Where archeological documentation exists, path outlines for gardens can be replaced on site. Otherwise, no changes to the buildings and gardens except those common to all action alternatives would be made.

Chalmette National Cemetery

The entrance from River Road to the cemetery would be modified to facilitate access by NPS staff from the maintenance and VC areas.

The Carriage House, the former maintenance building, would be converted to use as a passive interactive interpretive and education facility for visitors to the cemetery. The modern equipment shed would be demolished and additional visitor parking added.

Unit Administrative Offices

Administrative offices would remain in the Superintendent's Lodge in the Cemetery.

Maintenance Facility

See Fazendeville STP site above.

Public Restrooms

No changes would be made.

Staffing

New positions in this alternative would include two additional interpretive position to staff the Visitor Center and augment interpretive programming at new facilities, a park historian, two new maintenance positions to maintain new facilities, and an additional law enforcement ranger to promote visitor safety with increased visitation. This would result in six additional Full-time Equivalencies (FTEs).

Management Zoning

Management zoning at the Chalmette unit would reflect this alternative's concept of improving park operations and enhancing visitor opportunities with changes to most current unit facilities (see Figure 7: Alternative B Management Zones on page 65). The changes would be designed to provide for greater opportunities for interpretation and visitor education. Visitor Services Zones would be applied to the Visitor Center, Chalmette Monument, Malus-Beauregard House and grounds, and the parking areas near the entrance to Monument Road, the Malus-Beauregard House, the Program

and Special Event staging areas, as well as the boat dock. The Rampart Display, Tour Walking Loop, Rodriguez Site, Monument Road and approaches and Cemetery would be in a Historic Interaction Zone where visitors would have opportunities for self-guided discovery with passive interpretive displays and portable media.

Administrative offices would be in the historic cemetery buildings in a Park Services Zone. The maintenance facility would be moved to the former Fazendeville STP site also in a Park Services Zone.

The remainder of the site including the fields of the Chalmette Plantation, the woodland buffer and the river batture will be managed as a Cultural Landscape Zone in harmony with the requirements of the historic scene and natural ecological functions.

Figure 7: Alternative B Management Zones



ALTERNATIVE C

CONCEPT

Alternative C seeks to restore the historic character of the battlefield with changes to most current unit facilities (see Figure 8: Alternative C on page 69). The changes would be designed to remove modern features and restore elements of the cultural landscape integral to the story of the battle. The tour road would be removed. A new linking road would connect Monument Road to the River Road, and River Road would resume its historic place as the site's primary transportation artery, providing access between and among the Chalmette Monument, VC, Rampart Display, Rodriguez Site, Malus-Beauregard House, battlefield trails, and the cemetery. All trace of the Fazendeville STP site would be removed and the battlefield topography restored.

Battlefield

The tour road would be removed and the roadbed re-graded to the original slope. The historic First Ditch, an integral feature during the battle, would be re-opened and a foot trail would be added along its course to serve as the primary means of visitor access to the battlefield and the British perspective. A short trail would be established to mark the trace of the Center Road. The First Ditch Trail would extend from the River Road to the trace of the Double Ditch, now within the woodland buffer. The trail would follow the trace of the Double Ditch to the Rampart,

and would link to the trail on the inside face of the rampart, completing a trail loop.

Woodland Buffer Between Battlefield and NPS Fence

About fifty percent of the woodland buffer would be removed and the forest converted to open field. The area to be removed would be concentrated in front of the rampart where the main British charge faltered and the majority of British officers and men fell, and would extend east along the trace of the Double Ditch. Also removed would be the wooded area on the left flank of the rampart near the Chalmette Monument entrance.

Repaired Rampart and Rodriguez Canal Interpretive Display

The rampart and canal would be extended to the property line or beyond if an agreement could be reached with the landowner. The purpose of the extension into the railroad and utility right-of-way between the NPS fence and the highway would be to make it visible from St. Bernard Highway and enhance the entrance sequence. Some symbolic representation of the line would be carried across the highway to signal to motorists the significance of the site.

The rampart and canal would not be bisected by the Tour Road. They would be repaired to historically accurate design and dimensions. Research indicates that the canal was wider, deeper, and contained

open water at the time of the battle. Today the canal is narrow, shallow, and contains emergent vegetation year round. Similarly, the historic rampart was higher, wider, and armored on its front face. Behind it was a raised banquette. Beyond the canal was a glacis, an armored, low linear feature, designed to deflect incoming ordinance. All of these features would be represented accurately in the new interpretive display. In addition, the new display would contain the batteries in their accurate positions and built to accurate specifications.

Tour Road

The tour road would be removed (See Battlefield above).

Chalmette Monument and Battlefield Entrance, Monument Road, Rodriguez Site

Improvements to the entrance common to all of the action alternatives would be implemented. In addition, a 30-space parking area would be added inside the NPS fence line. This would accommodate visitors who now park in an unsafe manner along the entrance road outside the gate after hours and provide additional parking for those wishing to access only the north part of the battlefield walking loop and the British Memorial. For security after hours, a second gate would be constructed on Monument Road beyond the new parking area.

Visitor parking would be removed from the VC and Chalmette Monument circle area. A small staff parking area would be maintained, but the

vehicular loop around the VC island would be removed on the battlefield side.

New visitor parking for 30 vehicles would be added on the west side of Monument Road near the Chalmette Monument. Visitors would walk on the Monument Circle to access the VC and the trail system linking them to other features. A new interpretive trail from the VC to River Road would be built through the oaks to interpret the Rodriguez House site.

River Road and River Approach

As in all action alternatives, the River Road would be paved. Utilities would be buried or removed. It would be used as utility road for NPS and for the Port Authority, and for special events. A trail would follow the River Road, linking the First Ditch trail to other facilities, and closing the loop for pedestrians seeking to make the circuit of all facilities.

Fazendeville Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) Site

All trace of the Fazendeville STP would be removed (see Battlefield above).

Malus-Beauregard House

No changes except those common to all action alternatives would be made.

Chalmette National Cemetery

The entrance from River Road to the cemetery would be modified to reflect the historic entrance sequence and facilitate access. Parking would be added just inside the

north gates. The service road between the tour road and the cemetery would be removed, and the wall re-connected.

Maintenance Facility

Maintenance operations would be moved offsite to an adjacent area to be leased from the St. Bernard Port, Harbor and Terminal Authority.

Unit Administrative Offices

Administrative offices would remain in the Superintendent's Lodge in the Cemetery. Additional administrative and program storage space would be housed in the Carriage House and the former maintenance building. The modern equipment shed would be demolished and additional parking added to the small staff parking area.

Public Restrooms

The existing restrooms would be removed from the Rodriguez site and new restrooms would be constructed adjacent to the VC on the VC island.

Staffing

New positions in this alternative would include two additional interpretive position to staff the Visitor Center and augment interpretive programming at new facilities, a park historian, three new maintenance positions to maintain new facilities and trails, and an additional law enforcement ranger to promote visitor safety with increased visitation. This would result in seven additional Full-time Equivalencies (FTEs).

Management Zoning

Management zoning at the Chalmette unit would reflect this alternative's concept of restoring the historic character of the battlefield with changes to most current unit facilities (see Figure 9: Alternative C Management Zones on page 70). The changes would be designed to remove modern features and restore elements of the cultural landscape integral to the story of the battle. Visitor Services Zones would be applied to the Visitor Center, Chalmette Monument, Malus-Beauregard House and grounds, and the parking areas near the entrance to Monument Road and highway cemetery entrance, as well as the boat dock. The Rampart Display, battlefield trails, Rodriguez Site, Monument Road and approaches and Cemetery would be in a Historic Interaction Zone where visitors would have opportunities for self-guided discovery with passive interpretive displays and portable media.

Administrative offices would be in the historic cemetery buildings in a Park Services Zone. The maintenance facility would be moved offsite.

The remainder of the site including the fields of the Chalmette Plantation, the woodland buffer and the river batture would be managed as a Cultural Landscape Zone in harmony with the requirements of the historic scene and natural ecological functions.

Figure 8: Alternative C

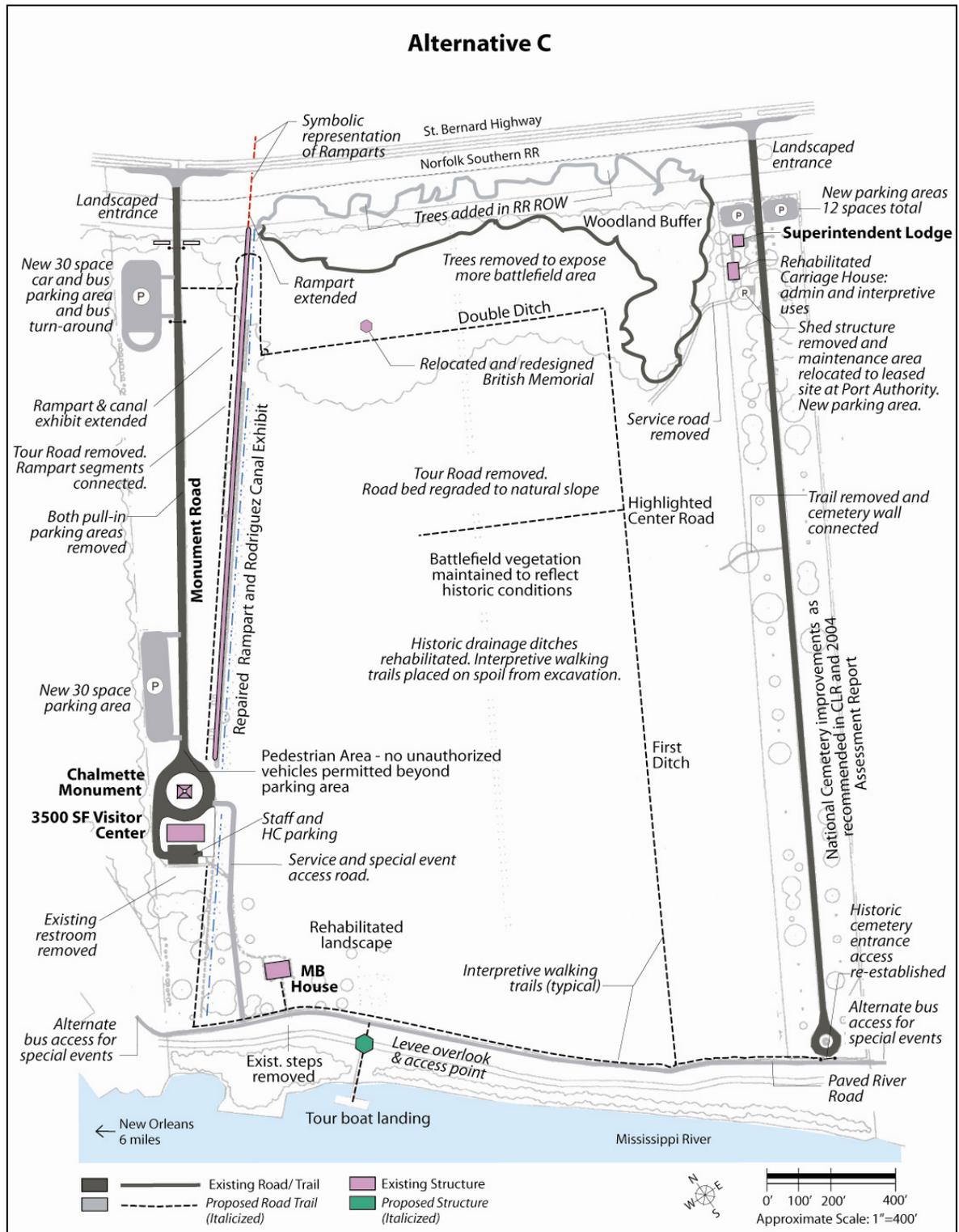
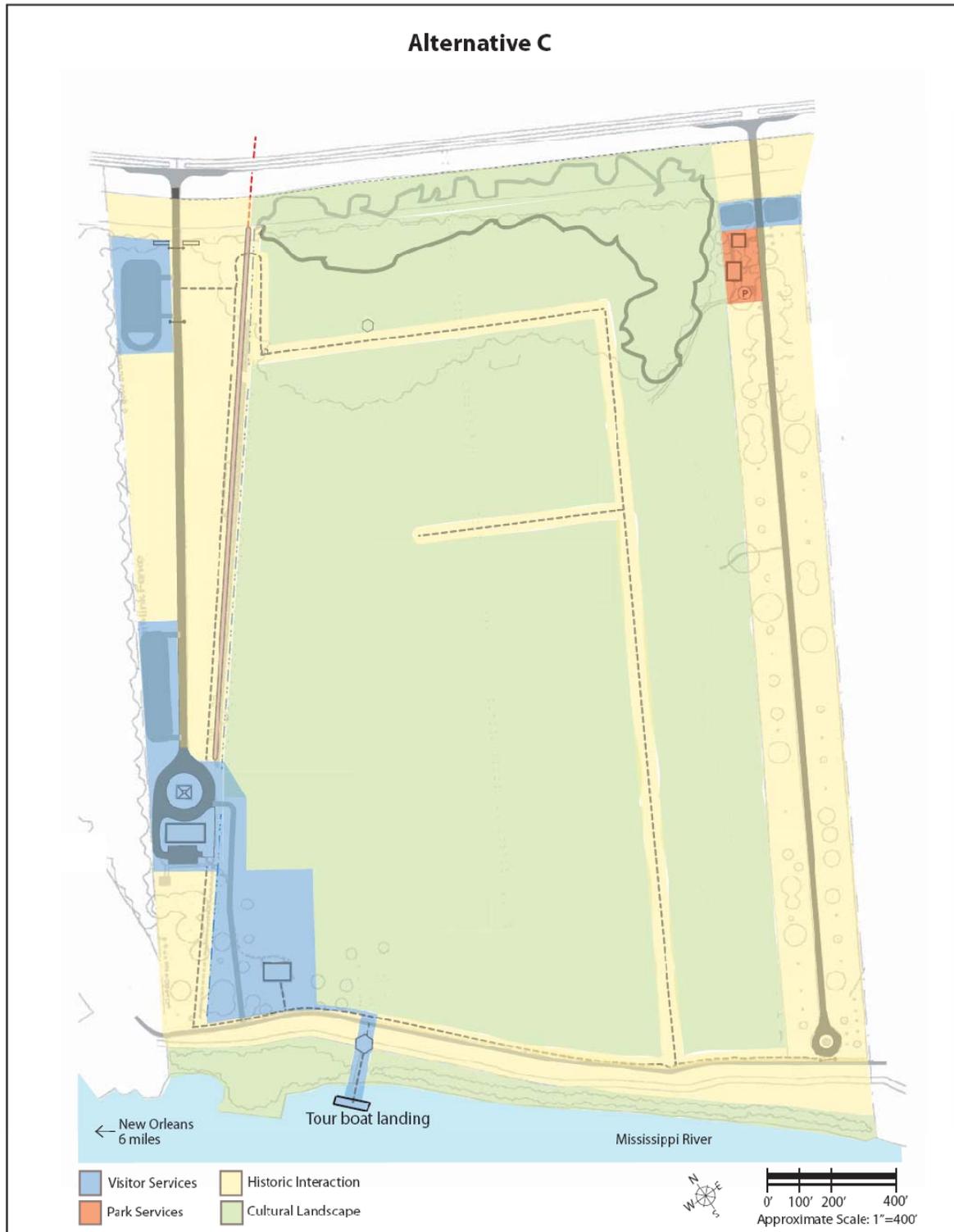


Figure 9: Alternative C Management Zones



SELECTION OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Selection of a preferred alternative was accomplished by using the "Choosing by Advantages" (CBA) process developed by Jim Suhr (Suhr 1999). CBA is a decision making process based on calculating and compiling the advantages of different alternatives for a variety of factors. By using the CBA process, the NPS was able to determine which of the three alternatives would be the preferred alternative for the Chalmette Unit. The alternatives were examined in detail, given the information available on existing conditions and the preliminary concept plans. The CBA process for determining the preferred alternative for the Chalmette Unit is presented in Appendix B.

In the CBA process, factors represent areas of concern (i.e., protect cultural and natural resources, provide visitor services) that were expressed by the NPS technical advisors and park staff. High and low assessment criteria were established for each factor. High criteria describe very favorable or desirable environmental conditions. Minimum criterion generally reflect the minimum standards permitted by Federal Law or NPS policy. Advantages were determined by calculating the difference between attributes for each factor among the alternatives.

Elements of a "factor" are considered "attributes" in CBA parlance. For example, under the factor of "Protect Cultural and Natural Resources," the

"attribute," or measure, of the factor was a subjective assessment based on an alternative's level of construction activity. Accordingly, a high attribute means more protection or less potential loss or damage to cultural resources.

The advantages of each factor were determined and these advantages were compared to one another, to determine which advantage was most important to this project, or "paramount." The next step is to compare the other advantages to this "paramount advantage" to determine their importance relative to the paramount advantage and then to assign an appropriate score for each. After this exercise is completed, the scores of each alternative are calculated, and the alternative that scores the highest is considered the best alternative.

Conclusion

The final steps in analyzing the alternatives involved a cost analysis as well as the CBA process.

A preliminary estimate of probable costs based on concept plans was prepared for each of the alternatives, which resulted in similar costs among alternatives. The factors or attributes developed for the CBA process were to: protect natural and cultural resources; provide for visitor enjoyment; improve efficiency of park operations; and, provide cost-effective, environmental responsible and otherwise

beneficial development for the NPS. CBA scores for each alternative were calculated, and the alternatives were ranked based on total CBA scores. Alternative B scored the highest, so it was considered the preferred alternative for the Chalmette Unit.

GENERAL USER (VISITOR) CAPACITY

This plan establishes qualitative carrying capacity guidelines by describing future desired visitor experiences, desired resource conditions, and appropriate kinds of activities and facilities for each management zone. These qualitative guidelines do not impose quantitative visitor limits or use restrictions but function, rather, as signals to alert park management and the public that other actions may be necessary to sustain the particular resource protection and visitor experience goals described in the zone. Specific management responses to these signals would vary according to the nature and intensity of the problem.

To help park managers and the public recognize when qualitative carrying capacities are being exceeded, a list of suggested indicators of unacceptable impacts to resources and visitor experience are given for each management zone. The listed indicators are not intended to be all inclusive and it should be understood by the reader that additional indicators could be added over time as improved scientific data and assessments are developed.

The importance of establishing quantitative carrying capacity specifications that reflect the most current scientific methodologies, monitoring techniques, and implementation strategies available is acknowledged by the plan. The plan also recognizes that successful carrying capacity management often requires quick

response to new information, science, and evolving circumstances (Haas 2001). For these reasons, establishing detailed quantitative standards or monitoring procedures to govern recreational carrying capacity management in each management zone is considered beyond the scope of this document. The GMP does, however, support the establishment of quantitative standards and recommends they be defined in more flexible and adaptive planning and implementation documents such as a Cultural Landscape Plan, Resource Management Plan, Comprehensive Interpretive Plan, Trail Management Plan, or similar plan. Carrying capacity standards in subsequent documents would be developed with the appropriate level of environmental impact analysis as directed by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and NPS policy.

The General Authorities Act for the NPS, section 604, amended section 12(b), requires that GMPs establish a user (carrying) capacity for a unit of the national park system, saying, among other things, that there must be "identification of an implementation commitment for visitor carrying capacity for all areas of the [national park system] unit" In addition, there also is a requirement in the NPS Management Policies 2006 that GMPs address the issue of user capacity. The use of the concept of user capacity in planning infrastructure and visitor management programs is

expected to result in effective and efficient management.

Visitor Experience and Resource Protection

The NPS has developed a framework called Visitor Experience and Resource Protection (VERP) to address user capacities. The VERP process is used to derive meaningful qualitative user capacities and quantitative capacities, i.e., use limits, where they are deemed necessary.

In the VERP framework, user capacity is defined as "The types and levels of visitor use that can be accommodated while sustaining the desired resource and social conditions that complement the purpose of the park units and their management objectives." The VERP framework is an iterative, ongoing process that begins by:

1. Prescribing the desired conditions of resources and visitor experiences for a given area (not by prescribing a maximum number of visitors). These conditions are based on the Chalmette unit's purpose, significance, and outstanding resource values;
2. Selecting measurable indicators, i.e., characteristics or conditions that reflect the status of Chalmette unit resources and visitor conditions.

Due to the considerable uncertainties surrounding the future level of population recovery in surrounding communities, and uncertainties about the recovery of

visitation to the New Orleans region, no final user capacities have been determined for Chalmette. During the implementation of this plan over the next several years, NPS staff will monitor resources and visitor use and judge whether or not the capacities (desired conditions) are being exceeded in any area. It is not likely that the expected levels of facility developments and visitation and the expected types of use would cause unacceptable impacts on the desired visitor experience or on the site's resources.

For the life of this plan, visitation would be controlled by the number and quality of facilities, by management actions, and by cooperative local efforts and initiatives. The NPS' visitor experience and resource protection (VERP) or similar processes would guide planners and managers in addressing user capacity and assessing impacts on resources and the visitor experience. The process would enable the staff to avoid some of the problems that other areas have experienced when visitation has not been managed to protect the resources or the quality of the visitor experience.

Desired Conditions

The Chalmette staff has identified desired conditions for various areas. Any new visitor facility would be designed and managed to accommodate individuals and small groups, even when larger groups were present, to help them to understand the site's story. Adequate areas would be developed for interpretive programs and media that would

tell the stories of the site's cultural resources. Adequate space for vehicles would be available in an area near visitor service facilities.

The interior of the Chalmette Monument and the Malus-Beauregard House would be managed to minimize damage to the fabric of the building.

In picnic areas and special event program and staging areas, the desired condition would be to have minimal impact on historic resources, including specimen trees and the cultural landscape.

The Chalmette National Cemetery would be managed as a contemplative area to honor those buried within, their families, and their descendants.

Visitor Center Facility

Capacity – It is impossible to set a visitor capacity in this document. Once an approved plan is implemented, NPS staff will determine the practical capacity of the visitor center. If this number is exceeded, the quality of visitor experience would be expected to diminish and desired conditions would cease to be met.

Malus-Beauregard House

Capacity – It is impossible to set a visitor capacity in this document. Once an approved plan is implemented, NPS staff will determine the practical capacity of the house. If this number is exceeded, the quality of visitor experience would be expected to diminish and desired conditions would cease to be met.

Historic Structures – Historic structures will be monitored to determine if any human caused impacts are occurring. The conditions documented at the time this GMPA/DCP/EA is approved will be used as a baseline. Monitoring will continue to measure such indicators as the general condition of structure exteriors, condition of interiors, and vandalism (theft, defacement, etc.).

Vehicle Parking – Space for vehicle parking may become limited at some times of the year. When parking areas fill up, visitors could begin parking outside established areas. This would affect resources adjacent to parking areas. Adjacent areas would be monitored to determine if unauthorized parking is adversely affecting resources.

Monitoring and Remedial Actions

Monitoring would be carried out to evaluate resource conditions and visitor experiences to ensure that the Chalmette unit's desired conditions would remain as prescribed. Through monitoring, NPS staff would determine if these indicators were viable and acceptable; if not, the indicators might be modified. The process of determining how much is too much is a dynamic one. Critical to the success of this process are identifying standards and indicators and adjusting the management strategies when monitoring indicates that conditions are out of standard. If these user capacities were exceeded on a regular basis, NPS staff would take actions to restore conditions to acceptable levels. For example,

the number of visitors to critical areas/ buildings could be restricted or a ticketing system to spread out visitation could be instituted. This would be implemented through a strategy developed by NPS staff subsequent to this GMPA/DCP/EA.

Table 2-1: Cost Comparison Table

	No Action	Alternative A	Alternative B (NPS Preferred)	Alternative C
Annual Operating Costs (ONPS)	\$1,200,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,800,000	\$1,900,000
Staffing (FTE)	11	14	17	18
Facility Costs	0	\$6,000,000	\$6,800,000	\$7,500,000

1. Annual operating costs are the total costs per year for maintenance and operations associated with each alternative, including utilities, supplies, staff salaries and benefits, leasing, and other materials. Cost and staffing estimates assume that the alternative is fully implemented as described in the narrative.
2. The total number of FTEs is the number of person-years of staff required to maintain the assets of the park at a good level, provide acceptable visitor services, protect resources, and generally support the park's operations. The FTE number indicates ONPS-funded NPS staff only, not volunteer positions or positions funded by partners. FTE salaries and benefits are included in the annual operating costs.
3. One-time facility costs include those for the design, construction, rehabilitation, or adaptive reuse of visitor centers, roads, parking areas, administrative facilities, comfort stations, educational facilities, entrance stations, fire stations, maintenance facilities, museum collection facilities, and other visitor facilities.

MITIGATIVE MEASURES COMMON TO THE ALTERNATIVES

Congress charged the NPS with managing the lands under its stewardship "in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations" (NPS Organic Act, 16 USC 1). As a result, the NPS routinely evaluates and implements mitigation whenever conditions occur that could adversely affect the sustainability of national park system resources.

To ensure that implementation of the action alternatives protects natural and cultural resources and the quality of the visitor experience, mitigative measures would be applied to actions proposed in this plan. The NPS would prepare appropriate environmental review (i.e., those required by the National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and other relevant legislation) for these future actions. As part of the environmental review, the NPS would avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts when practicable. The implementation of a compliance monitoring program could be considered to stay within the parameters of National Environmental Policy Act and National Historic Preservation Act compliance documents, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permits, etc. The compliance-monitoring program would oversee these mitigative measures and would include reporting protocols.

The following mitigation measures and best management practices would be applied to avoid or minimize potential impacts from implementation of the

alternatives. These measures would apply to all alternatives.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The NPS would preserve and protect, to the greatest extent possible, the cultural resources of the Chalmette unit. Specific mitigation measures include the following:

- Continue to develop inventories for and oversee research about archeological and historical resources to better understand and manage the resources. Continue to manage cultural resources and collections following federal regulations and NPS guidelines. Inventory the national historic site's collection and keep in a manner that would meet NPS curatorial standards.
- Avoid adverse impacts through the use of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archeology and Historic Preservation. If adverse impacts could not be avoided, mitigate these impacts through a consultation process with all interested parties.
- Inventory all un-surveyed areas in the Chalmette unit for archeological, historical, and ethnographic resources as well as cultural and ethnographic landscapes.
- Document cultural landscapes in the Chalmette unit and identify appropriate treatments.
- Conduct additional background research, resource inventory, and national register evaluation where information

about the location and significance of cultural resources is lacking. Incorporate the results of these efforts into site-specific planning and compliance documents.

- Mitigation measures include documentation according to standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record/Historic American Landscape Survey (HABS/HAER/HALS) as defined in the Re-engineering Proposal (October 1, 1997) of structures not already surveyed. The level of this documentation, which could include photography, archeological data recovery, and/or a narrative history, would depend on the context of its significance (national, state, or local) and individual attributes (an individually significant structure, individual elements of a cultural landscape, etc.) and be determined in consultation with the state historic preservation officer. When demolition of a historic structure is proposed, architectural elements and objects may be salvaged for reuse in rehabilitating similar structures, or they may be added to the park's museum collection. In addition, the historical alteration of the human environment and reasons for that alteration would be interpreted to visitors.
- Wherever possible, locate projects and facilities in previously disturbed or existing developed areas. Design facilities to avoid known or suspected cultural resources.

- Whenever possible, modify project design features to avoid effects on cultural resources. New developments would be relatively limited and would be located on sites that blend with cultural landscapes and not adjacent to ethnographic resources. If necessary, use vegetative screening as appropriate to minimize impacts on cultural landscapes and ethnographic resources.
- Strictly adhere to NPS standards and guidelines on the display and care of artifacts. This would include artifacts used in exhibits in the visitor center. Irreplaceable items would be kept above the 500-year floodplain. This means that no irreplaceable items would be displayed in the structures at the Chalmette unit.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Air Quality

- Implement a dust abatement program. Standard dust abatement measures could include the following elements: water or other stabilization methods, cover haul trucks, employ speed limits on unpaved roads, minimize vegetation clearing, and re-vegetate after construction.

Non-Native Species

- Implement a noxious weed abatement program. Standard measures could include the following elements: ensure construction-related equipment arrives on-site free of mud or seed-bearing material, certify

all seeds and straw material as weed-free, identify areas of noxious weeds before construction, treat noxious weeds or noxious weed topsoil before construction (e.g., topsoil segregation, storage, herbicide treatment), and re-vegetate with appropriate native species.

Soils

- Build new facilities on soils suitable for development. Minimize soil erosion by limiting the time that soil was left exposed and by applying other erosion control measures, such as erosion matting, silt fencing, and sedimentation basins in construction areas to reduce erosion, surface scouring, and discharge to water bodies. Once work was completed, re-vegetate construction areas with native plants in a timely period.

Threatened and Endangered Species and Species of Concern

Mitigative actions would occur during normal NPS operations as well as before, during, and after construction to minimize immediate and long-term impacts on rare, threatened, and endangered species. These actions would vary by specific project and area affected. Many of the measures listed above for vegetation and wildlife would also benefit rare, threatened, and endangered species by helping to preserve habitat. Mitigative actions specific to rare, threatened, and endangered species would include the following:

- Conduct surveys for rare, threatened, and endangered species as warranted.
- Site and design facilities/actions to avoid adverse effects on rare, threatened, and endangered species. If avoidance is infeasible, minimize and compensate for adverse effects on rare, threatened, and endangered species as appropriate and in consultation with the appropriate resource agencies.
- Develop and implement restoration and/or monitoring plans as warranted. Plans should include methods for implementation, performance standards, monitoring criteria, and adaptive management techniques.
- Implement measures to reduce adverse effects of nonnative plants and wildlife on rare, threatened, and endangered species.

Vegetation

- Monitor areas used by visitors (e.g., trails) for signs of native vegetation disturbance. Use public education, re-vegetation of disturbed areas with native plants, erosion control measures, and barriers to control potential impacts on plants from trail erosion or social trailing.
- Develop re-vegetation plans for the disturbed area and require the use of native species. Re-vegetation plans should specify seed/plant source, seed/plant mixes, soil preparation, etc. Salvage vegetation should be used to the extent possible.

Water Resources

- To prevent water pollution during construction, use erosion control measures, minimize discharge to water bodies, and regularly inspect construction equipment for leaks of petroleum and other chemicals.

Wildlife

- Employ techniques to reduce impacts on wildlife, including visitor education programs, restrictions on visitor activities, and ranger patrols.
- Implement a natural resource protection program. Standard measures would include construction scheduling, biological monitoring, erosion and sediment control, the use of fencing, topsoil salvage, re-vegetation, or other means to protect sensitive resources adjacent to construction.

Wetlands

- Delineate wetlands and apply protection measures during construction. Wetlands would be delineated by qualified NPS staff or certified wetland specialists and would be clearly marked before construction work. Perform construction activities in a cautious manner to prevent damage caused by equipment, erosion, siltation, etc. Where wetlands are unavoidably impacted, perform mitigation according to NPS guidelines.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- Implement an interpretation and education program.

Continue directional signs and education programs to promote visitor understanding.

- Conduct an accessibility study to understand barriers to programs and facilities. Based on this study, implement a strategy to provide the maximum level of accessibility.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- Implement a spill prevention and pollution control program for hazardous materials. Standard measures could include hazardous materials storage and handling procedures; spill containment, cleanup, and reporting procedures; and limitation of refueling and other hazardous activities to upland/non-sensitive sites.

NOISE ABATEMENT

Mitigative measures would be applied to protect the natural sounds in the Chalmette National Historic Site. Specific mitigation measures would include the following:

- Identify and take actions to prevent or minimize unnatural sounds that adversely affect Chalmette unit resources or values or visitors' enjoyment of them, according to management prescriptions.
- Regulate the use of motorized equipment during visitor hours to minimize noise generated by NPS management activities.

SCENIC RESOURCES

Mitigative measures are designed to minimize visual intrusions. These include the following:

- Where appropriate, use facilities such as boardwalks and fences to route people away from sensitive natural and cultural resources while still permitting access to important viewpoints.
- Design, site, and construct facilities to avoid or minimize adverse effects on natural and cultural resources and visual intrusion into the natural and/or cultural landscape.
- Provide vegetative screening, where appropriate.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND AESTHETICS

Projects would avoid or minimize adverse impacts on natural and cultural resources. Development projects (e.g., buildings, facilities, utilities, roads, bridges, trails) or reconstruction projects (e.g., road reconstruction, building rehabilitation, utility upgrades) would be designed to work in harmony with the surroundings, particularly in historic districts. Projects would reduce, minimize, or eliminate air and water non-point-source pollution. Projects would be sustainable whenever practicable, by recycling and reusing materials, by minimizing the amount of materials, and by minimizing energy consumption during the project and throughout the lifespan of the project.

IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

Additional detailed studies and plans would be needed to guide implementation of specific actions once this GMPA is completed. Such plans would describe how the NPS intends to achieve the desired conditions outlined in the GMPA. Additional environmental compliance would be conducted, as required under current and/or future laws. Opportunities for public input would be provided during the development of these implementation plans.

The types of plans and studies could include, but not be limited to, the following:

- cultural landscape report
- long range interpretive plan
- historic structure report
- historic resource management plan
- ethnographic overview and assessment
- collections management plan
- natural resources management plan (including exotic species management)
- comprehensive visitor use study

**ALTERNATIVES AND ACTIONS CONSIDERED BUT DISMISSED FROM DETAILED
EVALUATION**

Move Visitor Center – The planning team examined a number of options for relocation of the Visitor Center. Proposals for an offsite VC or a VC to be built on land to be acquired, as has been proposed in previous planning documents, were rejected a priori (see Future Land Acquisitions under the Chapter 2 section titled Actions Common to Action Alternatives).

Relocation to a site within the unit boundary near the river landing and the Malus-Beauregard House was examined during scoping meetings. Consensus emerged after discussions with park staff, cultural landscape experts, and the State Historic Preservation Office that the present site is ideal. The historic fabric of the battlefield there has long since been altered by the construction of the Chalmette Monument. Subsurface utilities are already in place, meaning that construction of a new Visitor Center would have minimal archeological impact. The existence of the Chalmette Monument creates a post-battle commemorative landscape, so that a new building there does not intrude upon the historic landscape as it would on a portion of the undeveloped battlefield. Finally, the site allows interpreters to focus visitors on the perspective of the American defenders. Accordingly, options to move the VC from the island adjacent to the Chalmette Monument were not pursued. Subsequent to these deliberations, Hurricane

Katrina destroyed the existing VC. Planning, design and NEPA compliance for the replacement of the VC were conducted independently of this GMPA/DCP/EA.

Plant Sugar Cane – A number of proposals have been made over the years and analyzed during this planning process to manage the portion of the Chalmette Plantation's fields that are currently within the unit as sugar cane fields. The proposed benefits of such a proposal were to achieve historical accuracy and provide opportunities for living history demonstrations. Others have proposed that turning over the field to a contract farmer would alleviate NPS of the burden of mowing and maintaining the field.

While it is true that there were cane fields on the plantation during the 1814-1815 campaign, contemporary accounts indicate that the portion of the battlefield directly in front of the rampart, the area within the Chalmette unit, had not been planted in sugar cane for several years before the battle, and was in fact grown up in typical open field early successional vegetation. NPS now manages the field to keep it in an early successional vegetative state. It should also be noted that sugar cane is a two year crop which can grow to twelve or fifteen feet in height. As a result, for much of the time the crop would obscure the view both from the American and British

perspectives for visitors. The field would therefore be in a recently harvested condition in time for the anniversary of the battle only every other year. Finally, there is no contemporary sugar cane cultivation in any nearby areas, making it impractical to find farmers to grow the cane cost effectively. Accordingly, this proposal was not pursued.

Tramway or Railway – Members of the public proposed during the scoping process the idea of converting or altering the tour road to remove private vehicles and create a tram or light rail system to transport visitors. Analysis of the cost effectiveness of this proposal, as well as its effect on the cultural landscape and visitors' experience lead to the conclusion that such an idea is infeasible.

Table 2-2: Summary of Key Impacts of Implementing the Alternatives

Note: There would be no impairment of resources or values under any proposed alternative actions.

No Action Alternative		Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Impacts on Cultural Resources				
Historic Sites and Structures	The No Action Alternative would result in a finding of No Adverse Effect to the historic structures.	Alternative A would result in a finding of No Adverse Effect to the historic structures.	Alternative B would result in a finding of No Adverse Effect to the historic structures.	Alternative C would result in a finding of No Adverse Effect to the historic structures.
Cultural Landscape	The No Action Alternative would result in a finding of No Adverse Effect to the cultural landscape.	Alternative A would result in a finding of No Adverse Effect to the cultural landscape.	Alternative B would result in a finding of No Adverse Effect to the cultural landscape.	Alternative C would result in a finding of No Adverse Effect to the cultural landscape.
Archeological resources	The No Action Alternative would result in a finding of No Adverse Effect to archeological resources	Adverse impacts on archaeological resources resulting from implementing Alternative A would be moderate, leading to No Adverse Effect.	Adverse impacts on archaeological resources resulting from implementing Alternative B would be moderate, leading to No Adverse Effect.	Adverse impacts on archaeological resources resulting from implementing Alternative C would be moderate, leading to No Adverse Effect.
Ethnographic Resources	The No Action Alternative would result in a finding of No Adverse Effect to ethnographic resources	Alternative A would result in a finding of No Adverse Effect to ethnographic resources	Alternative B would result in a finding of No Adverse Effect to ethnographic resources	Alternative C would result in a finding of No Adverse Effect to ethnographic resources
Impacts to Natural Resources				
Floodplain (Zone B floodplain)	This alternative would have no effect on the floodplain at CHAL because no new developments or changes to existing developments are proposed. Because this alternative would result in no new impacts or changes to the floodplain in the region, there would be no additional cumulative impacts from this	Alternative A would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts. By implementing mitigation measures the impacts to the floodplain would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable. The overall cumulative effect on the floodplain would	Alternative B would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts. By implementing mitigation measures the impacts to the floodplain would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable. The overall cumulative effect on the floodplain would	Alternative C would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts to the floodplain at CHAL. By implementing mitigation measures the impacts to the floodplain would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable. The overall cumulative effect on the

	No Action Alternative	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
	alternative.	be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.	be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.	floodplain would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.
Coastal Zone	This alternative would have no effect on the coastal zone at CHAL because no new developments or changes to existing developments are proposed. Because this alternative would result in no new impacts or changes to the coastal zone in the region, there would be no cumulative impacts.	Alternative A would result in short term minor adverse impacts; however it is expected to be consistent, to the maximum extent practicable with the LCRP. This alternative would not contribute to the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, therefore there would be no additional cumulative impacts to the coastal zone.	Alternative B would result in short term minor adverse impacts; however it is expected to be consistent, to the maximum extent practicable with the LCRP. This alternative would not contribute to the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, therefore there would be no additional cumulative impacts to the coastal zone.	Alternative C would result in short term minor adverse impacts; however it is expected to be consistent, to the maximum extent practicable with the LCRP. This alternative would not contribute to the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, therefore there would be no additional cumulative impacts to the coastal zone.
Soils	This alternative would have no effect on soil at CHAL because no new developments or changes to existing developments are proposed. Because this alternative would result in no new impacts or changes to soil in the region, there would be no additional cumulative impacts from this alternative.	This alternative would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts. The overall cumulative effect on soils would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.	Alternative B would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts on soils at the park. The overall cumulative effect on soils would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.	Alternative C would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts on soils at the park. The overall cumulative effect on soils would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.
Wetlands	This alternative would have no effect on wetlands at the park because no new developments or changes to existing	Alternative A would result in short term minor adverse impacts. However, establishment of this alternative	Alternative B would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts. However, establishment of	Alternative C would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts. However, establishment of this alternative

	No Action Alternative	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
	<p>developments are proposed. Because this alternative would result in no new impacts or changes to the wetlands in the region, there would be no additional cumulative impacts from this alternative.</p>	<p>would also result in long term minor beneficial impacts through wetland mitigation requirements which would offset the expected adverse impacts of this alternative. The overall cumulative effect on wetlands would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.</p>	<p>this alternative would also result in long term minor beneficial impacts through wetland mitigation requirements. Wetland mitigation would offset the expected adverse impacts of this alternative. The overall cumulative effect on wetlands would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.</p>	<p>would also result in long term minor beneficial impacts through wetland mitigation requirements which would offset the expected adverse impacts of this alternative. The overall cumulative effect on wetlands would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.</p>
Vegetation	<p>Implementing the No Action alternative would have no new impacts on vegetation. The no-action alternative would not add to impacts from other activities in the region and, thus, there would be no project-related cumulative effect on vegetation resources.</p>	<p>This alternative would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts. However, due to the addition of landscape plants/trees and the addition of trees to buffer the highway, some of the long term adverse impacts to vegetation would be offset. The overall cumulative effect on vegetation would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.</p>	<p>Alternative B would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts on vegetation at the park. However, due to the addition of landscape plants/trees and the addition of trees to buffer the highway, some of the long term adverse impacts to vegetation would be offset. The overall cumulative effect on soils would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.</p>	<p>Alternative C would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts on vegetation at the park. However, due to the addition of landscape plants/trees and the addition of trees to buffer the highway, some of the long term adverse impacts to vegetation would be offset. The overall cumulative effect on soils would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.</p>

	No Action Alternative	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Wildlife	Implementing the No Action alternative would have no new effect on wildlife populations. Impacts on wildlife from existing development would continue. Because this alternative would have no new changes on wildlife, there would be no additional cumulative impacts.	Implementing Alternative A would have short term minor adverse impacts on wildlife populations. However, establishment of this alternative would also result in long term beneficial impacts to wildlife by increasing the diversity of available habitat for wildlife. The overall cumulative impacts would be negligible and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.	Implementing Alternative B would have short term minor adverse impacts on wildlife populations. However, establishment of this alternative would also result in long term beneficial impacts to wildlife by increasing the diversity of available habitat for wildlife. The overall cumulative impacts would be negligible and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.	Implementing Alternative C would have short term minor adverse impacts on wildlife populations. However, establishment of this alternative would also result in long term beneficial impacts to wildlife by increasing the diversity of available habitat for wildlife. The overall cumulative impacts would be negligible and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.
Impacts on the Socioeconomic Environment				
	The No Action Alternative would have no new effect on the socioeconomic environment in the region. Because this alternative would have no new effects on the socioeconomic environment, there would be no additional cumulative impacts.	Implementing Alternative A would result in short and long term minor beneficial impacts on the socioeconomic environment. The overall cumulative effects would be minor and beneficial.	Implementing Alternative B would result in short and long term minor beneficial impacts on the socioeconomic environment. The overall cumulative effects would be minor and beneficial.	Implementing Alternative C would result in short and long term moderate beneficial impacts on the socioeconomic environment. The overall cumulative effects would be minor and beneficial.
Impacts on Visitor Use and Experience				
	Implementing the No Action Alternative would result in a short term minor adverse impact to visitor safety. Because actions proposed in this alternative would have virtually no	Implementing Alternative A would result in long term moderate beneficial impacts on the visitor experience. The overall	Alternative B would result in moderate long term beneficial impacts on the visitor experience. The overall cumulative impacts would be	Alternative C presents the most diverse range of options for interpreting and educating visitors to the park. Implementing Alternative C would result in moderate

	No Action Alternative	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
	additional new effects on visitor use and experience, there would be no project-related cumulative impacts.	cumulative impacts would be long term, minor, and beneficial.	minor and beneficial.	to major long term beneficial impacts on the visitor experience. The overall cumulative impacts would be moderate and beneficial.
Impacts on NPS Operations				
	The No Action Alternative would result in no new impacts on NPS operations at the park. Because there would be no new impacts on NPS operations, there would be no cumulative impacts.	Implementing Alternative A would result in long term negligible to minor adverse impacts on NPS operations at the park. There would be no overall cumulative effects.	Implementing Alternative B would result in long term minor adverse impacts on NPS operations at the park. There would be no overall cumulative effects.	Implementing Alternative C would result in long term minor to moderate adverse impacts on NPS operations at the park. There would be no overall cumulative effects.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT



INTRODUCTION

Chapter Three describes the existing environment of the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery and its surrounding area. The chapter focuses on the natural and cultural resources, land uses, and socioeconomic characteristics that have potential to be affected if any of the alternatives were implemented. The GMPA/DCP/EA process was initiated prior to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita's landfall in the New Orleans area in 2005. Alterations, restoration, and/or repairs to resources as a result of the hurricanes are discussed as they are applicable under the specific resource section. Specific details of the damage and effects of Hurricane Katrina are discussed in Chapter 1.

LOCATION AND SETTING

The Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery is a unit of the larger Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. The Chalmette Unit is located in St. Bernard Parish six miles south and east of New Orleans, Louisiana, on the east bank of the Mississippi River. The Chalmette Unit is bounded to the north by St. Bernard Highway and the Norfolk Southern Railroad corridor and to the east and west by industrial facilities. The former Kaiser Aluminum plant is to the east, and is now an industrial park. The Chalmette Slip, a marine terminal and intermodal transport facility, is adjacent to the west. Both are operated by the St. Bernard Port Authority. The Mississippi River is the southernmost boundary of

the park and a flood protection levee parallels the river. A map of the Chalmette Unit and its surrounding area is presented in Chapter 1.

CLIMATE

The New Orleans - St. Bernard Parish area has a subtropical marine climate with hot, humid summers and mild winters influenced by prevailing southerly winds and proximity to the Mississippi River, Lake Pontchartrain, and the Gulf of Mexico. On average, the coldest month is January with an average temperature of 52.6 oF and the hottest month is July with an average temperature of 82.4 oF. The average annual precipitation is 64.92 inches. The wettest month is June and the driest month is October (National Weather Service 2008). Generally, winters are mild with intermittent colder periods (Cornelison and Cooper, 2002).

Hurricanes and severe storms have always been a part of Louisiana's weather. Of the 273 hurricanes to hit the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts of the United States, Louisiana has been hit by 49 (New Orleans Hurricane History 2008). Most recently, Hurricane Katrina made landfall east of New Orleans on August 29, 2005, with devastating flooding, as levee and floodwall systems were overtopped or failed. A month later Hurricane Rita sent a storm tide surging through breaches in hastily repaired levees, re-flooding sections of the area.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

OVERVIEW

The Chalmette Unit is managed and preserved as a significant cultural resource. The park's 143 acres cover only a small portion of the original battlefield, the remnant now located in a highly industrial landscape. The principal features of the Chalmette Unit are associated with the Battle of New Orleans; however, other pre- and post-War of 1812 features exist on the property which are associated with other eras and uses. These features date from multiple periods of French and Spanish colonial as well as later American settlement. They serve as reminders of various land uses. Surrounding industrialization has eliminated the agricultural setting that existed at the time of the battle and has significantly changed the natural setting surrounding the preserved portion of the battlefield and cemetery. Chalmette's cultural landscape represents not a battlefield preserved in its entirety, but a fragmented continuum of material history overlaid on the remnants of the former battlefield (Risk 1999).

NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

Under the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) regulations, a determination of either adverse effect or no adverse effect must be made for affected National Register-listed or -eligible cultural resources (see Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences). The Chalmette Battlefield was administratively

listed to the National Register as a historic district in 1966. However, the registration was not recorded until 1985, when an amendment to the original nomination was completed. It was approved and accepted in 1987 under the designation of Chalmette Unit, JELA. This unit includes both the battlefield and the national cemetery (Greene 1985, Risk 1999).

The Chalmette Unit is significant because it contains features associated with the social development of southern Louisiana and with the military history of the nation, primarily the battles fought on this ground in late 1814 and early 1815, which effectually ended hostilities between the U.S. and Great Britain and speeded the ratification of the peace treaty ending the War of 1812. Secondly, the unit represents the commemorative aspects of the Battle of New Orleans, the military continuum associated with the Civil War earthworks and the cemetery, and the economic, social life, and architectural style that typified southern Louisiana before and after 1815 (Greene 1985).

Most of the cultural resources listed below were included as contributing features located within this historic district. If the nomination is amended in the future, additional information, discussed below, will enhance the site's significance.

In order for a property to be eligible for the National Register, it must be shown to be significant under one or more of

the four basic Criteria for Evaluation. These Criteria indicate the value of the resource in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. This value is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The four Criteria include:

- **Criterion A:** resources that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- **Criterion B:** resources that are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past;
- **Criterion C:** resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; and
- **Criterion D:** resources that have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory (National Register Bulletin, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation).

The discussions regarding historic structures and cultural landscapes, below, will include a short analysis of the National Register eligibility of each resource.

HISTORIC STRUCTURES

The following is a list of known structures within the boundaries of the Chalmette Unit. Specific information about each of these structures is summarized in the park's Historic Resource Study (Greene 1985).

- Rodriguez Canal (used by General Jackson to front the earthen rampart he had built to defend the city from the invading British troops);
- Chalmette Monument (built 1855-1908 to commemorate the War of 1812);
- Spotts Marker (erected ca. 1890s to commemorate the role of First Lieutenant Samuel Spotts in the Battle of New Orleans);
- Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) Monument (erected 1882 to honor Union Civil War troops; relocated 1956); and
- Malus-Beauregard House (built in 1830s as residence, remodeled 1850s, expanded 1866 and 1890s).

All of these resources are cited in the 1985 National Register documentation for the Chalmette Unit.

Chalmette Monument

The Chalmette Monument is a 142-foot tall obelisk commemorating the War of 1812 soldiers who fought in the Battle of New Orleans. The monument is located adjacent to the site of the Visitor Center and is behind the historic rampart line built and defended by Andrew Jackson's men during the battle in 1815. Construction of the marble monument began in 1855, but halted due to the Civil War. It was finally completed with

funding from the federal government in 1908 and dedicated during the centennial celebration of the Battle of New Orleans in 1915. The Chalmette Monument tract was formally designated a National Historical Park in 1939 and jurisdiction was transferred to NPS (Greene 1985).

The wedge shape of the tract on which the monument was constructed is distinctive in plan and from the air. That the monument was symmetrically placed as a focal point on this tract is also apparent in the landscape. The entrance drive and Monument Circle dating from 1938 create a strong axis from the highway to the monument and contribute to the monument's integrity.

Prior to Hurricane Katrina the Chalmette Monument was being cleaned and re-pointed. Although torn loose by high winds, the scaffolding for the project was re-erected in 2006 and the restoration tasks completed. The monument cap was also damaged and awaits repair. Entrance into the monument is gained through a bronze door and up a spiral staircase that leads to an observation area at the top overlooking the battlefield. The staircase and the interior hand rails to the monument have been repaired and reopened to visitors (NPS 2007).

Although slightly damaged during Hurricane Katrina, the monument and its tract retain their historical integrity. The Chalmette Monument is eligible for listing in the National Register under, Criterion C for architecture Criteria Consideration F for its importance as a property primarily commemorative in intent.

Malus-Beauregard House

The Malus-Beauregard House was constructed after the end of the War of 1812, around 1836, in the French Colonial Style. Before the outbreak of the Civil War, it was remodeled in the Greek Revival style. The house represents the way of life and standard of living that characterized the country retreats of wealthy New Orleanians (Greene 1985). Since construction, the house passed through a variety of owners prior to being acquired by the state and was transferred to NPS in 1949. At that time, the Malus-Beauregard House was adaptively rehabilitated to its approximate appearance from the period 1856-1866 and served as the Visitor Center for the park until in 1983 (Risk 1999). Flooding from Hurricane Katrina damaged the house, but it has maintained its structural integrity. Repairs and additional rehabilitation are by NPS are complete (NPS 2009).

Dependency structures and the domestic-scale landscape that surrounded the house in the late-19th and early-20th centuries have vanished; the house and grounds have merged into the manicured commemorative battlefield landscape. The landscape no longer retains its integrity to the historic period of the house and has no historical significance (Risk 1999). However, the house itself remains listed as a contributing feature in the 1985 National Register listing of the Chalmette Unit.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

The Chalmette Unit contains and protects a portion of the land on which the Battle of New Orleans occurred. However, the battle was spread over a wider area than is currently protected within the existing park boundaries. Inside the park, various land parcels, each with its own distinctive site history, were acquired by the state and federal governments over more than 100 years. These have been assembled into the present park landscape. Elements not present during the Battle of New Orleans are now part of the present landscape, including the Malus-Beauregard House, Chalmette Monument, Spotts Marker, the reconstructed American rampart, the Chalmette National Cemetery, the St. Bernard sewage treatment plant, the modern river levee and River Road, and the Fazendeville Road trace.

In the vicinity of the Chalmette Unit vegetation patterns have been altered in response to changes in local land use as it shifted from agriculture to industrial, commercial and suburban development. Open views along the curve of the river and across the so-called "Chalmette Plain"—actually a cleared agricultural landscape that American forces assumed was a naturally open landscape—that were strategically important to the battle have been blocked by industrial sprawl and wooded areas to the west of the park. The baldcypress swamp that spatially defined the northern extent of the battlefield was lost to timber cutting in the nineteenth century and forced drainage in the twentieth; the wooded thicket allowed to grow on the former battlefield to mimic

original baldcypress swamp now contains few baldcypress trees. It no longer fits the footprint of the original baldcypress swamp because that grew outside the current NPS boundary, north of the St. Bernard Highway in what is now open fields and a subdivision (Risk 1999).

The Chalmette Unit is situated on a recent deposit of deltaic soil that is nearly absent of any relief visible to the casual observer. The topography dips away from the river, down the backslope of the river's natural levee. Traces of old agricultural ditches and roadbeds and other signs of human activity have left visible marks in the terrain. Because of the clayey subsoil and the numerous small depressions, the battlefield frequently contains areas of standing water particularly along the shoulders of park roads where grading has altered drainage patterns (Risk 1999).

The Mississippi River at the Chalmette Unit has shifted its course northward over time altering the riverfront topography and the original view used by Jackson in strategic planning during the battle. Since the battle the change in the river's meander has eroded approximately 180 feet of the southernmost edge of the battlefield at the point where Jackson's Line, the rampart, met the riverbank. (Risk 1999; Cornelison and Cooper 2002).

The Mississippi River front is separated from the Chalmette Unit by an engineered levee and floodwall constructed in numerous phases by landowners, public entities, and, since 1927, the United States Army Corps of

Engineers (USACE). The levee's flattened top surface is traversed by a narrow service road, maintained and used by the local levee district. A low concrete floodwall runs along the landward edge of the crest, providing a partial screen for the service lane from below. USACE chose to use a floodwall instead of additional earthen lifts that would have necessitated widening the levee and burying more of the battlefield. Though it spared archeological resources, its construction introduced a jarring visual addition to what had been a traditional grass-covered earthen levee.

A break in the wall allows pedestrian access to a concrete stairway that descends the levee embankment to the Malus-Beauregard House. The crest of the levee provides an elevated overlook of the battlefield for visitors arriving by riverboat at a dock maintained by the Port Authority. Setbacks to accommodate the shifting river mean that today's levee is no longer in the same location as the 1815 levee. Multiple reinforcements and additional lifts have increased the height of the levee so that it is about twice as high as the one present during the battle. The modern levee with its floodwall, more so than the historic levee, has severed the landscape from its connection to the Mississippi River and blocked the view of the river from the battlefield (Risk 1999).

The description, above, includes a number of cultural landscape features that should be either listed separately or added as contributing elements to

resources if it is amended. For example, although the Chalmette National Cemetery is listed as a contributing element to the park unit's historical significance in current documentation, it has never been evaluated for eligibility to the National Register independently of the battlefield. The Malus-Beauregard House and grounds and the Chalmette Monument tract will also be analyzed for integrity and significance independent of the battlefield landscape.

Chalmette National Cemetery

The Chalmette National Cemetery was established in 1864 as a burial site for occupying Union soldiers who died in Louisiana during the Civil War. Thereafter, it was included in the nation's array of veterans' cemeteries and now contains over 15,000 burials, including casualties and veterans of the Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I and World War II, as well as a few casualties of the Vietnam War. The remains of four veterans from the War of 1812 are buried at the cemetery. The cemetery is connected to the Chalmette Battlefield by walking paths and covers approximately 17 acres.

The period of significance of the cemetery is defined by the years when it was designed, constructed, and maintained by the War Department, that is, from 1868 to 1933. Remaining features that contribute to that significance include its post-and-panel brick walls, its iron entrance gate, the lodge complex, the G.A.R. Monument, the gridded organization of grave markers, and the relic allées of trees that line the main drive. And, although the paved drive does not retain its historic

materials (focal circles, brick curb and gutters, shell paving), it contributes to the overall spatial organization of the cemetery and retains its original axial alignment (Risk 1999).

The Chalmette National Cemetery is defined and separated from the Chalmette Battlefield by a brick wall on the east side of the battlefield. It is buffered along the Kaiser Aluminum Plant boundary, in part, by a narrow vegetated strip. Historic photographs show that many more trees and other vegetation once grew in the cemetery; trees in the southern portion of the cemetery have been lost to storms and disease, particularly since Hurricane Betsy in 1965. The historic allées were replanted in 2000, but in 2005, Hurricane Katrina caused the loss of seven historic sycamore and live oak trees as well as 40 younger trees that died or were severely damaged and had to be removed. Damage also occurred to 2500 feet of the post-and-panel brick wall; as this document goes to press a contract is underway to restore and repair this structure (NPS 2007).

The cemetery draws historical significance from both its developmental association with the Civil War and the aesthetic qualities expressed in its design and construction as a War Department National Cemetery. Based on the spatial integrity of its features, the Chalmette National Cemetery has been determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places independent of the Chalmette Battlefield. It should be considered as significant for Criterion A, due to its association with the Civil War;

Criterion C, due to its patterns of design and construction; and Criteria Consideration F, for its commemorative intent.

ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The first archeological testing performed by the NPS at the Chalmette Unit took place in 1957 by Francis H. Elmore in an attempt to locate information for interpretation in the park (Cornelison and Cooper 2002). Additional archeological research took place between 1963 and 1998 using a variety of methodologies. These surveys uncovered a number of artifacts, earthwork remnants, and landscape anomalies (irrigation/drainage ditches) related not only to the Battle of New Orleans but to the land uses of the property before and after the war.

The most recent archeological survey took place in October 2000, using a multi-disciplinary survey. Electronic projections of historic maps, shovel tests, metal detecting, excavations, ground penetrating radar, global positioning system (GPS), and geographic information system (GIS) mapping were all used in the investigations. The survey resulted in conclusive evidence of the Chalmette battle lines, the location of General Pakenham's attack, and artifacts from both the War of 1812 and the Civil War (Cornelison and Cooper 2002).

Significant known archeological sites within the Chalmette Unit include:

- Site of American entrenchments and artillery batteries;

- Site of the Rodriguez Plantation complex;
- Site of British advance batteries of January 1, 1815;
- Site of British attacks of December 28, 1814; January 1, 1815; and January 8, 1815, including the sites of Centre Road and the several drainage ditches that traversed the field; and
- Site of Confederate earthworks (Note: while the site of most of the entrenchments proper lies beyond the east wall of the national cemetery, part of the area of occupation of the works was within the present park boundary) (Greene 1985).
- Site of the Freedmen's Cemetery.

ETHNOGRAPHIC RESOURCES

The park's battle era historic resources, and its commemorative resources associated with the battle, are important to American Indian tribes historically associated with the Battle of New Orleans: Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians.

Future study and research could reveal that other American Indian tribes are historically or culturally associated with Chalmette, in addition to the Choctaw warriors. If so, these tribes will be added as participants in park planning and management.

Fazendeville

Not included as a contributing element in the 1985 nomination, but historically important, the site of the Fazendeville Community should be also included

as a cultural resource under Criterion D. This African-American residential community, founded during the Reconstruction era, existed from 1867 to 1964 on the current site of the Chalmette Battlefield. Freed slaves from nearby plantations settled the community, which exemplified the early reconstruction period African-American communities that sprang up after the Civil War. In the 1960s, Kaiser Aluminum purchased the land on both sides of Fazendeville, which was all that remained undisturbed of the original battlefield and the Chalmette Plantation. Kaiser's intention was to expand their industrial plant, much as they had already done on the remainder of the Chalmette Plantation downriver from the cemetery. Preservationists rallied Congress to save the battlefield, and Kaiser in the end donated its properties to NPS. Congress directed NPS to consolidate what remained of the battlefield between the Chalmette Monument and Chalmette National Cemetery properties into a single holding. Accordingly, by 1964 NPS had purchased the lots of Fazendeville and relocated the residents to newly developing neighborhoods of the Lower Ninth Ward in adjacent New Orleans. All above-ground evidence of the historic community was removed except the road trace through the heart of old plantation fields. In 1999, the Fazendeville Community site holds historic, cultural and ethnographic significance (Greene 1985). The site warrants an additional identification survey and evaluation. If there are surviving archeological resources and they undergo protection or data recovery, the site is eligible for the National

Register of Historic Places independent of the Chalmette Battlefield as it is likely to yield knowledge about the history of the Fazendeville Community.

Ethnographic resources, including interviews, can be used to create a more comprehensive public understanding of the Fazendeville Community. In 1999, the NPS initiated an oral history project with the Fazendeville Community (Peña 2005). Then, in 2001, Dr. Joyce M. Jackson, of Louisiana State University, began an oral history project for the Fazendeville Community. The work resulted in a Phase 1 report entitled: "Life in the Village: A Cultural Memory of the Fazendeville Community," completed in June 2003. Phase 2, a continuation of the oral history project, and Phase 3, the development of an exhibit on Fazendeville, will be completed in the future (Peña 2005).

NATURAL RESOURCES

OVERVIEW

The Chalmette Unit is located on the east bank of the Mississippi River on recent alluvium within the deltaic plain, about 90 miles upriver from Head of Passes, where the river splits into several distributary channels. The deltaic plain is a wetland-dominated area created by sediments deposited at its mouth as the river built the delta gulfward over the last 3500 years, and by overbank deposition during spring floods. The process of overbank flooding creates natural levees that gradually rise above sea level to confine the channel. Chalmette is located on the natural levee. At its highest point near the river it is about 11 feet above sea level, sloping down to about 7 feet at the northeast boundary. At the time of the battle, a man-made levee had been in place protecting the riverside plantations from spring floods for several decades. From that point, rainwater drained down the gradual backslope of the natural levee to a tidally flooded swamp forest about 3500 feet to the north. (It was this narrow stretch of high ground between the river and swamp that caused Jackson to choose the location to build a defensive earthwork to block the advance of the British army.)

Today Chalmette is protected from flooding by man-made levees, both the Mississippi River mainline levees that run through the unit and hurricane protection levees on the seaward face of developed areas, about one and a half miles to the north. Because this levee system completely encircles the

area, a forced drainage pumping system collects rainwater in culverts, ditches and canals and carries it over the levees. Topographically Chalmette has only a gradual slope away from the river. Therefore, much of the field is temporarily flooded during heavy rains. Because the fields are undeveloped, St. Bernard Parish uses the unit for stormwater management of overland sheet flow during rain events.

Geologically, the delta is an area of unconsolidated sediments that are subsiding rapidly under their own weight. In addition, the weight of the delta's sediments causes faulting in subsurface rock layers, which are sinking and sloughing into the gulf. Human alterations, such as forced drainage which dewateres belowground sediments, have increased subsidence rates. The battlefield may be as much as three to six feet lower than it was at the time of the battle, a significant decrease in elevation for an area already so close to sea level (Gonzalez and Tornqvist 2006).

Due to the flatness of the park's topography and the presence of the Mississippi River flood protection levee, the river is not a visible component of the landscape for those at ground level on the battlefield (Risk 1999), except that the tops of ocean-going vessels can be seen over the crest of the levee.

Chalmette is divided and managed as several distinct landscapes. High visitor use areas, such as the monument, cemetery, Malus-Beauregard House grounds, the

rampart and road shoulders are kept closely mowed with scattered specimen trees. The battlefield itself is mowed only enough to keep it in an early successional state, which best represents its condition at the time of the battle. A screen of forest on the north side of the field acts as both a visual buffer for the railroad-highway corridor and as a representation of the swamp forest that anchored the left flank of Jackson's defensive line. Other narrow strips of trees act primarily as a visual buffer from the surrounding industrial developments. The batture is allowed to grow as a forest in a natural state. A cluster of historic live oaks near the temporary Visitor Center delineates the archeological site of the Rodriguez Plantation. The American rampart, an in-situ reconstruction interprets the defensive earthworks built during the Battle of New Orleans (Jackson's Line), follows the line of the Rodriguez Canal trace (Risk 1999).

WATER RESOURCES

The Mississippi River and the network of estuarine bayous, bays and marshes connected to the gulf are the major hydrologic influence in the area surrounding the Chalmette Unit. Because Chalmette now sits in an artificial drainage basin surrounded by levees, it is cut off from those systems (except on the river batture). Therefore no water bodies, streams or tributaries are located within the park, except for the river itself, which forms the southern boundary. Meandering of the Mississippi River has caused erosion that has claimed

approximately 180 feet of the original American defense line at Chalmette (Cornelison and Cooper 2002). Upland areas have been created as natural banks or levees resulting from overbank flooding. The highest part of the Chalmette Unit, the portion on the crest of the natural levee, is approximately 10 feet in elevation. Natural levees along the Mississippi River were formed by the cycles of flooding and resulting sediment deposition prior to the construction and installation of any man-made flood control structures.

Periodic persistent heavy rains can result in flooding and ponding of water at Chalmette. Hurricane Katrina caused devastating flooding when storm surge overtopped the back levees and floodwalls along the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal failed. The floodwall along that canal formed the western link in the ring of levees which surrounds Chalmette.

Ponding of water is common in the woods along the northern end of the battlefield where the adjacent railroad embankment and the St. Bernard Highway impede the original drainage gradient that moved water from the river to the inland swamps. During frequent periods of heavy or steady rainfall additional ponding occurs along the American rampart, the western wall of the cemetery, the western property line and between the Malus-Beauregard House and the Tour Road (Risk 1999).

Water draining from Chalmette still follows the original gradient from the natural levee crest near the river gradually toward the north, eventually

draining into the St. Bernard Parish stormwater drainage system adjacent to the St. Bernard Highway. It is ultimately returned to receiving wetlands through the St. Bernard Parish pumping system.

FLOODPLAINS

All federal agencies are required to avoid building in a 100-year floodplain unless no other practical alternative exists. NPS has adopted guidelines pursuant to Executive Order 11998 stating that NPS policy is to restore and preserve natural floodplain values and avoid environmental impacts associated with the occupation and modification of floodplains. The guidelines also require that, where practicable alternative exist, Class I action be avoided within a 100-year floodplain. Class I actions include the location or construction of administration, residential, warehouse, and maintenance buildings, non-excepted parking lots, or other man-made features that by their nature entice or require individuals to occupy the site.

Based on the 1985 Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) the Chalmette Unit is located in Zone B flood hazard area. Zone B is defined as the area between limits of the 100-year flood and 500-year flood; or certain areas subject to 100-year flooding with average depths less than 1 foot or where the contributing drainage area is less than one square mile; or areas protected by levees from base flood (FEMA 1985). The unit is protected from the 100-year flood by a levee system; however, during Hurricane Katrina, the levee system was overtopped and

floodwalls failed, flooding St. Bernard Parish and the park. The Mississippi River levee located immediately adjacent to the park did not fail and held up against the hurricane. (Mississippi River Gulf Outlet 2007). Analyses completed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) indicate that the current flood control system will not meet the standards for providing protection against the 100-year flood (FEMA 2006). New updated FIRMs are being developed as a result of analyses and the planned improvements to the levee system by USACE (FEMA 2006). Current advisory base flood elevation maps recommend that building in the vicinity of the park be constructed 3 feet above the highest existing adjacent grade (HEAG) at the building site (FEMA 2006). The Chalmette Unit is approximately 7-11 feet above mean sea level. Due to the lack of topographic relief at the park, it is occasionally flooded during major storms and functions as stormwater management for overland sheet flow during storm events.

COASTAL ZONE

The Federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) gives Louisiana the authority to determine whether activities of governmental agencies are consistent with the Louisiana Coastal Resources Program (LCRP). Consistency Determination authority is exercised over some state and all direct federal agency activities. Because the Chalmette Unit is located in the Louisiana Coastal Management Zone (CMZ), as a federal agency NPS would require a consistency determination for activities

originating from the preferred alternative. A Federal consistency is the review of Federal projects for consistency with the CZMA, as implemented by the State. The term "Federal consistency" refers to the review process mandated by Section 307 of the CZMA, and NOAA regulations (15 CFR Part 930). The CZMA requires that Federal actions, which are reasonably likely to affect land or water use, or natural resource of a state's coastal zone, be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the federally approved Coastal Zone Management Program (CZMP).

NPS Management Policies 2006 state that NPS will comply with the provisions of state coastal zone management plans prepared under the CZMA (NPS 2006, sec. 4.8.1.1). The Louisiana State and Local Coastal Resources Management Act of 1978 (La.R.S. 49:214.21 et. Seq.) provides the authorization for the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR) Coastal Management Division to implement the LCRP. A certification of consistency is supported by necessary data and information that a proposed activity or development complies with the LCRP and that such activity shall be conducted in a manner consistent with the program.

The LDNR is the principal agency requiring permit applications for construction activities in the coastal zone and comments on Federal permit applications to ensure consistency with the LCRP. Federal activities are exempt from Coastal Use permits, yet they still must be consistent with the LCRP. Consultation with the LCRP is underway and will be

completed upon selection of the preferred alternative.

SOILS

Located on a recent deposit of deltaic soil (deposited over the last 3,500 years), the Chalmette Unit is nearly flat with traces of old agricultural ditches and roadbeds. Soils are defined as being characteristic of the Schriever series, a very deep, poorly drained soil with slow permeability that is found on the lower Mississippi River alluvial plain (Natural Resources Conservation Service 2008a). The Schriever series is generally found on the lower parts of natural levees and in backwater swamps with very little slope (0-3 percent) and low elevation (less than 50 ft above MSL). The soil is also generally saturated between 0 and 0.5 feet from December through April in normal years and moist in the subsoil layers below that depth. The soil is most frequently used for cropland, pasture and hay crops with sugar cane and rice historically grown in that soil series (NRCS 2008b). The USDA NRCS has characterized the Schriever series as hydric soils in the State of Louisiana. The definition of a hydric soil is a soil that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part (Environmental Laboratory 1987). Hydric soils are one of the required criteria for a site to be characterized as a wetland and include soils developed under sufficiently wet conditions to support the growth and regeneration of hydrophytic vegetation.

WETLANDS

A jurisdictional determination by the USACE was conducted at the Chalmette Unit in 2004. At that time, the USACE identified two jurisdictional wetland areas at the site (USACE 2005). The first jurisdictional wetland area is a swampy, second-growth woodland (forested wetland) that buffers the battlefield from the Norfolk Southern Railroad line and St. Bernard Highway to the north. The second jurisdictional wetland is the batture area, an annually inundated portion of land between the Mississippi River and the levee along the park's southern boundary, which is subject to seasonal flooding. The forested wetland is dominated by hackberry (*Celtis laevigata*), black willow (*Salix nigra*), elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*), rough leaf dogwood (*Cornus drummondii*), and groundsel tree (*Baccharis halimifolia*). The forested wetland thicket provides the most diverse and protective wildlife habitat in the park (Risk 1999). The batture wetland contains the most flood tolerant species of plants including black willow that delineate the low water level (Risk 1999).

In addition to the USACE wetlands, the NPS defines wetlands as vegetated areas that are flooded or saturated for a duration of time sufficient to allow development of at least one of the three wetland indicators described in the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual (Environmental Laboratory 1987). The NPS Director's Order #77-1: Wetland Protection and Procedural Manual #77-1: Wetland Protection apply to USACE jurisdictional wetlands, but they also apply to any other habitats

that are classified as wetlands under Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States or the Cowardin Classification (Cowardin, et al. 1979), including unvegetated and/or nonsoil wetlands. The three wetland indicators used include wetland hydrology, hydric soil, or hydrophytic vegetation. Compared to the NPS, the USACE has a less stringent definition of wetlands. Generally, all three wetland criteria are required for an area to be approved as a Federal wetland by the USACE. Therefore, all Federally-defined wetlands are also defined as NPS wetlands based upon the Cowardin Classification (Cowardin et al. 1979).

The entire Chalmette Unit is described as having hydric soils. The NPS Director's Order #77-1 specifies "undrained, hydric soils" as one of three required wetland indicators. However, areas of the unit with artificial fill above the natural soil layer—roadbeds, the cemetery, the monument area, the reconstructed rampart, the river levee, etc., have soils that are either not native to the site or are no longer hydric because they have been artificially elevated. The NPS-defined wetlands at the Chalmette Unit include the majority of the site, including the battlefield (within and surrounding the existing Tour Road) described as field and pasture, the associated historic drainage ditches that support hydrophytic vegetation, and all the other surrounding areas of the park. These areas are between the 100-year and 500-year floodplain and function as stormwater management for overland sheet flow during storm events.

Because of the plastic clayey subsoil and numerous micro-depressions, the battlefield area frequently contains areas of standing water, particularly along the shoulders of the park roads where grading changes have blocked drainage. During heavy rains, significant ponding has been observed in the battlefield area along the length of the American rampart, the western wall of the cemetery, the tour road, and the western property line. The battlefield zone is maintained in primarily low herbaceous cover with wet depressions and is infrequently mowed. As a result, this tract exhibits a greater diversity of vegetation, including some native grasses, low successional species, and wet meadow species which thrive in the old road traces and ditch depressions that transect the tract from north to south. The rear grounds surrounding the Malus-Beauregard House, although maintained to a more manicured, turf-grass appearance, resemble a wet successional meadow due to the slightly lower-lying topography of the area (Risk 1999).

VEGETATION

Chalmette Battlefield

The open battlefield is maintained in grasses and herbaceous plant cover by mowing and bush-hogging. Without intervention, it would rapidly succeed to shrubland and then forest. In areas where control of woody vegetation does not take place, woody vegetation grows. An inventory of the vascular flora of Chalmette found 244 species, of which 176 (72%) were native and 68 (28%) were invasive or deliberately planted. Among the

70 families and 180 genera found, were four major herbaceous plant groups: composites (12 percent), grasses (9.5 percent), sedges (8 percent), and legumes (5 percent). About 19 percent was comprised of woody tree, shrub and vine species. (Urbatsch, Ferguson, and Gunn-Zumo in press.)

The maintained battlefield is allowed to grow to a height of several feet between cuttings, while maintaining shorter mown swatches along the shoulders of the tour road for safety and visibility. Vegetation in the field includes a mix of native grasses, sedges, forbs and early successional woody species.

To the north of the tour road, a swampy, second growth woodland buffers the battlefield from the Norfolk Southern Railroad line and St. Bernard Highway. The thicket is often inundated after heavy rains because of permanent alterations in the drainage patterns when the railroad embankment was constructed. The area contains typical bottomland species including hackberry, black willow, elderberry, rough leaf dogwood (*Cornus drummondii*), and groundsel tree (*Baccharis halimifolia*).

Because spring water levels can be as much as ten feet deep, the batture contains the most flood tolerant species of plants including black willow that grow to the river's low water level. Other species tolerant of prolonged flooding are found in the ditches and depressions on the battlefield (Risk 1999).

Several areas of the park have been planted and/or managed for vegetative buffers. A line of

cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) trees in the southwestern corner of the tract screens the park from the Chalmette Slip dock. In addition, a 40-foot strip along the park's western boundary has been released from mowing to form a more substantial buffer along the Chalmette Slip property. A single row of cypress trees was planted at the northern end of the western park boundary to provide screening for a gas line right-of-way. Another row of trees separates the cemetery from the rainwater storage pond just downriver.

At the southern end of the monument tract, a cluster of live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) trees marks the location of the Rodriguez Plantation archeological site (Risk 1999).

The grounds of the Malus-Beauregard House, in the southwest corner of the tract are maintained in mowed turf grass and plantings.

Chalmette National Cemetery

The Chalmette National Cemetery is maintained exclusively in mown turf, exhibits little botanical diversity and provides little shelter or habitat for wildlife. Live oaks formed a partial alleé lining the drive for approximately 300 feet beyond the maintenance area. The park has planted live oak saplings to fill in the gaps in the alleé (Risk 1999). Prior to Hurricane Katrina, the Cemetery had a number of mature sycamore trees. Hurricane Katrina uprooted seven of the historic trees and they were removed. An additional 40 trees died or were severely damaged by high winds and were also removed. Sego palms (*Cycas*

revoluta) line the drive from the entrance gate to the maintenance area. Many of the trees still existing in the southern portion of the cemetery, primarily sycamores but also live oak and magnolia, have truncated limbs and branches from storm damage.

Non-native Vegetation

Management of targeted species of non-native vegetation is conducted at the park as part of the overall maintenance activities. A special project in 2007-2008 targeted all of the Chinese tallows (*Triadaca sebifera*) growing at the unit.

WILDLIFE

Wildlife diversity at the Chalmette Unit is limited by the lack of diversity in habitats found within the park's boundary. Species that are associated with or tolerant of human presence and activities comprise the majority of wildlife observations recorded. Opossum (*Didelphis virginianus*), gray squirrel (*Sciurus carolensis*), cotton rats (*Sigmodon hispidus*), house mouse (*Mus musculus*), rats (*Rattus rattus*), swamp rabbits (*Sylvilagus aquaticus*), and raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) have all been observed at the park. Bats, river otter (*Lutra canadensis*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), and armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*) have also been observed (C. Hood unpub. data).

Bird species in the park have been recorded as migrants, wintering, and breeding species. A total of 164 species have been observed with the largest species diversity occurring in spring and fall as northbound and southbound migrants move through the area.

Approximately 41 species are residents year round and 35 species breed either within the Chalmette Unit or in the vicinity (Muth, 2005).

Non-native

The tropical fire ant (*Solenopsis geminata*) and Formosan termite (*Coptotermes formosanus*), non-native pest species, are actively controlled by park staff in and around buildings, specimen trees, and visitor use areas such as the National Cemetery, rampart, monument grounds, and Malus-Beauregard House (Muth, 2008a).

SOCIOECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The socioeconomic environment in St. Bernard Parish and the State of Louisiana has changed dramatically in the last few years. On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck Louisiana's coast and on September 24, 2005, the coast was hit again by Hurricane Rita. Initially 1.3 million Louisianans were displaced or evacuated as a result of the hurricanes. St. Bernard parish was flooded as a result of storm surge to such an extent that authorities ordered the evacuation of all residents after the storm. For months afterward only emergency personnel lived in the parish, living in temporary housing. Residences were lost or damaged to an extent as to make them uninhabitable. To provide insight into the changes to St. Bernard Parish as a result of the hurricanes both pre- and post-Katrina demographic data are presented here as available. Post-Katrina data is limited and being updated and expanded on a regular basis and could become

outdated in a short period of time.

Pre-Katrina Demographics

Population in the St. Bernard Parish in Louisiana was 67,229 in 2000, 96 percent of which was urban population. Between 1990 and 2000 the population of St. Bernard Parish increased by only 0.01 percent. Age distribution for people living in St. Bernard Parish was approximately 26.1 percent for ages 0 to 17 years, 60.8 percent for ages 18 to 64 years, and 13.9 percent for ages over 65 years (U.S. Census 2000).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the racial composition of St. Bernard Parish was 88.4 percent white and 11.6 percent minority, which is lower than the average minority population in the state of Louisiana (37.5 percent) or the United States (30.9 percent). The median household income in 1999 was \$35,939. The percentage of population living below the poverty level in St. Bernard Parish is 13.1 percent, compared to 19.6 percent in the state of Louisiana and 12.4 percent nationally (U.S. Census 2000).

Historically, the economy of St. Bernard was tied to the land and its unique environment until the mid-twentieth century. The plantations and farms that were developed on the rich soils that lined the banks of the Mississippi River provided economic benefits to the parish's residents during the pre-Industrial period. St. Bernard's wetlands provided extensive economic benefits through the fishing, crabbing, shrimping, oystering and trapping industries, which thrived in the

area. The wetlands also provided timber to the area due to the abundance of baldcypress trees found there, which were harvested and used in the construction of many houses in the New Orleans area in the 1800s and early 1900s (St. Bernard Parish 2007). Since the 1940s, urbanization and industrialization have altered the area and its economy. Wetland areas have been altered by human activities, which have resulted in the destruction of fresh water marshes. Industrial development was concentrated along St. Bernard's portion of the east bank of the Mississippi River, where the American Sugar Refinery, Kaiser Aluminum's Chalmette Works and the Tenneco Oil Refinery were developed on the riverfront from the Orleans parish line in Arabi to Chalmette. Other industrial developments in the area included the Murphy Oil Refinery, natural gas processing plants and ship building. Currently, St. Bernard's economy consists of a mix of industrial activities along with its historic agricultural and fisheries economy. Wholesale and retail trade, government services, and contract construction are also major economic contributors. A majority of St. Bernard's population is employed in the city of New Orleans and other portions of the metro area (St. Bernard Parish 2007).

Post-Katrina Demographics

St. Bernard Parish suffered the greatest population loss in the New Orleans area: 100% of its citizens were displaced and made at least temporarily homeless by the storm, and some residents were killed. Even a year later, it had lost approximately 75

percent of its population as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Approximately one-third of the population relocated to more distant parishes or out of state (Louisiana Recovery Authority 2006). The U.S. Census Bureau estimated the July 2005 pre-Katrina population of St. Bernard Parish as 64,683. Almost a year after the storm, in July 2006 the population was estimated at 13,875. The July 2007 estimate was 33,439 (U.S. Census Bureau). The July 2007 estimate represents only 51% of the pre-storm figure.

The most current population data are represented by the number of households actively receiving mail. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, the number of households actively receiving mail in St. Bernard Parish was 25,604. As of January 2008, the number of households actively receiving mail is 10,866, approximately 42.4 percent of the pre-Katrina number (GNOCDC 2009).

The number of non-farm jobs in the New Orleans Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) decreased from 604,500 in July 2005 to a low of 425,800 jobs in October 2005 and has increased to approximately 531,500 jobs (preliminary data), as of November 2008. As of November 2008, the dominant source of employment in the New Orleans MSA was private (non-governmental) service-providing jobs rather than goods-producing as it had been prior to the hurricanes. Goods-producing employment has reached or exceeded pre-Katrina levels since May of 2007. A majority of the employment in the New Orleans MSA comes from education and health services, professional and business services as well as trade, transportation and utilities.

Government employment (82,500, preliminary data) is still below pre-Katrina levels (101,400) in November 2008 (GNOCDC 2009).

Prior to Hurricane Katrina, St. Bernard Parish had 1,051 employers in the second quarter of 2005. Post-Katrina the number of employers decreased to a low of 429 in the first quarter of 2006 but has since grown to approximately 575 in the first quarter of 2008; 646 had moved or closed after the hurricane but 159 have moved in or opened (GNOCDC 2009).

St. Bernard Parish had 15 public schools and eight private schools open prior to Hurricane Katrina. As of October 2008, there are only eight public and three private schools open (GNOCDC 2009).

Economic Contribution to the Community

The Chalmette Unit received 65,020 visitors in 2007. Previously, the unit had an average annual visitation of approximately 107,000 visitors (NPS personal communication, L. Dupree 2009). As an individual entity, the Chalmette Unit contributes to the local economy by attracting visitors and has been a component of the tourism industry for St. Bernard Parish and New Orleans.

Park management is actively engaged with the local community. It continues to cooperate constructively on issues that are of interest and concern to the surrounding community and works to strengthen its relationship with volunteers, local government officials, and local cultural and natural heritage institutions.

Since Hurricane Katrina, partnering and cooperation with community groups has been interrupted. The St. Bernard Parish Recovery Plan states the importance of the Chalmette Unit to the community for tourism and the continuation of partnering with the park (St. Bernard Parish 2007).

VISITOR USE AND EXPERIENCE

Visitation for the Chalmette Unit during 2007 was 65,020 and through October of 2008 it was 49,244 (Dupree, 2009). In addition to visitation by individuals interested in the War of 1812, opportunities currently exist for walking or jogging at Chalmette Battlefield, which has a 1.5-mile Tour Road that begins at the park entrance and contains six stops interpreting important features of the battlefield (NPS 2004). Ongoing reconstruction projects since Hurricane Katrina have forced temporary closures of the visitor facilities.

A commercially operated paddle wheel tour boat, the Creole Queen, used to carry visitors from the French Quarter in New Orleans to the Chalmette Battlefield year round and provided a unique and scenic way to access the Chalmette Unit. Park staff met the arriving passengers and offered guided interpretive walks to interested visitors. Hurricane Katrina damaged the tour boat landing area and the Creole Queen suspended operations. Two boats (the Creole Queen and the Steamboat Natchez) are currently running tours from New Orleans, and visits to the Chalmette Unit are expected to resume in December 2009.

NPS OPERATIONS

Since Hurricane Katrina, one to two NPS staff members are located at Chalmette almost daily. The unit is open daily from 7:00 am - 4:30 pm.

MUSEUM OPERATIONS AND INTERPRETATION

NPS staff provides interpretive programs to educate visitors and groups on the Battle of New Orleans and its significance to the War of 1812. Living history demonstrations are performed occasionally and battle reenactments, such as the Anniversary of the Commemoration of the Battle of New Orleans held each January, including 2006-2009 despite storm damage, allow volunteers, as well as local and state organizations to be involved in the park's activities. Since Hurricane Katrina regularly scheduled programming has been reduced; however, specially scheduled events and tours are accommodated (Muth, 2009).

Prior to Hurricane Katrina a small museum collection was located in the former Visitor Center that contained several exhibits explaining the importance of Louisiana and the Battle of New Orleans in the War of 1812. The former Visitor Center also contained a small auditorium for audiovisual programs. Hurricane Katrina damaged the former Visitor Center, which was later demolished. Artifacts and exhibits housed in the former Visitor Center were retrieved by NPS curatorial staff and most were salvageable. A temporary modular VC was opened during design and planning of the new

facility. During construction visitor services were transferred to the Malus-Beauregard House. The new Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery Visitor Center was formally opened on January 8, 2011, the 196th anniversary commemoration of the Battle of New Orleans.

Opportunities for visitors to experience solitude or have a contemplative experience are available most often during periods of low visitation and in areas of the park away from the main parking lot, temporary Visitor Center, picnic area and comfort station.

Currently, visitors to the Chalmette Unit have access to the temporary visitor facilities during hours of operations and the Tour Road is accessible daily except during closures necessitated by construction. The levee overlook and tour boat landing are closed until tour boat operations resume.

The visitors' parking area consists of pull-in parking along the entrance road adjacent to the north side of the Chalmette Monument. Pedestrian access to the temporary visitor facilities is via a walkway that meets ADA standards.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES



INTRODUCTION

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that environmental documents discuss the environmental impacts of a proposed federal action, feasible alternatives to that action, and any adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided if a proposed action is implemented. In this case the proposed federal action would be the adoption of a General Management Plan Amendment/Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment (GMPA/DCP/EA) for the Chalmette Unit of the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. This chapter analyzes the environmental impacts of implementing the three alternatives and the no-action alternative on cultural resources, natural resources, the visitor experience, and the socioeconomic environment. The analysis is the basis for comparing the beneficial and adverse effects of implementing the alternatives.

Impact analysis discussions are organized by impact topic and then by alternative under each topic. Each alternative discussion also describes cumulative impacts and presents a conclusion. At the end of the chapter there is a brief discussion of unavoidable adverse impacts, irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources, the relationship of short-term uses of the environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity. The impacts of each alternative are briefly summarized in Table 2-1.

CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

A cumulative impact is described in the Council on Environmental Quality's regulation 40 CFR 1508.7 as follows:

Cumulative impacts are incremental impacts of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency (federal or nonfederal) or person undertakes such other action. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, actions taking place over a period of time.

To determine potential cumulative impacts, other projects within and surrounding the Chalmette Unit were identified. The area included surrounding communities and businesses: St. Bernard Parish, the Kaiser Aluminum facility, the Chalmette Slip Marine Terminal, and the industrial facilities located to the east and west of the park. Projects were identified by discussions with the NPS staff. Potential projects identified as cumulative actions included any planning or development activity that was currently being implemented, or would be implemented in the reasonably foreseeable future. Impacts of past actions were also considered in the analysis.

These actions are evaluated in conjunction with the impacts of each alternative to determine if they would have any cumulative effects on a particular natural, cultural, or socioeconomic

resource or visitor use. If the cumulative action is a future action, the qualitative evaluation of cumulative impacts was based on a general description of the project.

Past Actions

Historical Land Use

Chalmette contains and protects a portion of the land on which the Battle of New Orleans occurred. However, the battle was spread over a wider area than is currently contained within the existing park boundary. Within the site, various land parcels, each with its own distinctive history, have been assembled into the present landscape. Portions of the Rodriguez Plantation, where American forces built their defensive rampart, and the Chalmette Plantation, across which the British assault was conducted, comprise the present landscape. The so-called Rodriguez Plantation was actually a fairly modest farm at the time of the battle. The small wedge-shaped tract, about ninety one feet wide at its apex fronting the river, was not large enough for a typical plantation. As part of a larger plantation in the 18th century it was undoubtedly used for the cultivation of indigo and later, sugarcane. The smaller parcel was later subdivided and sold in 1808 to Rodriguez, an attorney of Spanish descent that lived in New Orleans. The parcel contained a house and other outbuildings. On the property line downriver was a canal, possibly a millrace, afterwards called the Rodriguez Canal. It was this canal, dividing the open agricultural lands along the river and forming a barrier that ran from the river

levee to the back swamp, which first attracted General Jackson and his engineers. He used it to front the earthen rampart he had built to defend the city from the invading British troops coming upriver. The American encampment included not only the Rodriguez tract, but the downriver McCarty Plantation as well, which is outside the unit boundary and was largely destroyed by the dredging of the Chalmette Slip in the 1920s (Greene, 1985).

On the downriver side of the canal was the Chalmette Plantation. Sugar cane was the main crop and at the time of the battle the cane was not yet harvested. However, the fields immediately in front of the rampart, where the battle took place, were fallow and overgrown. A sequence of drainage ditches running perpendicular to the river and a double ditch running parallel to the river, and the so-called Center Road, played a large role in the execution of the battle (Risk 1999). The remnants of the ditches and road are still extant at the park. Most of the Chalmette property, including the location of the house and main buildings, was downriver from the unit. The buildings still existing in the twentieth century were removed for the construction of the Kaiser Aluminum plant.

After the War of 1812 and through the Civil War the land use changed to a series of smaller farms and estates exemplified by the Malus-Beauregard House preserved and interpreted at the Chalmette Unit. Following the Civil War, a community of freedmen, former slaves from area plantations, was established on a section of the former Chalmette

Plantation known as Fazendeville. Fazendeville was an active community until 1964 when the NPS acquired the property and it was incorporated into the Chalmette Unit. In the twentieth century, adjacent areas became industrialized.

Elements not present during the Battle of New Orleans but added subsequently include the Chalmette Monument, providing a focal point on the Rodriguez property, the Chalmette National Cemetery, the NPS era tour roads and buildings, and the NPS-reconstructed American rampart on the original line between the two plantations. The historic but post-battle Malus-Beauregard House and the St. Bernard sewage treatment plant introduce elements unrelated to the story of the battle.

Hurricanes

Hurricanes and severe storms have always been a part of Louisiana's weather. Of the 273 hurricanes to hit the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts of the United States, Louisiana has been directly affected by 49 (New Orleans Hurricane History 2008). Most recently, Hurricane Katrina made landfall east of New Orleans on August 29, 2005. This hurricane caused tremendous damage in the area primarily as a result of flooding from the overtopping of levees and floodwall failures in the face of the storm's unprecedented tidal surge. As a result, portions of the existing resources at the Chalmette Unit have been affected and are in varying stages of restoration and repair.

Hurricane Katrina produced a storm surge that traveled across Lake Borgne and up the

Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO) into the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal, resulting in the flooding of over 19,000 acres of St. Bernard Parish, including the unit. Flood waters remained for approximately three weeks. A month later, Hurricane Rita, although it made landfall 200 miles to the west, produced an 8-foot storm surge that breached the repaired levees and along with heavy rains caused wide spread flooding for a second time (St. Bernard website 2007).

St. Bernard Parish

St. Bernard Parish was flooded as a result of storm surge from Hurricane Katrina and the entire parish was evacuated. 99% of all residences and businesses were flooded. Residences were lost or damaged to an extent as to make them uninhabitable.

Former Kaiser Aluminum Chalmette Reduction Plant

The former Kaiser Aluminum Chalmette Reduction Plant operated from the early 1950's through the mid 1990's on the portion of the historic Chalmette Plantation downriver from the cemetery. The site is now owned by the St. Bernard Port, Harbor and Terminal Authority and is being redeveloped as a commercial and industrial park.

Present Actions

Chalmette Unit Visitor Center

The NPS has replaced the 1440 square foot Chalmette Unit Visitor Center, which was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, with a 3500 square foot building. Hurricane Katrina recovery funds have been appropriated for this

new structure, which would be built on an expanded footprint of the former Visitor Center. The Visitor Center is not included in this EA analysis; NEPA compliance for the Visitor Center has been completed under a separate document. However, cumulative effects from the construction of the Visitor Center are included in this EA.

St. Bernard Parish Project

The St. Bernard Project began rebuilding/renovating homes in August 2006. As of May 2009, they have rebuilt 215 homes and 30 are in the process of being rebuilt (St. Bernard Parish Project; website checked June 13 2009).

Chalmette Slip

The Chalmette Slip is part of the Chalmette Marine Terminal and Industrial Park. It was purchased by the St. Bernard Port, Harbor and Terminal Authority from Kaiser Aluminum in January 1989. Current projects at the Chalmette Marine Terminal and Industrial Park include the rehabilitation of several buildings at these facilities.

Future Actions

St. Bernard Parish Tourism Center

During the scoping process for this project, the proposal to create an offsite tourism center to be managed by St. Bernard Parish, with possible support from NPS and other partners, generated considerable interest and enthusiasm. The purpose of such a center would be not only to orient visitors to the Chalmette Unit, but to interpret some of the broader themes of area history, culture, and

natural history, and to provide a venue to more fully interpret that part of the British Campaign of 1814-15 that took place outside the confines of the Chalmette Unit.

Discussions about possible locations of such a center focused on the Meraux Estate fields on the north side of St. Bernard Highway and on St. Bernard Port, Harbor and Terminal Authority properties that occupy the old Kaiser Aluminum lands both upstream and downstream of the unit.

Considerable uncertainty surrounds the future priorities of St. Bernard Parish post Hurricane Katrina. However, NPS remains committed to continuing to explore possibilities for such a facility with the parish and other partners.

Removal of Fazendeville Sewage Treatment Plant (STP)

Prior to Hurricane Katrina, St. Bernard Parish made a decision to decommission and demolish the Fazendeville STP. The parish was actively seeking funding to make it possible to re-route sewage to a different plant, and to demolish the existing facility.

Hurricane Katrina destroyed most of the existing sewage treatment infrastructure in the parish. Ironically, the Fazendeville STP, because it was located adjacent to the river on high ground, was one of the first plants that could be brought back online after the storm. While the parish completely rebuilds its sewage treatment system, it would be necessary to continue operation of the Fazendeville STP. However, the parish remains committed to

the eventual decommissioning and demolition of the plant. Accordingly, all alternatives assume the eventual removal of the plant from the battlefield.

Replacement of River Boat Dock

The river boat dock operated by the St. Bernard Port, Harbor and Terminal Authority provided a means of access to the unit for a significant percentage of its visitors. A hurricane surge that came up the river during Katrina overwhelmed the hurricane protection back levees and floodwalls severely damaging the docking facility. The old dock had a very basic, utilitarian design. NPS will work cooperatively with the Port Authority to find a design that is more welcoming and more in keeping with the historic setting, if such a design can be achieved within funding limits. In the event that the Port Authority decides against replacement, NPS will explore other options for rebuilding the dock. All alternatives assume the eventual rebuilding of the docking facility.

St. Bernard Parish Project

The St. Bernard Project is planning in the future to continue to rebuild and renovate homes in the St. Bernard Parish.

St. Bernard Parish Long-Term Community Recovery Plan

Projects included in the recovery plan are the development of a landscape and gateway enhancement master plan, housing and community development (i.e., create a housing assistance program), economic and workforce development (i.e., create a small

business service center), development of a mixed-use medical village, transportation and infrastructure, and flood protection and coastal restoration (i.e., create barrier islands).

Chalmette Slip

Future projects at the marine terminal and industrial park include the construction of additional warehouse space.

IMPAIRMENT OF PARK RESOURCES

In addition to determining the environmental consequences of implementing the preferred and other alternatives, NPS Management Policies 2006 requires analysis of potential effects to determine whether or not proposed actions would impair park resources and values.

The fundamental purpose of the national park system, established by the Organic Act and reaffirmed by the General Authorities Act, as amended, begins with a mandate to conserve park system resources and values. NPS managers must always seek ways to avoid, or to minimize to the greatest degree practicable, adverse impacts on a park unit's resources and values. Although Congress has given the NPS the management discretion to allow certain impacts within a park unit when necessary and appropriate to fulfill the purposes of the park unit, that discretion is limited by the statutory requirement that the NPS must leave resources and values unimpaired unless a particular law directly and specifically provides otherwise. The prohibited impairment is an impact that, in the professional

judgment of the responsible NPS manager, would harm the integrity of the park unit's resources and values, including the opportunities that otherwise would be present for the enjoyment of those resources or values. An impact on any park unit's resource or value may constitute impairment. An impact would be more likely to constitute impairment if it affects a resource or value whose conservation is:

- necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of the park unit;
- key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park unit or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park unit; or
- identified as a goal in the park unit's GMP or other relevant NPS planning documents.

Impairment may result from NPS activities in managing the park unit, visitor activities, or activities undertaken by concessionaires, contractors, and others operating in the park unit. A determination on impairment is made in the conclusion section in this document for each impact topic related to the park resources and values. An evaluation of impairment is not required for topics related to visitor use and experience (unless the impact is resource based), NPS operations, or the socioeconomic environment. When it is determined that an action(s) would have a moderate to major adverse effect, a justification for "non-impairment" is made. Impacts of only negligible or minor intensity are not considered to result in impairment.

METHODS AND ASSUMPTIONS FOR ANALYZING IMPACTS

The planning team based the impact analysis and the conclusions in this chapter largely on the review of existing literature and studies, information provided by experts in the NPS and other agencies, and park staff insights and professional judgment. The team's method of analyzing impacts is further explained below. It is important to remember that all the impacts have been assessed assuming that mitigative measures would be implemented to minimize or avoid impacts. If the mitigative measures described in Chapter 2 were not applied, the potential for resource impacts and the magnitude of those impacts would increase.

NPS Director's Order 12, "Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision Making," presents an approach to identifying the duration (short or long term), type (adverse or beneficial), and intensity or magnitude (e.g., negligible, minor, moderate, or major) of the impact(s), and that approach has been used in this document. Direct and indirect effects caused by an action were considered in the analysis. Direct effects are caused by an action and occur at the same time and place as the action. Indirect effects are caused by the action and occur later in time or farther removed from the place, but are still reasonably foreseeable.

The impacts of the action alternatives describe the difference between implementing the no-action alternative and implementing each of the action

alternatives. To understand a complete "picture" of the impacts of implementing any of the action alternatives, the reader must also take into consideration the impacts that would occur under the no-action alternative.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

METHODOLOGY

Potential impacts to cultural resources (archeological sites, historic structures, and the cultural landscape) are explained in terms of type, context, duration, and intensity, which is consistent with the CEQ regulations. Analyses of potential impacts are intended to comply with the requirements of both the National Environmental Policy Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

In accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulations implementing Section 106, impacts to cultural resources were identified and evaluated by:

1. determining the Area of Potential Effects (APE);
2. identifying cultural resources present in the APE that were either listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP);
3. applying the criteria of adverse effect to affected cultural resources listed on or eligible for listing on the NRHP; and
4. considering ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects.

Under the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) regulations, a determination of either *adverse effect* or *no adverse effect* must also be made for affected NRHP-listed or -eligible cultural resources. An *adverse effect* occurs whenever an impact alters, directly or

indirectly, any characteristic of a cultural resource, which qualifies it for inclusion on the NRHP, by diminishing the integrity of the resource's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. Adverse effects also include reasonably foreseeable effects caused by the alternatives that would occur at a later time or that would be cumulative over the course of time. A determination of *no adverse effect* means that there is an effect, but the effect would not diminish in any way characteristics of a cultural resource that would qualify it for inclusion on the NRHP.

Definitions of Intensity Levels

In order for a historic structure to be listed in the NRHP, it must meet one or more of the following criteria of evaluation: (A) it must be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; (B) associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; (C) embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or (D) have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. In addition, the structure or building must possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association (*National*

Register Bulletin, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation). For purposes of analyzing potential impacts to historic structures/buildings, the thresholds of change for the intensity of an impact are defined as follows:

Negligible: Impact(s) is at the lowest levels of detection - barely perceptible and not measurable. For purposes of Section 106, the determination of effect would be no adverse effect.

Minor:

Adverse impact - impact would not affect the character-defining features of a NRHP eligible or listed structure or building. For purposes of Section 106, the determination of effect would be no adverse effect.

Beneficial impact - stabilization/ preservation of character defining features in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. For purposes of Section 106, the determination of effect would be no adverse effect.

Moderate:

Adverse impact - impact would alter a character-defining feature(s) of the structure or building but would not diminish the integrity of the resource to the extent that its NRHP eligibility is jeopardized. For purposes of Section 106, the determination of effect would be no adverse effect.

Beneficial impact - rehabilitation of a structure or building in accordance

with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. For purposes of Section 106, the determination of effect would be no adverse effect.

Major:

Adverse impact - impact would alter a character-defining feature(s) of the structure or building, diminishing the integrity of the resource to the extent that it is no longer eligible to be listed in the NRHP. For purposes of Section 106, the determination of effect would be adverse effect.

Beneficial impact - restoration of a structure or building in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. For purposes of Section 106, the determination of effect would be no adverse effect.

The Area of Potential Effect for the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery was determined to be the entire site of the Chalmette Unit. The period of significance for the battlefield and rampart is December to March of 1815; for the Cemetery, 1864 to the present; for the Malus-Beauregard House, the period from 1833 until NPS acquisition; and for the Chalmette Monument, 1855-1909.

HISTORIC STRUCTURES, ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES, CULTURAL LANDSCAPES, AND ETHNOGRAPHIC RESOURCES

IMPACTS FROM IMPLEMENTING THE NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the no-action alternative, existing conditions would remain unchanged. Current management practices, policies, and park programs would continue to be implemented with no major changes from current levels.

No amenities, or interpretational or educational facilities, such as kiosks, trails, signage, or parking, would be constructed with this alternative. Other than replacement or repair to pre-Katrina conditions, historic structures, archeological sites, the cultural landscape and ethnographic resources would be left in their present condition.

Cumulative Impacts. Visitation trends would likely increase with the approach of the Battle of New Orleans bicentennial leading to general wear and tear on the site associated with heavy visitation. These impacts on the site may have a minor, short-term adverse effect.

If existing structures continue to be stabilized, repaired, and maintained in accordance with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (the Standards), this would be considered a beneficial impact leading to **No Adverse Effect**.

Since under the no action alternative the cultural landscape at Chalmette is managed in the future based on a plan

developed in accordance with the NPS' Preservation Brief 36, "Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment, and Management of Historic Landscapes" (Brief 36), existing landscape features, such as roads, curbs, trails, walls, drainage structures, and vegetation, would continue to be preserved and interpreted, creating No Adverse Effect. Any disturbance of eligible archaeological resources would not occur before consultation between the NPS and the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer (and/or the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, if necessary) and the preparation of a memorandum of agreement, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.6, "Resolution of Adverse Effects." Impacts on archaeological resources resulting from implementing the no-action alternative would be minimal, leading to **No Adverse Effect**.

Ethnographic resources are also going to be categorized as various other types of cultural and natural resources, such as archeological sites, historic buildings, natural areas, or cultural landscapes. Places of cultural significance (a type of ethnographic resource) may also be Traditional Cultural Properties, a type of historic property eligible for inclusion on the National Register. All standards that pertain to these other types of resources would be applied to these ethnographic resources. Assessment of effect on ethnographic resources will be done using both the standards and procedures that apply to the

category of resource (such as archeology site, historic building, cultural landscape) and by using the condition assessment criteria developed in consultation with the traditionally associated groups, resulting in **No Adverse Effect**.

Conclusion. If historic structures are treated in accordance with the Standards and if cultural landscapes are treated in accordance with Brief 36, then application of the ACHP's criteria of adverse effects (36 CFR 800.5, Assessment of Adverse Effects) to the no-action alternative would result in a finding of **No Adverse Effect** to the historic structures and cultural landscape located within the Chalmette Unit.

IMPACTS FROM IMPLEMENTING ALTERNATIVE A

Changes to the site proposed in Alternative A include the following:

- New landscape features, such as signage, fencing, gates, and planting, at both the entrance to the battlefield and to the entrance to the cemetery;
- New 10 space parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Accurately reconstruct and extend the rampart and Rodriguez Canal interpretive display.
- Extension of walking trail along entire length of canal from new parking to Chalmette Monument;
- Rehabilitation of the Malus-Beauregard House and related historic landscape;

- New 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station;
- New levee overlook and access point;
- New trails to connect overlook to Tour Road;
- New 20 space overflow car and bus parking area southeast of the Malus-Beauregard House ;
- Addition of a program and special events staging area;
- Redesigned British Memorial;
- Addition of paved shoulder, designated walking lane, and interpretive waysides to Tour Road;
- Restoration of existing vehicle pull-throughs;
- Additional plantings added in railroad right-of-way;
- Alteration of battlefield vegetation to reflect historic conditions; and
- Improvements to the Chalmette National Cemetery.

Other than these changes and additions, some existing conditions would remain the same. It is assumed that current management practices, policies, and park programs would continue to be implemented with no major changes from current levels.

Direct Impacts. Under Alternative A, activities related to the rehabilitation of the Malus-Beauregard House may result in a small amount of damage to these historic buildings, but subsequent restoration activities would likely mitigate any minor construction damage. Therefore these actions are expected to have a negligible impact on these resources.

Any disturbance of eligible archaeological resources within the site would not occur before consultation between the NPS and

the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer (and/or the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, if necessary) and the preparation of a memorandum of agreement, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.6, "Resolution of Adverse Effects." Therefore, the proposed reconstruction of the northern portion of the existing remnant of the Rodriguez Canal as far as the railroad right-of-way would not proceed until archaeological investigations have been implemented. It is anticipated that the reconstruction would have a minor adverse impact on the canal as an archeological site.

This is also applicable to other activities related to new facility installation that could affect subsurface archaeological resources. Past developments within the site may have already resulted in the disturbance and loss of some archaeological resources during excavation and construction activities. If NRHP-listed or -eligible archaeological resources are avoided to the greatest extent possible, the actions associated with this alternative would contribute only moderately to the adverse impacts of other past, present, and reasonable foreseeable actions occurring within the Chalmette Unit.

The greatest impact to the cultural landscape would be from the installation of additional parking lots and pedestrian trails throughout the site. Of these new circulation features, the parking lot adjacent to the Battlefield entrance would have a moderate adverse impact because it would be located within the historic linear viewshed from the entrance to the Chalmette

Monument. The parking lot proposed in the former location of the sewage treatment plant would have a moderate adverse impact to the cultural landscape because, as a horizontal feature it would be less visually intrusive than the plant, but more intrusive than restoration of the site to natural conditions.

Additional trails proposed within the site would have only a minor adverse impact to the site because, although they are additional features, they also increase visitor access to the site and are in keeping with the goals of the park to make resources accessible to visitors. Localized landscaping projects involving additional site furnishings and plantings at both entrances and at the Malus-Beauregard House would have a moderate beneficial impact on the site. Entrance plantings, fencing, signage, and gates would help improve the entrance sequences at both locations, emphasize the site's importance as a park of national importance, and distinguish it from its surrounding industrial complex setting.

Rehabilitation of the landscape surrounding the Malus-Beauregard House would be based on historic photographs and plans and would set it apart as a secondary interpretive site to enhance understanding of its role in antebellum life, as well as distinguish it from the larger battlefield. This would have a major beneficial impact on the cultural landscape of the site. Improvements proposed to the National Cemetery in accordance with treatment recommendations found in the 1999 Cultural

Landscape Report would have a major beneficial impact on this historic site.

Conclusion. If historic structures are treated in accordance with the Standards, then application of the ACHP's criteria of adverse effects (36 CFR 800.5, Assessment of Adverse Effects) to Alternative A would result in a finding of **No Adverse Effect** to the historic structures located within the Chalmette National Battlefield and National Cemetery.

Any disturbance of eligible archaeological resources would not occur before consultation between the NPS and the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer (and/or the Advisory council on Historic Preservation, if necessary) and the preparation of a memorandum of agreement, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.6, "Resolution of Adverse Effects." Adverse impacts on archaeological resources resulting from implementing Alternative A would be moderate, leading to **No Adverse Effect**.

If cultural landscapes are treated in accordance with Brief 36, then application of the ACHP's criteria of adverse effects (36 CFR 800.5, Assessment of Adverse Effects) to Alternative A would result in a finding of **No Adverse Effect** to the cultural landscape located within the Chalmette Unit National Battlefield and National Cemetery.

Ethnographic resources are also going to be categorized as various other types of cultural and natural resources, such as archeological sites, historic buildings, natural areas or

cultural landscapes. Places of cultural significance (a type of ethnographic resource) may also be Traditional Cultural Properties, a type of historic property eligible for inclusion on the National Register. All standards that pertain to these other types of resources would be applied to these ethnographic resources. Assessment of the effect on ethnographic resources will be done using both the standards and procedures that apply to the category of resource (such as archeology site, historic building, cultural landscape) and by using the condition assessment criteria developed in consultation with the traditionally associated groups, resulting in **No Adverse Effect**.

IMPACTS FROM IMPLEMENTING ALTERNATIVE B

Changes to the site proposed in Alternative B include the following:

- New landscape features, such as signage, fencing, gates, and planting, at both the entrance to the battlefield and to the entrance to the cemetery; Addition of a Center Road Trail to existing Tour Road;
- New 20 space parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Restoration of the northern extension of the Rodriguez Canal and extension of the recreated rampart structure within the right-of-way of the railroad;
- Removal of trees in the north part of the site to expose more of the battlefield area;

- Additional plantings added in railroad right-of-way;
- Relocated and redesigned British Memorial;
- Extension of walking trail along entire length of canal from new parking to Chalmette Monument;
- Installation of two new pull-through interpretive stops on the west side of Monument Road;
- Removal of pull-in parking on the east side of Monument Road;
- Alteration of battlefield vegetation to reflect historic conditions;
- Rehabilitation of the Malus-Beauregard House and related historic landscape;
- Rebuild carriage house northeast of Malus-Beauregard House;
- New 20 space car and bus turn-around area to the east of the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Tour Road segment converted to two-way traffic between Chalmette Monument and new 20-space car parking and bus turn-around
- New 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station;
- New levee overlook and access point;
- Re-establishment of historic cemetery entrance access on River Road;
- Conversion of Tour Road to pedestrian use only;
- Removal of existing restrooms building, and construction of new bathrooms as a modular addition to the Visitor's Center;
- Restoration of existing vehicle pull-throughs;
- Rehabilitation of the Superintendent's Lodge for administrative use and

- rehabilitation of the Carriage House for interpretation use;
- Relocation of Maintenance Facilities to River Road;
- Addition of a program and special events staging area; and
- Improvements to the Chalmette National Cemetery.

Other than these changes and additions, current management practices, policies, and park programs would continue to be implemented with no major changes from current levels.

Direct Impacts. Under Alternative B, activities related to the rehabilitation of the Malus-Beauregard House, Superintendent's Lodge, and Carriage House may result in a small amount of damage to these historic buildings, but subsequent restoration activities would likely mitigate any minor construction damage. Therefore these actions are expected to have no adverse impact.

Any disturbance of eligible archaeological resources within the site would not occur before consultation between the NPS and the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer (and/or the Advisory council on Historic Preservation, if necessary) and the preparation of a memorandum of agreement, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.6, "Resolution of Adverse Effects." Therefore, the proposed reconstruction of the northern portion of the existing remnant of the Rodriguez Canal as far as the railroad right-of-way would not proceed until archaeological investigations have been implemented. The reconstruction would have a minor adverse impact on the canal as an archeological site.

This is also applicable to other activities related to new facility installation that could affect subsurface archaeological resources. Past developments within the site may have already resulted in the disturbance and loss of some archaeological resources during excavation and construction activities. If NRHP-listed or -eligible archaeological resources are avoided to the greatest extent possible, the actions associated with this alternative would contribute only moderately to the adverse impacts of other past, present, and reasonable foreseeable actions occurring within the Chalmette Unit.

The greatest impact to the cultural landscape would be from the installation of the unstaffed Visitor Information Center, additional parking lots, vehicular drives, and pedestrian trails throughout the site. The Visitor Information Center would be a new feature located within the viewshed of the Chalmette Battlefield and would have a moderate adverse impact.

Of the new circulation features, the parking lot adjacent to the Chalmette Battlefield entrance and the two new pull-through interpretive stops would have a moderate adverse impact because they would be located within the historic linear viewshed from the entrance to the Chalmette Monument. On the other hand, removal of the existing pull-in parking area on the east side of the Chalmette Drive would have a major beneficial impact.

The parking lot proposed to the east of the Malus-Beauregard House would have a moderate adverse impact because it would

be placed within the viewshed of both the battlefield and the Malus-Beauregard House. Associated with this is the vehicular drive that would connect this parking lot with the circular drive around the Chalmette Monument. However, because it is aligned with the existing Tour Road, it would have only a minor adverse impact.

Additional trails proposed within the site would have only a minor adverse impact to the site because, although they are additional modern features, they also increase visitor access to the site and are in keeping with the goals of the park to make resources accessible to visitors.

Relocation and redesign of the British Memorial would have a minor beneficial impact on the site because it would improve understanding of the location of British troops during the battle at the Chalmette Unit site.

Relocation of Maintenance Facilities to the former site of the sewage treatment plant would have a minor beneficial impact, isolating maintenance activities outside the historic core of the site.

Localized landscaping projects involving additional site furnishings and plantings at both entrances and at the Malus-Beauregard House would have a minor beneficial impact on the site. Entrance plantings, fencing, signage, and gates would help improve the entrance sequences at both locations, emphasize the site's importance as a park of national importance, and distinguish it from its surrounding industrial complex setting.

Rehabilitation of the landscape surrounding the Malus-Beauregard House would be based on historic photographs and plans and would set it apart as a secondary interpretive site to enhance understanding of its role in antebellum life, as well as distinguish it from the larger battlefield. This would have a major beneficial impact on the cultural landscape of the site.

Improvements proposed to the National Cemetery in accordance with treatment recommendations found in the 1999 Cultural Landscape Report would have a major beneficial impact on this historic site. Effects from the re-establishment of the historic cemetery entrance on the south end of the site are unknown and require further investigation.

Conclusion. If historic buildings and structures are treated in accordance with the Standards, then application of the ACHP's criteria of adverse effects (36 CFR 800.5, Assessment of Adverse Effects) to Alternative B would result in a finding of **No Adverse Effect** to the historic structures located within the Chalmette Unit.

Any disturbance of eligible archaeological resources would not occur before consultation between the NPS and the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer (and/or the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, if necessary) and the preparation of a memorandum of agreement, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.6, "Resolution of Adverse Effects." Adverse impacts on archaeological resources resulting from implementing Alternative B would be moderate, leading to **No Adverse Effect**.

If cultural landscapes are treated in accordance with Brief 36, then application of the ACHP's criteria of adverse effects (36 CFR 800.5, Assessment of Adverse Effects) to Alternative B would result in a finding of **No Adverse Effect** to the cultural landscape located within the Chalmette Unit.

Ethnographic resources are also going to be categorized as various other types of cultural and natural resources, such as archeological sites, historic buildings, natural areas or cultural landscapes. Places of cultural significance (a type of ethnographic resource) may also be Traditional Cultural Properties, a type of historic property eligible for inclusion on the National Register. All standards that pertain to these other types of resources would be applied to these ethnographic resources. Assessment of the effect on ethnographic resources will be done using both the standards and procedures that apply to the category of resource (such as archeology site, historic building, cultural landscape) and by using the condition assessment criteria developed in consultation with the traditionally associated groups, resulting in **No Adverse Effect**.

IMPACTS FROM IMPLEMENTING ALTERNATIVE C

Changes to the site proposed in Alternative C include the following:

- New landscape features, such as signage, fencing, gates, and planting, at both the entrance to the battlefield

- and to the entrance to the cemetery;
- New 30 space car and bus parking area, and bus turnaround near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
 - Restoration of the northern extension of the Rodriguez Canal and symbolic representation of the recreated rampart structure across and to the north side of St. Bernard Highway;
 - Removal of trees in the north part of the site to expose more of the battlefield area;
 - Additional plantings added in railroad right-of-way;
 - Redesigned and relocated British Memorial;
 - Removal of the Tour Loop Road and regrading of road bed to natural slope;
 - Extension of walking trail along entire length of canal from new parking to Chalmette Monument;
 - New 30 space parking area adjacent to the Chalmette Monument on the west side of Monument Road;
 - Removal of pull-in parking on the east side of Monument Road;
 - Removal of existing restrooms building, and construction of new bathrooms as a modular addition to the Visitor's Center;
 - Removal of pull-in parking areas on Chalmette Drive;
 - Addition of service and special events access road from Chalmette Monument to River Road;
 - Alteration of battlefield vegetation to reflect historic conditions;
 - Addition of complex of interpretive walking trails that follow restored agricultural field drainage ditches and the alignment of River Road;
 - Rehabilitation of the Malus-Beauregard House and related historic landscape;
 - New levee overlook and access point;
 - Re-establishment of historic cemetery entrance access on River Road;
 - Rehabilitation of the Carriage House for administrative and interpretive uses at the Cemetery;
 - Relocation of Maintenance Facilities to leased site at Port Authority;
 - Addition of new 12 car parking lot at cemetery entrance;
 - Removal of trail leading from battlefield to mid-point of cemetery and restoration of cemetery wall; and
 - Improvements to Chalmette National Cemetery.
- Other than these changes and additions, it is assumed that current management practices, policies, and park programs would continue to be implemented with no major changes from current levels.
- Direct Impacts.** Under Alternative C, activities related to the rehabilitation of the Malus-Beauregard House and Carriage House may result in a small amount of damage to these historic buildings, but subsequent restoration activities would likely mitigate any minor construction damage. Therefore these actions are expected to have no adverse impact on these resources.
- Any disturbance of eligible archaeological resources within the site would not occur before

consultation between the NPS and the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer (and/or the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, if necessary) and the preparation of a memorandum of agreement, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.6, "Resolution of Adverse Effects." Therefore, the proposed reconstruction of the northern portion of the existing remnant of the Rodriguez Canal as far as the railroad right-of-way would not proceed until archaeological investigations have been implemented. The reconstruction would have a minor adverse impact on the canal as an archeological site.

This is also applicable to other activities related to new facility installation that could affect subsurface archaeological resources. Past developments within the site may have already resulted in the disturbance and loss of some archaeological resources during excavation and construction activities. If NRHP-listed or -eligible archaeological resources are avoided to the greatest extent possible, the actions associated with this alternative would contribute only moderately to the adverse impacts of other past, present, and reasonable foreseeable actions occurring within the Chalmette Unit.

The greatest impact to the cultural landscape would be from the removal of the Tour Road and the installation of additional parking lots, vehicular drives, and pedestrian trails throughout the site. The Tour Road has been determined to detract from the historic interpretation goals of the park administration because this road, installed in the 1960s, interferes with

understanding of the qualities of the landscape at the time of the Battle of New Orleans. At that time, the landscape consisted of an agricultural field, subdivided by a number of shallow drainage ditches that transported water from the fields to lowland swamps on the northern edge of the site. Some of these ditches were also aligned with property divisions contemporary with the battle period. Removal of the Auto Tour Road Loop would have a major beneficial impact.

Of the new circulation features, the parking lot near the Battlefield entrance and the proposed parking lot adjacent to the Chalmette Monument, would have a moderate adverse impact because they would be located within the historic linear viewshed from the entrance to the Chalmette Monument. On the other hand, removal of the existing pull-in parking area on the east side of the Chalmette Drive would have a major beneficial impact by improving safety for visitors who would no longer have to back out into the roadway when departing from the pull-in parking area.

The vehicular drive that would connect from the Chalmette Monument to River Road may have a moderate adverse impact to the site because of its proximity to the Rodriguez Canal and house site. Additional pedestrian trails proposed within the site would have only a minor adverse impact to the site because, although they are additional features, they also increase visitor access to the site and are in keeping with the goals of the park to make resources accessible to visitors. The new trails to be located atop spoils piles created from the

reconstruction of historic agricultural ditches would have a beneficial impact by enhancing interpretation of the battlefield site. One of these trails would be placed on the alignment of Center Road, which has not been previously interpreted.

Relocation and redesign of the British Memorial would have a minor beneficial impact on the site because it would improve understanding of the location of British troops during the Battle of New Orleans at the Chalmette site.

Relocation of Maintenance Facilities to a leased site at the Port Authority would have a major beneficial impact on historic interpretation of the site, as well as public safety, isolating maintenance activities completely out of the park.

Localized landscaping projects involving additional site furnishings and plantings at both entrances and at the Malus-Beauregard House would have a minor beneficial impact on the site. Entrance plantings, fencing, signage, and gates would help improve the entrance sequences at both locations, emphasize the site's importance as a park of national importance, and distinguish it from its surrounding industrial complex setting.

Rehabilitation of the landscape surrounding the Malus-Beauregard House would be based on historic photographs and plans and would set it apart as a secondary interpretive site to enhance understanding of its role in antebellum life, as well as distinguish it from the larger battlefield. This would have a

major beneficial impact on the cultural landscape of the site.

Improvements proposed to the Chalmette National Cemetery in accordance with treatment recommendations found in the 1999 Cultural Landscape Report would have a major beneficial impact on this historic site. Effects from the re-establishment of the historic cemetery entrance on the south end of the site are unknown and require further investigation.

Conclusion. If historic structures are treated in accordance with the Standards, then application of the ACHP's criteria of adverse effects (36 CFR 800.5, Assessment of Adverse Effects) to Alternative C would result in a finding of **No Adverse Effect** to the historic structures located within the Chalmette Unit.

Any disturbance of eligible archaeological resources would not occur before consultation between the NPS and the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer (and/or the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, if necessary) and the preparation of a memorandum of agreement, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.6, "Resolution of Adverse Effects." Adverse impacts on archaeological resources resulting from implementing Alternative C would be moderate, leading to **No Adverse Effect**.

If cultural landscapes are treated in accordance with Brief 36, then application of the ACHP's criteria of adverse effects (36 CFR 800.5, Assessment of Adverse Effects) to Alternative C would result in a finding of **No Adverse Effect** to

the cultural landscape located within the Chalmette Unit.

Ethnographic resources are also going to be categorized as various other types of cultural and natural resources, such as archeological sites, historic buildings, natural areas or cultural landscapes. Places of cultural significance (a type of ethnographic resource) may also be Traditional Cultural Properties, a type of historic property eligible for inclusion on the National Register. All standards that pertain to these other types of resources would be applied to these ethnographic resources. Assessment of the effect on ethnographic resources will be done using both the standards and procedures that apply to the category of resource (such as archeology site, historic building, cultural landscape) and by using the condition assessment criteria developed in consultation with the traditionally associated groups, resulting in **No Adverse Effect**.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Analysis of natural resources was based on research, knowledge of existing resources, and the best professional judgment of planners, biologists, and botanists who have experience with similar types of projects. Information on the Chalmette Unit's natural resources was gathered from several sources. As appropriate, additional sources of data are identified under each topic heading.

Where possible, map locations of resources were compared with the locations of proposed developments and modifications. Predictions about short term (less than one year) and long term (one year or more) site impacts were based on previous studies of development impacts on natural resources.

WATER RESOURCES

FLOODPLAINS

Floodplain Management, Executive Order 11988 issued 24 May 1977, directs all Federal agencies to avoid both long and short term adverse effects associated with occupancy, modification, and development in the 100-year floodplain, when possible. The 100-year floodplain is defined in this order as "the lowland and relatively flat areas adjoining inland and coastal waters including flood prone areas of offshore islands, including at a minimum, that area subject to a one percent greater chance of flooding in any given year." Flooding in the 100-year zone is

expected to occur once every 100 years, on average. In addition, NPS proposed actions that may adversely affect floodplains must comply with DO #77-2: Floodplain Management.

Since the Chalmette Unit is located outside of the 100-year floodplain an impact analysis is not required and the activities proposed under the alternatives would not impact the 100-year floodplain. However, due to the existing poor drainage conditions and periodic flooding at the park as discussed in Chapter 3, impacts from the alternatives to the floodplain at the Chalmette Unit were analyzed in this chapter. The floodplain at the Chalmette Unit is defined by FEMA as Zone B the area between limits of the 100-year flood and 500-year flood; or certain areas subject to 100-year flooding with average depths less than 1 foot or where the contributing drainage area is less than one square mile; or areas protected by levees from base flood (FEMA 1985). The Chalmette Unit has little topographic relief with an elevation of 10 feet above sea level and is occasionally flooded during major storms acting as stormwater management for overland sheet flow during storm events. During periods of persistent torrential rainfall, ponding occurs along the American rampart, the western wall of the cemetery, the western property line and between the Malus-Beauregard House and the Tour Road (Risk 1999).

Methodology

Predictions about site impacts were based on knowledge of impacts on natural resources from development of visitor and operations facilities under similar situations. The following categories were used to evaluate the potential impacts on the floodplain (Zone B - the floodplain area between the limits of the 100-year flood and 500-year flood) at the Chalmette Unit:

Negligible - The impact on the floodplain would not be measurable. Any effects on functionality of the floodplain would be slight.

Minor - Impacts would be measurable or perceptible but would be localized within a relatively small area. The overall functionality of the floodplain would not be affected.

Moderate - An action would result in a change in quantity or alteration of the floodplain and overall functionality of the floodplain. Impacts would cause a change in the floodplain; however, the impact would remain localized.

Major - An action would result in a change in the floodplain that would be substantial, highly noticeable, and permanent. Impacts would affect overall floodplain functionality in a relatively large area. Significant floodplain processes would be altered, and landscape-level changes would be expected.

Cumulative Impacts Common to All Alternatives Including the No Action Alternative

Actions that have occurred or would occur affecting the floodplain include industrial and residential development on adjacent lands. Additionally, the floodplain in the region has been historically affected by agriculture.

Hurricanes and severe storms have always been a part of the Louisiana's weather. Of the 273 hurricanes to hit the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts of the United States, Louisiana has been hit by 49 (New Orleans Hurricane History 2008). Most recently, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita made landfall in the New Orleans area in August and September 2005, respectively. These hurricanes caused tremendous damage in the area primarily as a result of flooding from the over topping of levees and tidal surge. As a result portions of the existing resources at the Chalmette Unit have been affected and are in varying stages of restoration and repair.

The entire Louisiana Coast is experiencing relative sea level rise (RSLR) which is a downward movement of land surface relative to sea level and caused by a variety and combination of factors including compaction of unconsolidated soils, sea level rise, faulting and potentially the removal of subsurface fluids from the draining of wetlands (Louisiana Coastal Area 2007). The subsidence rate calculated for Coastal Louisiana is approximately 0.91 centimeters per year or 1.75 meters (4.1 feet) since the Battle of New Orleans. The St. Bernard Parish

area is a part of the Louisiana Coastal Area Restoration Study conducted by the USACE and the State of Louisiana (DNR 2008).

Hurricane Katrina produced a storm surge that traveled across Lake Borgne and up the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet resulting in the flooding of over 19,000 acres of St. Bernard Parish including the Chalmette Unit. Flood waters remained for approximately three weeks. Hurricane Rita produced an 8-foot storm surge that breached the repaired levees and along with heavy rains caused wide spread flooding for a second time (St. Bernard website 2007).

Many foreseeable future development actions outside of the Chalmette Unit could impact the existing periodic flooding condition including the construction of residential development, commercial development, and associated infrastructure. These future actions include the St. Bernard Project which is rebuilding and renovating homes in the St. Bernard Parish, projects included in the St. Bernard Parish Long Term Community Recovery Plan, removal of the STP, replacement of the river boat dock, and the St. Bernard Parish Tourism Center.

Impacts from Implementing the No Action Alternative

No new impacts to the floodplain would be expected as a result of implementing the No Action Alternative, because no new developments or changes to existing developments are proposed under this alternative at the Chalmette Unit. Impacts on

the floodplain from existing development would continue.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative would not contribute to the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions; therefore, there would be no project-related cumulative impacts to the floodplain.

Conclusion. This alternative would have no effect on the floodplain at the Chalmette Unit because no new developments or changes to existing developments are proposed. Because this alternative would result in no new impacts or changes to the floodplain in the region, there would be no additional cumulative impacts from this alternative. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts Common to all Action Alternatives

The following proposed actions would impact the floodplain at the Chalmette Unit and are common to all the action alternatives:

- Landscape the entrance to the park and the entrance to the cemetery;
- Landscape at the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Plant trees in the railroad right-of-way;
- Construct a new levee overlook and access point; and,
- Accurately reconstruct and extend the rampart and Rodriguez Canal interpretive display.

The proposed actions common to all alternatives would result in impacts to the floodplain at the Chalmette Unit. However, these

impacts would be localized within a relatively small area and the overall functionality of the floodplain would not be affected. To minimize the impacts to the floodplain the levee overlook would be elevated above the floodplain. Current advisory base flood elevation maps recommend that building in the Chalmette Unit vicinity be constructed 3 feet above the highest existing adjacent grade (HEAG) at the building site (FEMA 2006). The Chalmette Unit is approximately 10 feet above mean sea level (MSL). By implementing these mitigation measures the impacts to the floodplain would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable. The proposed actions would cause minor alterations to the floodplain; however, the area of the floodplain would not be increased, and the floodplain would still perform its function of storing water during flood events.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative A

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative A would also impact the floodplain at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 10 space parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Tour Road - pave the shoulder, add waysides, and construct interpretive trail on the inside shoulder of the road;
- Construct a new 20 space car and bus parking area southeast of the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Addition of a program and special events staging area; and,

- Construct a new 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Center.

Constructing and implementing these proposed actions for Alternative A would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts to the floodplain at the Chalmette Unit. To minimize the impacts to the floodplain the interpretive trail would be paved with pervious materials and the unstaffed Visitor Information Center would be elevated above the floodplain. By implementing these mitigation measures the impacts to the floodplain would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable. Overall, the impacts would be localized within a relatively small area and the overall functionality of the floodplain would not be affected.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the region would result in minor adverse cumulative impacts; however, this alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects.

Conclusion. This alternative would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts. By implementing mitigation measures the impacts to the floodplain would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable. The overall cumulative effect on the floodplain would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative B

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative B would also impact the floodplain at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 20 space car and bus parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Addition of a Center Road Trail to existing Tour Road;
- Remove the two pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Construct two new pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Tour Road segment rebuilt for two-way traffic to access new parking area and bus turnaround east of the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Construct a new 20 space car parking area and bus turnaround area east of the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Construct a new 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Center;
- Addition of a program and special events staging area;
- Construct a new parking area near the cemetery entrance; and,
- Remove the existing restroom and construct new bathrooms as a modular addition to the Visitor Center.

Constructing and implementing these proposed actions for Alternative B would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts to the floodplain at the Chalmette Unit. To minimize the impacts to the floodplain the unstaffed Visitor Information Center would be elevated above

the floodplain. By implementing this mitigation measure the impact to the floodplain would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the region would result in minor adverse cumulative impacts; however, this alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects.

Conclusion. This alternative would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts. By implementing mitigation measures the impacts to the floodplain would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable. The overall cumulative effect on the floodplain would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative C

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative C would also impact the floodplain at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 30 space car and bus parking and bus turnaround area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Remove the two pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Remove the existing restroom and construct new bathrooms as a modular addition to the Visitor Center;

- Remove the Tour Road and re-grade to a natural slope;
- Construct a new 30 space parking area adjacent to the Chalmette Monument;
- Remove the NPS service road;
- Construct a new 12 space parking area near the cemetery entrance;
- Construct new interpretive walking trails;
- Remove the trail to the cemetery; and,
- Construct new staff and parking near the new Visitor Center.

Constructing the parking areas and interpretative trails for Alternative C would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts to the floodplain at the Chalmette Unit. To minimize the impacts to the floodplain the trails would be paved with pervious materials. Removing the pull-in parking areas, existing restroom, Tour Road, and the NPS service road would benefit the floodplain by reducing the amount of impervious surfaces at the park. These actions would be minor and long term.

By implementing these mitigation measures the impacts to the floodplain would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable. Overall, the impacts would be localized within a relatively small area and the overall functionality of the floodplain would not be affected.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the region would result in minor adverse cumulative impacts; however, this

alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects.

Conclusion. This alternative would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts to the floodplain at the Chalmette Unit. However, removing the existing paved Tour Road would result in minor long term benefits to the floodplain. By implementing mitigation measures the impacts to the floodplain would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable. The overall cumulative effect on the floodplain would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

COASTAL ZONE

Methodology

Predictions about site impacts were based on knowledge of impacts to the resources of the coastal zone from development of visitor and operations facilities. The following categories were used to evaluate the potential impacts to the resources on the coastal zone:

Negligible - The impact to the resources of the coastal zone would not be measurable. Any effects on the resources of the coastal zone would be slight.

Minor - Impacts to the resources of the coastal zone would be measurable or perceptible but would be localized within a relatively small area. The overall functionality of the resources of the coastal zone would not be affected.

Moderate - An action would result in a change or alteration to the resources of the coastal zone. Impacts would cause a change to the resources of the coastal zone; however, the impact would remain localized.

Major - An action would result in a change in the coastal zone that would be substantial, highly noticeable, and permanent. Impacts would affect overall coastal zone functionality in a relatively large area. Significant coastal zone processes would be altered, and landscape-level changes would be expected.

Cumulative Impacts Common to All Action Alternatives Including the No Action Alternative

Hurricanes and severe storms have always been a part of the Louisiana's weather. Of the 273 hurricanes to hit the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts of the United States, Louisiana has been hit by 49 (New Orleans Hurricane History 2008). Most recently, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita made landfall in the New Orleans area in August and September 2005, respectively. These hurricanes caused tremendous damage in the area primarily as a result of flooding from the over topping of levees and tidal surge.

The entire Louisiana Coast is experiencing RSLR which is a downward movement of land surface relative to sea level and caused by a variety and combination of factors including compaction of unconsolidated soils, sea level rise, faulting and potentially the removal of subsurface fluids from the draining of wetlands (Louisiana Coastal Area 2007).

Many foreseeable future development actions outside of the Chalmette Unit would impact the LCMZ from the construction of residential development, commercial development, and associated infrastructure to sea level rise. These future development actions include the St. Bernard Project which is rebuilding and renovating homes in the St. Bernard Parish, projects included in the St. Bernard Parish Long Term Community Recovery Plan, removal of the STP, replacement of the river boat dock, and the St. Bernard Parish Tourism Center.

Impacts from Implementing the No Action Alternative

No new impacts to the coastal zone would be expected as a result of implementing the No-Action Alternative, because no new developments or changes to existing developments are proposed under this alternative at the Chalmette Unit. Impacts to the coastal zone from existing development would continue.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative would not contribute to the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions; therefore, there would be no project-related cumulative impacts to the coastal zone.

Conclusion. The Chalmette Unit lies within the LCMZ. However, this alternative would have no effect on the coastal zone at the park because no new developments or changes to existing developments are proposed. Because this alternative would result in no new impacts or changes to the coastal zone in the region, there would be no

cumulative impacts. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts Common to All Action Alternatives

All three action alternatives are located within the LCMZ. Short term minor adverse impacts to the resources of the coastal zone are anticipated from the proposed action alternatives. However, these impacts would be localized within a relatively small area. To minimize the impacts to the coastal zone the levee overlook would be elevated above the floodplain. Current advisory base flood elevation maps recommend that building in the Chalmette Unit vicinity be constructed 3 feet above the highest existing adjacent grade (HEAG) at the building site (FEMA 2006). The Chalmette Unit is approximately 10 feet above mean sea level (MSL). By implementing these mitigation measures the impacts to the resources of the coastal zone would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable.

Regulatory Requirements Common to All Action Alternatives

Activities proposed within the coastal zone by a Federal agency, such as the NPS, require a certification of consistency. A certification of consistency is supported by necessary data and information that a proposed activity or development complies with the Louisiana Coastal Resources Program (LCRP) and that such activity shall be conducted in a manner consistent with the program. The LDNR is the principal agency requiring permit applications for construction activities in the coastal zone

and comments on Federal permit applications to ensure consistency with the LCRP. Federal activities are exempt from Coastal Use permits, yet they still must be consistent with the LCRP.

Short term minor impacts to the coastal zone are anticipated from the proposed action alternatives; however, the NPS would be consistent to the extent practicable to be in compliance with the LCRP. The NPS has determined that the project is in compliance with the LCRP and will request concurrence from the LCRP to ensure compliance between the Federal and state coastal zone management programs. LDNR will review the GMPA/DCP/EA to determine if the project is in compliance with the LCRP. If the project is in compliance, a notice of agreement would be provided by the LDNR, thus completing all relevant CZM requirements.

Cumulative Impacts. The action alternatives would not contribute to the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, therefore there would be no project-related cumulative impacts to the coastal zone.

Conclusion. The action alternatives would result in short term minor adverse impacts. By implementing mitigation measures the impacts to the coastal zone would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable, regardless of the alternative. The proposed action is expected to be consistent, to the maximum extent practicable with the LCRP. The action alternatives would not contribute to the impacts of other past,

present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, therefore there would be no additional cumulative impacts to the coastal zone. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing these alternatives.

SOILS

Methodology

Predictions about site impacts were based on knowledge of impacts on natural resources from development of visitor and operations facilities under similar situations. The following categories were used to evaluate the potential impacts on soils:

Negligible - The impact on soil resources would not be measurable. Any effects on productivity or erosion potential would be slight.

Minor - An action would change a soil's profile in a relatively small area, but it would not appreciably change the productivity of the soil or increase the potential for erosion of additional soil.

Moderate - An action would result in a change in quantity or alteration of the topsoil, overall biological productivity, or the potential for erosion to remove small quantities of additional soil. Changes to localized ecological processes would be of limited extent.

Major - An action would result in a change in the potential for erosion to remove large quantities of additional soil or in alterations to topsoil and overall biological

productivity in a relatively large area. Significant ecological processes would be altered, and landscape-level changes would be expected.

Cumulative Impacts Common to All Action Alternatives Including the No Action Alternative

Actions that have occurred or would occur affecting soil resources include industrial and residential development on adjacent lands. Additionally, soil in the region including the Chalmette Unit has been historically affected by agriculture.

Many foreseeable future development actions outside of the Chalmette Unit would adversely impact soils through compaction and displacement from construction of residential development, commercial development, and associated infrastructure. These future actions include the St. Bernard Project, which is rebuilding and renovating homes in the St. Bernard Parish, projects included in the St. Bernard Parish Long Term Community Recovery Plan, removal of the STP, replacement of the river boat dock, and the St. Bernard Parish Tourism Center.

Impacts from Implementing the No Action Alternative

No new impacts to soil would be expected as a result of implementing the No Action Alternative, because no new developments or changes to existing developments are proposed under this alternative at the Chalmette Unit. Current management practices, policies, and park operations would continue to be implemented with

no major changes from current levels. Further development of the park would not occur and zoning would not be applied.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative would not contribute to the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, therefore there would be no project-related cumulative impacts to soils.

Conclusion. This alternative would have no effect on soil at the Chalmette Unit because no new developments or changes to existing developments are proposed. Because this alternative would result in no new impacts or changes to soil in the region, there would be no additional cumulative impacts from this alternative. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts Common to all Action Alternatives

The following proposed actions would impact soils at the Chalmette Unit and are common to all the action alternatives:

- Landscape the entrance to the park and the entrance to the cemetery;
- Landscape at the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Plant trees in the railroad right-of-way;
- Construct a new levee overlook and access point;
- Pave the River Road; and,
- Accurately reconstruct and extend the rampart and Rodriguez Canal interpretive display.

Constructing or implementing these activities would result in short term minor adverse impacts to soil during construction/implementation, because soil would be displaced or disturbed regardless of the alternative. Long term impacts to soil would be adverse but minor and would result from compaction and displacement of soil. Use of best management practices (BMPs) would be implemented during construction and other soil disturbing activities to minimize impacts to soils.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative A

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative A would also impact soils at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 10 space parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Tour Road - pave the shoulder, add waysides, and construct interpretive trail on the inside shoulder of the road;
- Addition of a program and special events staging area; and,
- Construct a new 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station.

Constructing or implementing these activities would result in short term minor adverse impacts to soil during construction and implementation, because soil would be displaced or disturbed. Long term impacts to soil would be adverse but minor and would result from compaction and displacement of soil.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the region would result in minor adverse cumulative impacts; however, this alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects.

Conclusion. This alternative would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts. The overall cumulative effect on soils would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative B

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative B would also impact soils at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 20 space car and bus parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield ;
- Addition of a Center Road Trail to existing Tour Road;
- Relocate the British Memorial;
- Remove the two pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Construct two new pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Tour Road segment realigned;
- Construct a new 20 space car parking area and bus turnaround area east of the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Construct a new 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station;

- Addition of a program and special events staging area; and
- Construct a new parking area near the cemetery entrance.

Constructing or implementing these activities would result in short term minor adverse impacts to soil during construction/implementation, because soil would be displaced or disturbed. Due to the construction of several new parking areas, long term impacts to soil would also be adverse and minor and would result from compaction and displacement of soil. Use of best management practices (BMPs) would be implemented during construction and other soil disturbing activities to minimize impacts to soils.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the region would result in minor adverse cumulative impacts; however, this alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects.

Conclusion. Alternative B would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts on soils at the Chalmette Unit. The overall cumulative effect on soils would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative C

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions

proposed for Alternative C would also impact soils at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 30 space car and bus parking and bus turn-around near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Relocate the British Memorial;
- Remove the two pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Remove the existing restroom;
- Remove the Tour Road and re-grade to a natural slope;
- Construct a new 30 space parking area adjacent to the Chalmette Monument;
- Remove the NPS service road;
- Construct a new 12 space parking area near the cemetery entrance;
- Rehabilitate the historic drainage ditches;
- Construct new interpretive walking trails;
- Remove the trail to the cemetery; and,
- Construct new staff and parking near the Visitor Center.

Constructing or implementing the activities proposed for Alternative C would result in similar impacts to soil as the activities proposed under Alternative B. Alternative C would result in short term minor adverse impacts to soil during construction/implementation, because soil would be displaced or disturbed. Due to the construction of several new parking areas and the rehabilitation of the historic drainage ditches, long term impacts to soil would also be adverse and minor and would result from compaction and displacement of soil. Use of BMPs would be implemented during construction and other soil

disturbing activities to minimize impacts to soils.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the region would result in minor adverse cumulative impacts; however, this alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects.

Conclusion. Alternative C would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts on soils at the Chalmette Unit. The overall cumulative effect on soils would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

WETLANDS

Federal Executive Order 11990 - Protection of Wetlands, directs all Federal agencies to avoid to the extent possible the long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands and to avoid direct or indirect support of new construction in wetlands wherever there is a practicable alternative. In the absence of such alternatives, parks must modify actions to preserve and enhance wetland values and minimize degradation. NPS *Director's Order* #77-1 (Wetland Protection) *Procedural Manual* 77-1 states that for new actions where impacts to wetlands cannot be avoided, proposals must include plans for compensatory mitigation that restores wetlands on NPS lands where possible at a minimum acreage ratio of 1:1. A "Statement of Findings" for

wetlands would be prepared prior to construction activities.

Applicable permits associated with wetlands would be acquired, prior to construction activities to ensure compliance with both Federal and State laws (i.e., CWA Sections 401 and 404). In addition, the appropriate agencies, including the USACE and LDNR, would be notified and consulted with prior to permit submittal or construction activities to ensure compliance with the CWA.

Methodology

Impacts were assessed qualitatively. Site-specific information was obtained from a floristic survey (Bretting 1975), a cultural landscape report (Risk 1999), a wetland delineation by the USACE at the site (USACE 2005), and from personnel communication with the chief of planning and resource stewardship at the park (Muth 2008b). Predictions about impacts were based on previous studies of development impacts on natural resources.

Minor –The impacts would not necessarily change the function of the wetland. An action would affect a small portion of vegetation, hydrology, and soil in a localized area but would not affect the functionality of the wetland at the local or regional scale. Aquatic/terrestrial processes would not be affected.

Moderate –The impacts would result in a small change in the overall function of the wetland. An action would affect a small portion of vegetation, hydrology, and soil in a

localized area and would affect the functionality of the wetland at the local scale. Local impacts to aquatic/terrestrial processes would be affected.

Major – The impacts would result in a large change in the overall function of the wetland in a relatively large area. An action would affect a large amount of vegetation, hydrology, and soil in a localized area and would affect the functionality of the wetland at the local scale and regional scale such that the function would not likely return to the former level (adverse), or would return to a sustainable level (beneficial). Significant aquatic/terrestrial processes would be altered.

Cumulative Impacts Common to All Action Alternatives Including the No Action Alternative

Actions that have occurred or would occur that affect wetlands include any development planned on adjacent lands that are characterized as wetlands. Additionally, the wetlands in the region have been historically affected by agricultural practices such as the past conversion of wetlands to croplands.

Many foreseeable future development actions outside of the Chalmette Unit such as rebuilding and renovating homes in the St. Bernard Parish, projects included in the St. Bernard Parish Long Term Community Recovery Plan, replacement of the river boat dock, and the St. Bernard Parish Tourism Center, should not adversely affect wetlands if the building footprints remain the

same or similar to existing conditions. However, if these activities extend beyond existing footprints into wetlands, these actions would cause adverse impacts by disrupting or destroying wetland vegetation, hydric soils, and/or changing existing hydrology.

Impacts from Implementing the No-Action Alternative

The No-Action Alternative would not result in any new changes to wetlands other than those brought about by natural environmental processes. Current management practices, policies, and park operations would continue to be implemented with no major changes from current levels. Further development of the park would not occur and zoning would not be applied. There would be no impact to wetlands or their functions as a result of this alternative and wetlands at the Chalmette Unit would remain the same.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative would not contribute to the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions; therefore, there would be no project-related cumulative impacts to wetlands.

Conclusion. This alternative would have no effect on wetlands at the Chalmette Unit because no new developments or changes to existing developments are proposed. Because this alternative would result in no new impacts or changes to the wetlands in the region, there would be no additional cumulative impacts from this alternative. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts Common to all Action Alternatives

The following proposed actions would impact wetlands at the Chalmette Unit and are common to all the action alternatives:

- Landscape the entrance to the park and the entrance to the cemetery;
- Landscape at the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Plant trees in the railroad right-of-way;
- Maintain the battlefield vegetation to reflect historic conditions;
- Construct a new levee overlook and access point; and,
- Accurately reconstruct and extend the rampart and Rodriguez Canal interpretive display.

These proposed actions result in a combination of adverse and beneficial impacts to wetlands at the Chalmette Unit. These actions would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts to wetlands because the vegetation and soil and/or vegetation would be disturbed or removed during implementation, regardless of the alternative. Planting trees in the railroad right-of-way would add not only new trees to the existing forested wetland, but may also add fill material in the wetland and would have a short term minor adverse impact to the forested wetland. Where appropriate, native, wetland-indicator (hydrophytic) tree species would be incorporated into the planting plan to create a long term minor beneficial impact to the forested wetland. Maintaining (mowing) the battlefield vegetation to reflect historic conditions would have negligible impacts on wetlands,

as the battlefield is currently being mowed on an infrequent basis.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative A

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative A would also impact wetlands at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 10 space parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Tour Road - pave the shoulder, add waysides, and construct interpretive trail on the inside shoulder of the road;
- Addition of a program and special events staging area; and,
- Construct a new 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station.

Constructing or implementing these activities would result in short term minor adverse impacts to wetlands during construction/implementation, because the vegetation, soils, and hydrology would be disturbed during these activities. Short term impacts to wetlands would be adverse but minor and would potentially result from the permanent removal and loss of wetland vegetation and disturbance of soils and hydrology for the parking area, special events staging area, trail, and Visitor Information Station. However, it is anticipated that future wetland mitigation would offset the long term adverse impacts. In addition, if porous pavement is used in the conversion of impervious surfaces in wetland areas, natural hydrology could be

partially maintained at these locations.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the cumulative impacts on wetlands discussed previously, would result in a minor adverse cumulative impact; however, this alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects and any required wetland mitigation would offset the expected adverse impacts of this alternative.

Conclusion. Alternative A would result in short term minor adverse impacts. However, establishment of this alternative would also result in long term minor beneficial impacts through wetland mitigation requirements which would offset the expected adverse impacts of this alternative. The overall cumulative effect on wetlands would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative B

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative B would also impact wetlands at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 20 space car and bus parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Addition of a Center Road Trail to existing Tour Road;
- Remove trees from the battlefield area;
- Relocate the British Memorial;

- Construct two new pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Tour Road segment realigned;
- Construct a new 20 space car parking area and bus turnaround area near the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Construct a new 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station;
- Addition of a program and special event staging area; and,
- Construct a new parking area near the cemetery entrance.

The actions proposed for Alternative B would result in short term minor adverse impacts to wetlands during construction and implementation, because the vegetation, soils, and hydrology would be disturbed during these activities. Short term impacts to wetland vegetation would be adverse but minor and would result from the permanent removal and loss of any existing wetland vegetation within the activities such as the proposed parking areas, realignment of the Tour Road, staging areas, and Visitor Information Station. There would also be a permanent loss of existing trees in the forested wetland to expose more of the battlefield area. Therefore, a long term minor adverse impact to wetland function in the forested wetland would result due to a decrease in floral productivity at this location. However, due to the mitigation requirements of wetland impacts, any required wetland mitigation would potentially offset the expected adverse impacts of this alternative. In addition, if porous pavement is used in the conversion of impervious surfaces in wetland areas, natural

hydrology could be partially maintained at these locations.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the cumulative impacts on wetlands discussed previously, would result in a minor adverse cumulative impact; however, this alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects and any required wetland mitigation would offset the expected adverse impacts of this alternative.

Conclusion. Alternative B would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts. However, establishment of this alternative would also result in long term minor beneficial impacts through wetland mitigation requirements. Wetland mitigation would offset the expected adverse impacts of this alternative. The overall cumulative effect on wetlands would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative C

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative C would also impact wetlands at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 30 space car and bus parking area and bus turn-around area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Remove trees from the battlefield area;
- Relocate the British Memorial;

- Remove the two pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Construct a new 30 space parking area adjacent to the Chalmette Monument;
- Construct a new 12 space parking area near the cemetery entrance;
- Rehabilitate the historic drainage ditches;
- Construct new interpretive walking trails; and,
- Construct new staff and parking near the Visitor Center.

The actions proposed for Alternative C would result in short term minor adverse impacts to wetlands during construction/implementation, because the vegetation, soils, and hydrology would be disturbed during these activities. Short term impacts to wetland vegetation would be adverse but minor and would result from the permanent removal and loss of existing wetland vegetation within the areas of the proposed parking areas and the interpretive walking trails. There would also be a permanent loss of existing trees in the forested wetland to expose more of the battlefield area. Therefore, a long term minor adverse impact to wetland function in the forested wetland would result due to a decrease in floral productivity at this location. However, due to the mitigation requirements of wetland impacts, any required wetland mitigation would potentially offset the expected adverse impacts of this alternative. In addition, if porous pavement is used in the conversion of impervious surfaces in wetland areas, natural hydrology could be partially

maintained at these locations. Long term minor beneficial impacts to wetlands may result from the rehabilitation of the historic drainage ditches. If the hydrology of the drainage ditches provides more connectivity and flow, the wetland function could be improved and a beneficial impact may result.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the cumulative impacts on wetlands discussed previously, would result in a minor adverse cumulative impact; however, this alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects and any required wetland mitigation would offset the expected adverse impacts of this alternative.

Conclusion. Alternative C would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts. However, establishment of this alternative would also result in long term minor beneficial impacts through wetland mitigation requirements which would offset the expected adverse impacts of this alternative. The overall cumulative effect on wetlands would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

VEGETATION

Methodology

Impacts were assessed qualitatively. Site-specific information was obtained from a floristic survey (Bretting 1975) and a cultural landscape report (Risk 1999). Predictions about impacts were based on previous

studies of development impacts on natural resources.

Negligible – The impact on vegetation (individuals and/or communities) would not be measurable. The abundance or distribution of individuals would not be affected or would be slightly affected. Ecological processes and biological productivity would not be affected.

Minor – The impact would not necessarily decrease or increase the area's overall biological productivity. An action would affect the abundance or distribution of individuals in a localized area but would not affect the viability of local or regional populations or communities.

Moderate – The impact would result in a change in overall biological productivity in a small area. An action would affect a local population sufficiently to cause a change in abundance or distribution, but it would not affect the viability of the regional population or communities. Changes to ecological processes would be of limited extent.

Major – The impact would result in a change to overall biological productivity in a relatively large area. An action would affect a regional or local population of a species sufficiently to cause a change in abundance or in distribution to the extent that the population or communities would not be likely to return to its/their former level (adverse), or would return to a sustainable level (beneficial).

Significant ecological processes would be altered.

Cumulative Impacts Common to All Action Alternatives Including the No Action Alternative

Native vegetation in the region has been historically affected by agricultural, industrial, and residential land uses and the introduction of nonnative species. These activities have caused impacts by disrupting or destroying native vegetation to varying degrees.

Prior to Hurricane Katrina the Chalmette National Cemetery had a number of mature sycamore and live oak trees. Hurricane Katrina uprooted seven of the historic trees and they were removed. An additional 40 trees died or were severely damaged by high winds and were also removed. Many of the trees still existing in the southern portion of the cemetery, primarily sycamores but also live oak and magnolia have truncated limbs and branches from storm damage. The park has planted live oak saplings to fill in some of the larger gaps in the lower cemetery planting.

Many foreseeable future development actions outside of the Chalmette Unit, such as rebuilding and renovating homes in the St. Bernard Parish, projects included in the St. Bernard Parish Long Term Community Recovery Plan, removal of the STP, replacement of the river boat dock, and the St. Bernard Parish Tourism Center, would also adversely impact vegetation. These activities would cause adverse impacts by disrupting or destroying native vegetation.

The anticipated increase in visitation at the Chalmette Unit would most likely result in short term adverse impacts such as additional vegetation trampling and increased social trails.

Impacts from Implementing the No-Action Alternative

The No-Action Alternative would not result in any new changes to vegetation other than those brought about by natural environmental processes. Current management practices, policies, and park operations would continue to be implemented with no major changes from current levels. Further development of the park would not occur and zoning would not be applied. There would be no impact to vegetation as a result of this alternative and vegetation communities at the Chalmette Unit would remain the same.

Cumulative Impacts. The No-Action alternative would not add to the cumulative impacts discussed previously, thus there would be no project-related cumulative effect on native vegetative resources.

Conclusion. Implementing the No-Action Alternative would have no new impacts on vegetation. The No-Action Alternative would not add to impacts from other activities in the region and, thus, there would be no project-related cumulative effect on vegetation resources. Thus, there would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts Common to All Action Alternatives

The following proposed actions would impact vegetation at the Chalmette Unit and are common to all the action alternatives:

- Landscape the entrance to the park and the entrance to the cemetery;
- Construction of an information kiosk at the entrance to the park;
- Landscape at the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Plant trees in the railroad right-of-way;
- Maintain the battlefield vegetation to reflect historic conditions;
- Construct a levee overlook and access point; and,
- Accurately reconstruct and extend the rampart and Rodriguez Canal interpretive display.

These proposed actions result in a combination of adverse and beneficial impacts to vegetation at the Chalmette Unit. Most of these actions would result in short term minor adverse impacts to grasses and herbaceous plant cover, because the grasses would be disturbed or removed during implementation, regardless of the alternative. Long term impacts to the vegetation at the Chalmette Unit would be minor but beneficial due to the selection of native landscape plants/trees to be added at the park as appropriate and from the planting of trees to buffer the highway, both of which would increase the variety and distribution of vegetation at the park. Maintaining (mowing) the battlefield vegetation to reflect historic conditions would have

negligible impacts on the grasses and herbaceous plant cover.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative A

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative A would also impact vegetation at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 10 space parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Tour Road - pave the shoulder, add waysides, and construct interpretive trail on the inside shoulder of the road;
- Addition of a program and special events staging area; and
- Construct a new 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station.

Constructing or implementing these activities would result in short term minor adverse impacts to vegetation (grasses and herbaceous plant cover) during construction/implementation, because the grasses would be disturbed during these activities. Long term impacts to vegetation would be adverse but minor and would result from removal and loss of existing grasses and herbaceous plant cover for the parking area, trail, and Visitor Information Station. Vegetation would be removed from these areas and would not re-colonize. However, due to the addition of landscape plants/trees and the addition of trees to buffer the highway, minor beneficial impacts would result in the long term by increasing the variety and distribution of vegetation at the park.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the cumulative impacts on vegetation discussed previously, would result in a minor adverse cumulative impact; however, this alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects.

Conclusion. This alternative would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts. However, establishment of this alternative would also result in long term minor beneficial impacts to vegetation by increasing the variety and distribution of vegetation at the park through landscaping and buffering. The overall cumulative effect on vegetation would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative B

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative B would also impact vegetation at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 20 space parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Addition of a Center Road Trail to existing Tour Road;
- Remove trees from the battlefield area;
- Relocate the British Memorial;
- Construct two new pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Tour Road segment realigned;
- Construct a new 20 space car parking area and bus

turnaround area east of the Malus-Beauregard House;

- Construct a new 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station;
- Addition of a program and special event staging area; and
- Construct a new parking area near the cemetery entrance.

The actions proposed for Alternative B would result in a combination of adverse and beneficial impacts to vegetation at the Chalmette Unit. Constructing or implementing most of these activities would result in short term minor adverse impacts to vegetation (mainly grasses and herbaceous plant cover) during construction/implementation, because the grasses would be disturbed during these activities. Long term impacts to vegetation would be adverse but minor and would result from the removal and loss of existing grasses and herbaceous plant cover for the proposed parking areas and Visitor Information Station. Vegetation would be removed from these areas and would not re-colonize. There would also be a permanent loss of existing trees to expose more of the battlefield area. The designated program and special event staging area may result in the trampling of some grasses during park events.

However, due to the addition of landscape plants/trees and the addition of trees to buffer the highway, some of the long term adverse impacts to vegetation would be offset. In addition, these plantings would result in increasing the variety and distribution of vegetation at the park.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the cumulative impacts on vegetation discussed previously, would result in a minor adverse cumulative impact; however, this alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects.

Conclusion. Alternative B would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts on vegetation at the Chalmette Unit. However, proposed landscaping and buffering in this alternative would offset some of the adverse impacts to vegetation. The overall cumulative effect on vegetation would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative C

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative C would also impact vegetation at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 30 space car and bus parking area and bus turn-around area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield ;
- Remove trees from the battlefield area;
- Relocate the British Memorial;
- Remove the two pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Construct a new 30 space parking area adjacent to the Chalmette Monument;
- Construct a new 12 space parking area near the cemetery entrance;

- Rehabilitate the historic drainage ditches;
- Construct new interpretive walking trails; and,
- Construct new staff parking near the Visitor Center.

The actions proposed for Alternative C would result in a combination of adverse and beneficial impacts to vegetation at the Chalmette Unit. Constructing or implementing most of these activities would result in short term minor adverse impacts to vegetation (mainly grasses and herbaceous plant cover) during construction/implementation, because the grasses would be disturbed during these activities. Long term impacts to vegetation would be adverse but minor and would result from the removal and loss of existing grasses and herbaceous plant cover for the proposed parking areas. Vegetation would be removed from these areas and would not re-colonize. There would also be a permanent loss of existing trees to expose more of the historic battlefield area.

However, due to the addition of landscape plants/trees and the addition of trees to buffer the highway, some of the long term adverse impacts to vegetation would be offset. In addition, these plantings would result in increasing the variety and distribution of vegetation at the park.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the cumulative impacts on vegetation discussed previously, would result in a minor adverse cumulative impact; however, this alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects.

Conclusion. Alternative C would result in short and long term minor adverse impacts on vegetation at the Chalmette Unit. However, proposed landscaping and buffering in this alternative would offset some of the adverse impacts to vegetation. The overall cumulative effect on vegetation would be minor and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

WILDLIFE

Methodology

Impacts on wildlife are closely related to impacts on habitat. The evaluation considered whether actions would be likely to displace some or all individuals of a species in the Chalmette Unit or would result in loss or creation of habitat conditions needed for the viability of local or regional populations. Impacts associated with wildlife might include any change in roosting or foraging areas, food supply, protective cover, or distribution or abundance of species.

Negligible – The impact would not be measurable on individuals, and the local populations would not be affected.

Minor – An action would affect the abundance or distribution of individuals in a localized area but would not affect the viability of local or regional populations.

Moderate – An action would affect a local population sufficiently to cause a minor change in abundance or distribution but

would not affect the viability of the regional population.

Major – An action would affect a regional or local population of a species sufficiently to cause a change in abundance or in distribution to the extent that the population would not be likely to return to its former level (adverse), or would return to a sustainable level (beneficial).

Cumulative Impacts Common to All Action Alternatives Including the No-Action Alternative

Regional wildlife populations have been historically affected by industrial and residential land uses and the introduction of non-native species. There have been subsequent moderate to major adverse impacts in the form of habitat loss or disruption associated with these uses. Wildlife diversity is limited by the lack of diversity in habitats found within the park boundary as well as within the region. Species that are associated with or tolerant of human presence and activities comprise the majority of wildlife observations recorded at the Chalmette Unit.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita caused tremendous damage in the area primarily as a result of flooding from the over topping of levees and tidal surge in August and September 2005, respectively. Hurricane Katrina produced a storm surge resulting in the flooding of over 19,000 acres of St. Bernard Parish including the Chalmette Unit. Flood waters remained for approximately three weeks. Hurricane Rita produced an 8-foot storm surge that breached the repaired levees and along with heavy rains caused wide

spread flooding for a second time (St. Bernard 2007). Wildlife at the Chalmette Unit would have been either caught and drowned in the flood waters or would have fled to more habitable areas if mobile. Over time, it is expected that re-establishment of wildlife populations would occur at the Chalmette Unit provided that existing habitats recover.

Many foreseeable future development actions outside of the Chalmette Unit, such as rebuilding and renovating homes in the St. Bernard Parish, projects included in the St. Bernard Parish Long Term Community Recovery Plan, replacement of the river boat dock, and the St. Bernard Parish Tourism Center could adversely impact wildlife by contributing to the lack of wildlife habitat. However, most of these development projects are occurring on previously developed areas; therefore, the cumulative effects to wildlife from future actions would be minor.

Impacts from Implementing the No-Action Alternative

The No-Action Alternative would not result in any new changes in the current status of wildlife communities either in terms of species composition, habitat, or population dynamics other than those brought about by natural environmental processes. Current management practices, policies, and park operations would continue to be implemented with no major changes from current levels. Further development of the park would not occur and zoning would not be applied. The Chalmette Unit would continue its management, education and interpretation. There would be no

impact to wildlife as a result of this alternative, and wildlife would continue to utilize the park as habitat.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative would not contribute to the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions; therefore, there would be no project-related cumulative impacts on wildlife populations. Because this alternative would have no new changes on wildlife, there would be no additional cumulative impacts.

Conclusion. Implementing the No-Action Alternative would have no new effect on wildlife populations. Impacts on wildlife from existing development would continue. Because this alternative would have no new changes on wildlife, there would be no additional cumulative impacts. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts Common to All Action Alternatives

The following proposed actions would impact wildlife at the Chalmette Unit and are common to all the action alternatives:

- Landscape the entrance to the park and the entrance to the cemetery;
- Construct a new information kiosk at the entrance to the park;
- Landscape at the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Plant trees in the railroad right-of-way;
- Maintain the battlefield vegetation to reflect historic conditions;

- Construct a new levee overlook and access point; and,
- Accurately reconstruct and extend the rampart and Rodriguez Canal interpretive display.

These proposed actions would result in short and long term impacts to the wildlife at the Chalmette Unit. Short term, minor adverse impacts would occur to wildlife at the Chalmette Unit as a result of disturbance to habitat from construction activities and to individuals as a result of noise and human activity. Long term, minor beneficial impacts to the wildlife at the Chalmette Unit would result from the addition of landscape plants/trees at the park and from the planting of trees to buffer the highway resulting in an increase and diversity of available habitat for wildlife. Long term impacts to the wildlife at the Chalmette Unit would be minor but beneficial due to the addition of landscape plants/trees at the park and from the planting of trees to buffer the highway resulting in an increase and diversity of available habitat for wildlife.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative A

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative A would also impact wildlife at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 10 space parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Tour Road - pave the shoulder and construct interpretive trail on the inside

- shoulder of the road;
- Addition of a program and special events staging area; and,
- Construct a new 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station.

Constructing or implementing these activities would result in short term minor adverse impacts during construction as the sounds and presence of heavy equipment and more humans would disturb and displace individual animals. Long term impacts to wildlife would be adverse but minor and would result from the loss of existing habitat (grasses and herbaceous plant cover). Once the parking area, trail, and Visitor Information Station are constructed, the areas could not be recolonized by wildlife such as birds, rodents, and other small mammals. However, these areas offer little value as wildlife habitat.

Due to the addition of landscape plants/trees at the Malus-Beauregard House, at the entrance to the park, and at the entrance to the cemetery, and the addition of trees to buffer the highway, minor beneficial impacts to wildlife would result in the long term by increasing the variety and distribution of available habitat for wildlife at the park.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the region would result in negligible and adverse cumulative impacts; however, this alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects.

Conclusion. Implementing Alternative A would have short

term minor adverse impacts on wildlife populations. However, establishment of this alternative would also result in long term beneficial impacts to wildlife by increasing the variety and distribution of vegetation at the park through landscaping and buffering resulting in an increase and diversity of available habitat for wildlife. The overall cumulative impacts would be negligible and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative B

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative B would also impact wildlife at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 20 space parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Addition of a Center Road Trail to existing Tour Road;
- Remove trees from the battlefield area;
- Remove the two pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Construct two new pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Tour Road segment realigned;
- Construct a new 20 space car parking area and bus turnaround area east of the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Construct a 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station;
- Addition of a program and special event staging area; and,

- Construct a new parking area near the cemetery entrance.

The actions proposed for Alternative B would result in a combination of adverse and beneficial impacts to wildlife at the Chalmette Unit. Constructing or implementing these activities would result in short term minor adverse impacts during construction as the sounds and presence of heavy equipment and more humans would disturb and displace individual animals. Short term minor impacts to wildlife would occur when the designated program and special event staging area is in use. Long term impacts to wildlife would be adverse but minor and would result from the loss of existing habitat (trees, grasses, and herbaceous plant cover). Once the parking areas and Visitor Information Station are constructed, the areas could not be recolonized by wildlife such as birds, rodents, and other small mammals. However, the grass and herbaceous plants currently offer little value as wildlife habitat.

Due to the addition of landscape plants at the Malus-Beauregard House, at the entrance to the park, and at the entrance to the cemetery, and the addition of trees to buffer the highway, minor beneficial impacts to wildlife would result in the long term by increasing the variety and distribution of available habitat for wildlife at the park.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the region would result in negligible and adverse cumulative impacts; however, this

alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects.

Conclusion. Implementing Alternative B would have short term minor adverse impacts on wildlife populations. However, establishment of this alternative would also result in long term beneficial impacts to wildlife by increasing the variety and distribution of vegetation at the park through landscaping and buffering resulting in an increase and diversity of available habitat for wildlife. The overall cumulative impacts would be negligible and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative C

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative C would also impact wildlife at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 30 space car and bus parking area and bus turn-around near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield ;
- Remove trees from the battlefield area;
- Remove the two pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Remove the existing restroom;
- Remove the Tour Road;
- Construct a new 30 space parking area adjacent to the Chalmette Monument;
- Remove the NPS service road;
- Construct a new 12 space parking area near the cemetery entrance;

- Rehabilitate the historic drainage ditches;
- Construct new interpretive walking trails; and,
- Construct new staff parking near the Visitor Center.

The actions proposed for Alternative C would result in a combination of adverse and beneficial impacts to wildlife at the Chalmette Unit. Constructing or implementing these activities would result in short term minor adverse impacts during construction as the sounds and presence of heavy equipment and more humans would disturb and displace individual animals. Long term impacts to wildlife would be adverse but minor and would result from the loss of existing habitat (trees, grasses, and herbaceous plant cover). Once the parking areas and trails are constructed, the areas could not be recolonized by wildlife such as birds, rodents, and other small mammals. However, the grass and herbaceous plants currently offer little value as wildlife habitat.

Due to the addition of landscape plants at the Malus-Beauregard House, at the entrance to the park, and at the entrance to the cemetery, and the addition of trees to buffer the highway, minor beneficial impacts to wildlife would result in the long term by increasing the variety and distribution of available habitat for wildlife at the park.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative, in combination with the other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the region would result in negligible and adverse cumulative impacts; however, this

alternative would contribute a small portion of these effects.

Conclusion. Implementing Alternative C would have short term minor adverse impacts on wildlife populations. However, establishment of this alternative would also result in long term beneficial impacts to wildlife by increasing the variety and distribution of vegetation at the park through landscaping and buffering resulting in an increase and diversity of available habitat for wildlife. The overall cumulative impacts would be negligible and adverse; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small. There would be no impairment of this resource as a result of implementing this alternative.

SOCIOECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Methodology

The NPS applied logic, experience, professional expertise, and professional judgment to analyze the impacts on the social and economic environment resulting from each alternative. Economic data, historic visitor use data, expected future visitor use, and future developments of the Chalmette Unit were all considered in identifying, discussing, and evaluating expected impacts.

Intensity of Impact. Assessments of potential socioeconomic impacts for the action alternatives were based on comparisons between the no action alternative and each of the action alternatives. The following intensity definitions were used.

Negligible – Effects on socioeconomic conditions would be at or below the level of detection. There would be no noticeable change in any defined socioeconomic indicators.

Minor – Effects on socioeconomic conditions would be slight but detectable.

Moderate – Effects on socioeconomic conditions would be readily apparent and result in changes to socioeconomic conditions on a local scale.

Major – Effects on socioeconomic conditions would be readily apparent, resulting in demonstrable changes to socioeconomic conditions in the region.

Cumulative Impacts Common to All Action Alternatives Including the No-Action Alternative

Impacts to the regional economy would increase as recovery from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita continues. After 13 months of being closed to the public after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in late 2005, the Chalmette Unit has been open to the public with a limited schedule of availability of staff and access to the temporary Visitor Center as well as programs. The loss of visitors traveling to the park by tour boat from New Orleans is expected to return in the future. As many as 600 visitors a day came to the park during the tour boat season and visitation would be expected to return to pre-hurricane levels when the tour boat dock is restored. In all, it is expected that the visitor experience at Chalmette would eventually return to pre-hurricane levels in the

future and that staffing levels would return to similar pre-hurricane levels.

The social and economic situation in St. Bernard Parish is affected by a combination of factors, including the presence of the Chalmette Unit. New Orleans and St. Bernard Parish were devastated by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita as described in Chapter 3. Prior to the hurricanes the livelihoods of service-related businesses in the New Orleans region relied to a large extent on the inflow of tourist dollars, especially restaurants and motels. As the region recovers, the tourism economy is expected to return to what it was prior to the hurricanes. St. Bernard Parish had less of a reliance on tourism since it largely relied on an industrial economic base. Nevertheless, the St Bernard Parish Chamber of Commerce is interested in developing a regional tourism center near the entrance to the Chalmette Unit. In addition, the rebuilding and renovating of homes in the St. Bernard Parish and projects included in the St. Bernard Parish Long Term Community Recovery Plan has and is continuing to benefit the local economy.

Common to all alternatives would be that the celebrations of the bicentennial anniversary of the War of 1812 and the Battle of New Orleans, in 2012 and 2015 respectively, would result in an increase in visitation to the Chalmette Unit. It would be expected that the bicentennial celebrations would not only provide potential visitors with a destination for visiting but could also provide visitors already traveling to the region

with an excuse to extend their visits in order to participate in special events and activities at the park. St. Bernard Parish and the New Orleans region would benefit from a short term increase in visitors requiring a variety of services including lodging, meals and other tourist opportunities. This would be a short term, moderate economic benefit to the local, regional and state economy. The increase in visitors to the park for the celebrations may increase interest in the War of 1812 and provide a resulting increase in visitation for the future beyond the bicentennial.

Impacts from Implementing the No-Action Alternative

In the No-Action Alternative impacts to the regional economy would continue at the same level. Current management practices, policies, and park programs would continue to be implemented with no major changes from current levels. Visitor facilities would be provided and maintained with no major changes to current levels. The average length of stay in the region would not likely change. Visitors would continue to visit the Chalmette Unit in the same manner and experience the same social conditions.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative would not contribute to other past, present, and future impacts on social or economic conditions because impacts to the regional economy would continue at the same level they were prior to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Thus this alternative would have no additional cumulative effects.

Conclusion. The No-Action Alternative would have no new effect on the socioeconomic environment in the region. Because this alternative would have no new effects on the socioeconomic environment, there would be no additional cumulative impacts.

Impacts Common to All Action Alternatives

The following proposed actions would impact socioeconomics and are common to all the action alternatives:

- Landscape the entrance to the park and the entrance to the cemetery;
- Landscape at the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Plant trees in the railroad right-of-way;
- Construct a new levee overlook and access point;
- Accurately reconstruct and extend the rampart and Rodriguez Canal interpretive display.

Common to all proposed alternatives, would be short term moderate benefits to the local economy for the construction called for in the alternatives (i.e., parking lots, rehabilitation of structures and landscape, relocation of storage and maintenance buildings, development of trails and unpaved roads). The degree of construction and development proposed within each alternative would impact the local economy for the duration of the construction and provide benefits ranging from minor (Alternative A and B) to moderate (Alternative C).

The number of visitors, average length of visit, and length of season could increase with the addition of increased interpretive and educational opportunities. In combination with an overall increase in visitation would be an increase in visitation by school groups and other groups interested in the War of 1812, the Battle of New Orleans and the significance of other historic uses of site. This would result in a long term moderate benefit to the economy locally and regionally.

New Orleans and St. Bernard Parish businesses that rely on the tourist trade would receive a long term minor benefit through direct and indirect spending for tourist-related services.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative A

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative A would also impact local socioeconomics:

- Construct a new 10 space parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield ;
- Construct a new 20 space overflow car and bus parking area southeast of the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Tour Road - pave the shoulder, add waysides, and construct interpretive trail
- on the inside shoulder of the road;
- Addition of a program and special events staging area; and
- Construct a new 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station.

This alternative would have a long term moderate beneficial impact on the regional economy. It is possible that the Chalmette Unit would hire up to three additional employees to handle the need for interpretive/educational, law enforcement and maintenance personnel. Hiring employees would benefit the local economy through an increased demand for housing, utilities, services, and goods.

The number of visitors to the Chalmette Unit, average length of visit, and length of season could increase under Alternative A. Overall, visitation would be expected to increase when a separate walking path is implemented and additional parking is provided. An increase in visitation among local residents using the separated walking path is likely. Alternative A would have a long term minor beneficial impact on the regional economy.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative would contribute to other past, present, and future impacts on social or economic conditions. The overall cumulative effects would be minor and beneficial; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.

Conclusion. Implementing Alternative A would result in short and long term minor beneficial impacts on the socioeconomic environment. The overall cumulative effects would be minor and beneficial.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative B

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed

previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative B would also impact local socioeconomics:

- Construct a new 20 space car and bus parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Tour Road converted to pedestrian use but remains intact;
- Addition of a Center Road Trail to existing Tour Road;
- Remove trees from the battlefield area;
- Remove the two pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Construct new pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Construct a new 20 space car parking area and bus turnaround area east of the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Construct a new 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station;
- Addition of a program and special event staging area;
- Construct a new parking area near the cemetery entrance; and,
- Re-establishment of the river entrance to the Chalmette National Cemetery.

This alternative would have a long term moderate beneficial impact on the regional economy. It is possible that the Chalmette Unit would hire up to six additional employees to handle the need for interpretative/educational, law enforcement and maintenance personnel. Hiring employees would benefit the local economy through an increased demand for housing, utilities, services, and goods.

This alternative would also have a long term minor beneficial impact on the regional economy.

Visitation to the park would increase for Alternative B especially with an increase in use of the park by pedestrians interested not only in the interpretive and educational aspects, but also for recreational walkers particularly from the nearby community. The reuse of the Tour Road as a pedestrian trail would increase use of the park by walkers more than Alternative A that provides a designated pedestrian lane but still allows auto use of the Tour Road. Those visitors unable to visit the historic battlefield area as pedestrians would be concentrated in the area from the entrance road pull-through waysides to the area around the new Visitor Center, Chalmette Monument and the Malus-Beauregard House, but would still be expected to increase as a result of the addition and improvement in parking and interpretive experiences.

The re-establishment of the river entrance to the Chalmette National Cemetery would provide a long term minor beneficial impact by providing additional access from the new Visitor Center area along the River Road. In addition, the relocation of the maintenance area could increase visitation to the Cemetery by removing intrusions to the viewshed and noise related to daily activity at the maintenance area.

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative would contribute to other past, present, and future impacts on social or economic conditions. The overall cumulative effects would be minor and beneficial; this alternative's contribution to these effects would be small.

Conclusion. Implementing Alternative B would result in short and long term minor beneficial impacts on the socioeconomic environment. The overall cumulative effects would be minor and beneficial.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative C

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative C would also impact local socioeconomics:

- Construct a new 30 space car and bus parking area and bus turn-around near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Remove trees from the battlefield area;
- Redesign and relocated British Memorial;
- Remove the two pull-in parking areas along Monument Road;
- Remove the existing restroom;
- Remove the Tour Road;
- Construct a new 30 space parking area adjacent to the Chalmette Monument;
- Remove the NPS service road;
- Construct a new 12 space parking area near the cemetery entrance;
- Disconnect National Cemetery access from the Chalmette Battlefield through the
- Historic brick wall;
- Rehabilitate the historic drainage ditches; and,
- Construct new interpretive walking trails.

This alternative would have a long term moderate beneficial impact on the regional economy. It is possible that the Chalmette Unit would hire up to seven additional employees to handle the need for

interpretative/educational, law enforcement and maintenance personnel. Hiring employees would benefit the local economy through an increased demand for housing, utilities, services, and goods.

The use of the trails by recreational walkers would not be expected to increase as much as for Alternative B. Trails proposed in Alternative C would be targeted for interpretive use rather than recreational walking and would not provide as conducive a surface for recreational walking as the paved walking loop proposed in Alternative B. Visitors unable to visit the historic battlefield area on foot would be concentrated in the area from the entrance road pull-through waysides to the area around the new Visitor Center, Chalmette Monument and the Malus-Beauregard House, but would still be expected to increase. At Chalmette National Cemetery visitation could increase as a result of the same options outlined in Alternative B; however, Alternative C would also add a new 12 space parking area adjacent to the St. Bernard Highway entrance providing easy accessibility to the cemetery despite the proposed closure of the trail and access connecting directly from the battlefield

Cumulative Impacts. This alternative would contribute to other past, present, and future impacts on social or economic conditions. The overall cumulative effects would be minor and beneficial.

Conclusion. Implementing Alternative C would result in short and long term moderate beneficial impacts on the

socioeconomic environment. The overall cumulative effects would be minor and beneficial.

VISITOR USE AND EXPERIENCE

Methodology

The analysis of potential effects of the alternatives on visitor use and experience is based on how visitor use and experiences would change with the addition or removal of certain facilities and the way management prescriptions were applied in the alternatives. This analysis is primarily qualitative rather than quantitative due to the conceptual nature of the alternatives.

Duration of Impact. Short term impacts would occur during one visit only; long term impacts would occur during more than one visit.

Intensity of Impact. Impacts were evaluated comparatively between alternatives, using the no action alternative as a baseline for comparison with each action alternative:

Negligible – Visitors would likely be unaware of any effects associated with implementation of the alternative.

Minor – Changes in visitor use and/or experience would be slight, but detectable; would affect few visitors, and would not appreciably limit or enhance visitor experiences identified as fundamental to the national historic site's purpose and significance.

Moderate – Some characteristics of visitor use and/or

experience would change, and many visitors would likely be aware of the effects associated with implementation of the alternative; some changes to experiences identified as fundamental to the national historic site's purpose and significance would be apparent.

Major – Multiple characteristics of visitor experience would change, including experiences identified as fundamental to the national historic site's purpose and significance; most visitors would be aware of the effects associated with implementing the alternative.

Type of Impact. Adverse impacts are those that most visitors would perceive as undesirable. Beneficial impacts are those that most visitors would perceive as desirable.

Cumulative Impacts Common to All Action Alternatives Including the No Action Alternative

After 13 months of being closed to the public after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in late 2005, the Chalmette Unit has been open to the public with a limited schedule of availability of staff and access to the temporary Visitor Center as well as programs. The loss of visitors traveling to the park by tour boat from New Orleans after the hurricanes is expected to return in the future. As many as 600 visitors a day came to the park during the tour boat season and it would be expected to return to pre-hurricane levels when the tour boat dock is restored. In all, it is expected that the visitor experience at Chalmette would eventually return to pre-hurricane levels in the future

and that staffing levels would return to similar pre-hurricane levels.

As the region recovers from the damage sustained from the hurricanes, tourism is expected to return to what it was prior to the hurricanes. The St Bernard Parish Chamber of Commerce is interested in developing a regional tourism center near the entrance to the Chalmette Unit which would be an additional long term benefit to visitor experience. The purpose of such a center would be not only to orient visitors to the Chalmette Unit, but to interpret some of the broader themes of area history, culture, and natural history, and to provide a venue to more fully interpret that part of the British Campaign of 1814-15 that took place outside the confines of NPS property.

Visitation trends would likely increase with the approach of the bicentennial celebrations of the War of 1812 and the Battle of New Orleans in 2012 and 2015, respectively. This could result in congestion at parking sites and facilities. Some visitors might experience crowds, especially during special events. Increased visitation and time spent at the Chalmette Unit would result in short term minor adverse impacts during events and long term moderate beneficial impacts would result from the development of increased awareness and interest in the War of 1812 and the Battle of New Orleans. There would be no cumulative adverse effects created by the bicentennial events.

Impacts from Implementing the No-Action Alternative

In the No-Action Alternative there would be no substantial change in existing formal and informal interpretation at the Chalmette Unit. Opportunities to interpret the War of 1812 and the Battle of New Orleans would continue to use the existing conditions found in the historic area. In addition, there would be a very low potential for the addition of visitor services and facilities besides those currently provided. The continuation of existing interpretation and education programs would continue to be a beneficial impact to visitors coming to the park.

Under the No Action Alternative, recreational opportunities would be minimal since there would continue to be informal use of the Tour Road for walking and no other trails created for recreational walking. Visitors opting to walk the Tour Road would continue to be at risk of an automobile/pedestrian collision resulting in a long term minor adverse impact to visitor safety.

Visitors seeking active educational and interpretive opportunities would continue to experience contact with staff at the temporary Visitor Center and as encountered throughout the site. These opportunities and the continued level of interpretation and education programming at the site would continue to benefit visitors seeking to learn about the Chalmette Unit.

Cumulative Impacts. Visitors to the Chalmette Unit would experience the same level of

educational opportunities through staff interaction and interpretive programs currently provided. This alternative would not result in any new actions that would contribute to these effects and so would not have any cumulative effects.

Conclusion. Implementing the No-Action Alternative would result in continuation of long term beneficial impacts to aspects of the visitor experience at the Chalmette Unit. However, there would be a short term minor adverse impact to visitor safety from this alternative. Because actions proposed in this alternative would have virtually no additional new effects on visitor use and experience, there would be no project-related cumulative impacts.

Impacts Common to all Action Alternatives

The following proposed actions would impact the visitor experience at the Chalmette Unit and are common to all the action alternatives:

- Landscape the entrance to the park and the entrance to the cemetery;
- Landscape rehabilitation at the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Plant trees in the railroad right-of-way;
- Construct a new levee overlook and access point;
- Repair and extend the rampart and Rodriguez Canal.

Common to all action alternatives are the rehabilitation of the historic features found at the Chalmette Unit such as the Malus-Beauregard House, the rampart and the Rodriguez Canal, as well as the enhancement and continued

maintenance of the historic landscape, which would provide a long-term beneficial impact to the visitor experience. Restoration and rehabilitation of the historic features and landscape would serve to allow a visitor the opportunity for a more authentic "immersion" into the history of the park and increased aesthetic experience. These same activities would also provide NPS interpretive staff with an augmented landscape with which to provide the visitor with improved and/or additional interpretive programs further enhancing visitor experience. Planting trees in the railroad right-of-way improves the buffer at the north end of the park allowing visitors a less intrusive impact from the adjacent highway. Each of those actions would result in a long-term minor beneficial experience.

The addition of an overlook on the levee would provide visitors to the Chalmette Unit with an opportunity to view the battlefield and the Mississippi River from a high point adjacent to the river. This would provide a long term minor beneficial impact to the visitor experience by enhancing the interpretive experience with a mechanism that would allow the entire battlefield to be viewed from an elevated position.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative A

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following proposed actions for Alternative A would also impact visitor experience at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct an 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station;
- Partial separation of pedestrians and vehicles on the Tour Road via a designated walking lane (paved shoulder of the Tour Road);
- Waysides added to the Tour Road;
- Addition of a program and special events staging area.
- Additional parking.

Alternative A would provide a moderate positive impact for visitor experience.

In addition to the new Visitor Center which would continue to function as the primary orientation area, visitor orientation and information would be provided by an unstaffed Visitor Information Station at the tour boat landing. The Visitor Information Station would provide specific information for way-finding and orientation for visitors in a prominent location without an increase in staffing resulting in a moderate positive impact to a visitor's experience at the Chalmette Unit. Visitors seeking active educational and interpretive opportunities would continue to experience contact with staff at the new Visitor Center and as encountered throughout the site. The overflow parking and special events staging area would provide additional benefits to the visitors that are not currently offered at the park. These opportunities and the continued level of interpretation and education programming at the site would result in a long term minor benefit to visitors seeking to learn about the Chalmette Unit.

A new, relocated, ten space parking area would provide a long term moderate beneficial impact to the visitor experience by increasing the number of currently available parking spaces. Additional overflow parking spaces (20) and bus parking would be provided and would be a major short term beneficial impact during special events.

A designated walking lane along the Tour Road would separate pedestrian use from automobile use and would provide a moderate long term beneficial impact by not only providing increased visitor safety but by also providing a venue for recreational walking opportunities for visitors and nearby residents. In addition, by providing both the Tour Road and a walking path alongside the tour route, the Chalmette Unit would be enjoyed by able and handicapped visitors alike. This would provide an additional long term moderate beneficial impact.

The addition of wayside kiosks along the Tour Road/pedestrian walking lane combined provide a long term moderate beneficial impact for the visitor to the park by enhancing the interpretive experience and educational opportunity to learn about the War of 1812, Battle of New Orleans and the other historic features of the site.

This alternative would have a long term moderate beneficial effect on the visitor experience by providing additional parking, additional information and interpretive opportunities and the separation of pedestrians from the autos along the Tour

Road ensuring public health and safety.

Cumulative Impacts. Alternative A provides the visitor with a modest increase in orientation and interpretive opportunities which may in the long term provide a minor beneficial impact by increasing awareness and interest in the War of 1812 and more specifically the Battle of New Orleans. Visitors may plan a portion of their New Orleans vacation to visit the site. Separation of the pedestrian use from auto use on the Tour Road would provide safer opportunities for recreational walking for visitors and local residents increasing the recreational visitor use of the site. These factors would combine to potentially increase visitor use for the long term that would provide the potential for crowded facilities and interpretive programs especially during special events.

When impacts discussed above are considered in combination with the impacts of this alternative, the resulting cumulative effects on the visitor experience would be long term, minor, and beneficial.

Conclusion. Alternative A would provide more visitor opportunities for learning about the War of 1812 and the Battle of New Orleans and cultural history of the site as well as providing recreational walking opportunities through the historic landscape with a minimal investment in facilities and interpretive exhibits. Implementing Alternative A would result in long term moderate beneficial impacts on the visitor experience. The overall

cumulative impacts would be long term, minor, and beneficial.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative B

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, Alternative B also provides for an enhanced visitor experience by proposing:

- Construct a new 500 square foot unstaffed Visitor Information Station;
- Tour Road converted to pedestrian use only;
- Addition of a Center Road Trail to existing Tour Road;
- Pull-in interpretive stops added to the Entrance Road; those on former Tour Road removed;
- Relocated and redesigned British Memorial;
- Increase visible battlefield area by removing trees;
- Addition of a program and special events staging area; and,
- Additional parking.

Alternative B would provide a moderate beneficial impact to visitor use and experience. Like Alternative A, visitor orientation and information would be provided by an unstaffed Visitor Information Station at the tour boat landing. This facility would provide for an enhanced orientation for visitors in a prominent location without an increase in staffing resulting in a moderate positive impact to a visitor's experience at the park.

A new 20 space car and bus parking area in place of the existing pull-in parking along the entrance road would provide a

minor positive impact to the visitor experience by removing the parking to an area near the entrance and away from interpretive areas but would not substantially increase the number of available parking spaces. An additional 10 car parking spaces and bus turnaround would be provided at the new Visitor Center that would be a moderate beneficial impact due to its proximity to the new Visitor Center and Malus-Beauregard House. Removal of pull-in parking would provide a moderate long-term beneficial impact by improving safety for visitors who no longer would have to back out into the roadway when departing the pull-in parking area.

This alternative provides for increased opportunities for walking at the park. The Tour Road would be left intact but its use would convert for pedestrian traffic resulting in a moderate long term positive impact for visitors especially local residents who use the battlefield for recreational walking. While providing a moderate long term beneficial impact for those visitors capable of walking long distances, the conversion of the Tour Road strictly to pedestrian use would limit some visitors from exploring the full extent of the historical battlefield. This would result in a long term, moderate adverse impact to a segment of potential visitors.

The historic entrance to the Chalmette National Cemetery at the Mississippi River would be re-established and would provide access to the cemetery for visitors arriving from the tour boat landing or parking at the Visitor Center. Re-establishing this entrance would result in a

minor positive impact to the visitor's visit.

The removal of trees from a portion of the battlefield would provide the visitor with an improved interpretive experience by means of a landscape that is more historically accurate to the existing landscape during the Battle of New Orleans. This would result in a moderate positive impact to the visitor's interpretive and educational experience.

In Alternative B the maintenance area currently adjacent to the main entrance of the Chalmette National Cemetery would be relocated to the former St. Bernard STP site and aesthetically screened with planted landscape. Removal of the maintenance area from the viewshed of the Chalmette National Cemetery would result in a major positive impact on the visitor's aesthetic experience at the cemetery and provide for a more contemplative experience removed from the intrusion of normal maintenance activity and any resulting noise.

This alternative would have a long term, minor, beneficial effect on ensuring public health and safety due to the removal of autos from the tour loop and its restriction for pedestrian use.

Cumulative Impacts. The visitor experience available through the options presented in Alternative B would provide an increased opportunity to educate visitors on the history of the War of 1812, the Battle of New Orleans, and the other historic features on the site. In addition, this alternative provides additional opportunities for walking and as

a result would provide the potential for visitors to diversify their use of the site and would add further opportunity for increasing visitation. As visitor use increases with increased opportunity for interpretation, educational and recreational enjoyment, experiences of crowded facilities, interpretive programs would occur. Visitors to other nearby NPS sites associated with the Jean Lafitte National Historic Park and Preserve may increase as notoriety of the restoration and rehabilitation of the Chalmette Unit is acknowledged.

When impacts discussed above are considered in combination with the impacts of this alternative, the resulting cumulative effects on the visitor experience would be long term, minor, and beneficial.

Conclusion. Alternative B would provide more visitor opportunities for learning the history of the War of 1812 and the Battle of New Orleans as well as the historic land use of the site and enjoying open space by walking with a minimal investment in facilities and interpretive exhibits. Overall, implementing Alternative B would result in moderate long term beneficial impacts on the visitor experience. However, this alternative would also result in adverse impact to visitors not capable of walking along the converted Tour Road. The conversion of the Tour Road strictly to pedestrian use would limit some visitors from exploring the full extent of the historical battlefield. This would result in a long term, moderate adverse impact to a

segment of potential visitors. The overall cumulative impacts would be minor and beneficial.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative C

This alternative would provide the visitor with the highest opportunity for education and interpretation of the Battle of New Orleans, the War of 1812 and the other historical uses of the Chalmette Unit. In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, specifically, Alternative C proposes:

- The removal of the Tour Road;
- Interpretive walking trails along the historic drainage ditches and Center Road converted to pedestrian use only;
- Relocated and redesigned British Memorial;
- Increase visible battlefield area by removing trees;
- Rampart and Rodriguez Canal reconnected;
- Chalmette National Cemetery river access re-established;
- Relocation of the maintenance area and removal of the NPS service road; and
- Additional parking.

Like Alternatives A and B, Alternative C would provide parking near the entrance to the Chalmette Unit; however, the number of spaces would increase to 30 and include a bus turnaround. Additional new parking (30 spaces) would be provided to the north of the Chalmette Monument and together with the entrance parking, provide the highest number of parking spaces available for visitors. These new parking areas

replace currently existing pull-in parking but would still provide a net increase for available parking resulting in a long term moderate beneficial impact to visitors. Removal of pull-in parking would have a moderate long-term beneficial impact by improving safety for visitors who no longer would have to back out into the roadway when departing the pull-in parking area.

The addition of rest rooms to the new Visitor Center and the removal of the existing restrooms would provide the visitor with convenient, contemporary facilities located in the same building as the Visitor Center. This would result in a long term minor beneficial impact to the visitor experience.

The removal of the Tour Road and the construction of interpretive walking trails along the historic drainage ditches including a side trail along the Center Road would provide visitors with a more "immersive" interpretive experience on the battlefield. It would also provide the potential for additional interpretive programs discussing the land use of the site prior to and after the Battle of New Orleans. This would result in a long term moderate benefit to visitor use. Handicapped visitors would be restricted to the Visitor Center and easily accessed sites such as the Malus-Beauregard House and would not be able to fully experience the park as Alternative C is proposed. This would result in a long term moderate adverse impact to a segment of visitors to the Chalmette Unit.

The rehabilitation and restoration of the historic drainage ditches provide an additional long term minor beneficial impact for the visitor to the park by adding to the interpretive experience and educational opportunity to learn about the War of 1812 and the Battle of New Orleans beyond that of the proposed landscape rehabilitation and maintenance common to all alternatives.

Similar to Alternative B, Alternative C also proposes the removal of trees to expose more battlefield area with the extent of tree removal in Alternative C being greater than that proposed in Alternative B. The removal of trees from a portion of the battlefield would provide the visitor with an improved interpretive experience by means of a landscape that is more historically accurate to the existing landscape during the Battle of New Orleans. This would result in a long term moderate beneficial impact to the visitor experience.

As in Alternative B, Alternative C provides for the relocation of the maintenance area away from the Chalmette National Cemetery and the re-establishment of the Mississippi River entrance to the cemetery all of which would result in a long term moderate beneficial impact to visitors of the cemetery. Removal of the maintenance area from the viewshed of the Chalmette National Cemetery would result in a long term major positive impact on the visitor's aesthetic experience at the cemetery and provide for a more contemplative experience removed from the intrusion of normal maintenance activity and any resulting noise.

In addition, Alternative C would provide for the removal of the center access trail from the battlefield to the cemetery and the closure of the historic brick wall at that site. This would result in a long term minor adverse impact to visitors wishing to easily walk from one site to another. The addition of 12 parking spaces at the entrance to the cemetery would provide a long term minor benefit to cemetery visitors and eliminate some of the inconvenience and resulting adverse impact to visitors from the loss of walking access to and from both sites.

Cumulative Impacts. The visitor experience available through the options presented in Alternative C would provide an increased opportunity to educate visitors on the history of the War of 1812, the Battle of New Orleans, and the various historical features and land uses prior to, during and after the war. In addition, this alternative provides additional opportunities for walking and as a result would provide the potential for visitors to diversify their use of the site and would add further opportunity for increasing visitation. As visitor use increases with increased opportunity for interpretation, education, and walking, experiences of crowded facilities, interpretive programs, and trails would occur. Visitors to other nearby NPS sites affiliated with as Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve may increase as notoriety of the restoration and rehabilitation of the Chalmette Unit is acknowledged.

When impacts discussed above are considered in combination with

the impacts of this alternative, the resulting cumulative effects on the visitor experience would be long term, moderate, and beneficial.

Conclusion. Alternative C presents the most diverse range of options for interpreting and educating visitors to the Chalmette Unit. Overall, implementing Alternative C would result in moderate to major long term beneficial impacts on the visitor experience. However, some visitors would experience adverse impacts from this alternative. Handicapped visitors would be restricted to the Visitor Center and easily accessed sites such as the Malus-Beauregard House and removal of the center access trail and the closure of the historic brick wall would impact visitors wishing to easily walk from one site to another. This would result in a long term, minor to moderate adverse impact to a small segment of visitors to the Chalmette Unit. The overall cumulative impacts would be moderate and beneficial.

NPS OPERATIONS

Methodology

The impact analysis evaluated the effects of the alternatives on the following aspects of NPS operations: staffing, infrastructure, visitor facilities, and services.

The analysis was conducted in terms of how NPS operations and facilities might vary under the different management alternatives. The analysis is more qualitative rather than quantitative because of the conceptual nature of the alternatives. Consequently

professional judgment was used to reach reasonable conclusions as to the intensity, duration, and type of potential impact.

Duration of Impact. Short term impacts would be less than one year. Long term impacts would extend beyond one year and have a permanent effect on operations.

Intensity of Impact.

Negligible – The effects would be at or below the lower levels of detection, and would not have an appreciable effect on NPS operations.

Minor – The effects would be detectable, but would be of a magnitude that would not have an appreciable effect on NPS operations.

Moderate – The effects would be readily apparent and would result in a substantial change in NPS operations in a manner noticeable to staff and the public.

Major – The effects would be readily apparent and would result in a substantial change in NPS operations in a manner noticeable to staff and the public and be markedly different from existing operations.

Type of Impact. Beneficial impacts would improve NPS operations and/or facilities. Adverse impacts would negatively affect NPS operations and/or facilities and could hinder the staff's ability to provide adequate services and facilities to visitors and staff. Some impacts could be beneficial for some operations or facilities and adverse or neutral for others.

Cumulative Impacts Common to All Action Alternatives Including the No-Action Alternative

After 13 months of being closed to the public after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in late 2005, the Chalmette Unit has been open to the public with a limited schedule of availability of staff and access to the temporary Visitor Center as well as programs. The loss of visitors traveling to the park by tour boat from New Orleans after the hurricanes is expected to return in the future once the river boat dock is replaced. It is expected that visitors to Chalmette would eventually return to pre-hurricane levels in the future and that staffing levels would return to similar pre-hurricane levels.

The St Bernard Parish offsite Visitor Center would be managed by St. Bernard Parish, with possible support from NPS and other partners. This would result in minor short term adverse impacts to existing NPS staff and possibly the addition of new staff resulting in minor adverse impacts to park operations in the long term.

Common to all alternatives preparation and implementation of activities and events for the bicentennial celebration of the War of 1812 and the Battle of New Orleans would result in an increase in workload for all staff. Consequently, buildings and grounds maintenance needs and interpretation and administration needs would increase causing short term moderate adverse impacts to planning, staff and operations. The hiring of additional staff as needed would offset the adverse impacts to

existing staff and scheduling resulting in a short term beneficial impact to operations.

Impacts from Implementing the No-Action Alternative

Park restoration and rehabilitation currently ongoing would eventually reach pre-Katrina conditions and NPS operations such as maintenance and interpretive programs would continue at the pre-Katrina level under the no action alternative. Current management practices, policies, and park programs—such as maintenance, and park operations would continue to be implemented with no major changes. All maintenance facilities would remain in their current location.

Cumulative Impacts. Since the No-Action Alternative would have no new impacts on NPS operations because current management practices and park operations would continue to be implemented with no major changes from that historically conducted at the Chalmette Unit, there would be no additional cumulative effects once day-to-day NPS operations returned to a stable pre-Katrina level.

Conclusion. The No-Action Alternative would result in no new impacts on NPS operations at the Chalmette Unit. Because there would be no new impacts on NPS operations, there would be no cumulative impacts.

Impacts Common to All Action Alternatives

The following proposed actions would impact NPS operations at the Chalmette Unit and are common to all the action alternatives:

- Rehabilitation of the Malus-Beauregard House and landscape; and,
- Maintain the battlefield vegetation to reflect historic conditions.

These proposed actions would result in short and long term effects to NPS operations at the Chalmette Unit. Long term impacts to NPS operations at the park would be minor and adverse due to the increase in staff time and machinery to maintain the landscape. The rehabilitation of the Malus-Beauregard House would result in long term negligible beneficial impacts to NPS operations by providing additional opportunity for interpretive activities.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative A

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative A would also impact NPS operations at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 10 space parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Construct a new 20 space overflow parking area southeast of the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Addition of a program and special events staging area; and,
- Pave the shoulder and construct an interpretive trail on the inside shoulder of the
- Tour Road.

Implementing this alternative would cause negligible changes to NPS operations at the Chalmette

Unit. Alternative A would result in the rehabilitation and restoration of several historic features such as the Malus-Beauregard House, rampart, and Rodriguez Canal resulting in minor opportunities for additional interpretive activities for staff.

Maintenance of the battlefield vegetation would continue within the same footprint as managed currently and the addition of a pedestrian shoulder to the Tour Road would result in long term negligible effects on NPS operations due to the limited amount of trail and wayside exhibits to manage. The addition and relocation of parking spaces and the addition of a special events staging area would result in a long term minor adverse impact by increasing maintenance of the areas. Facilities such as sidewalks, offices, storage buildings, maintenance, curatorial, emergency, and similar structures to support park operational and administrative needs would remain essentially unchanged. This alternative would have a long term minor beneficial effect on ensuring public health and safety due to the low dispersion of visitors and the separation of pedestrian traffic from the Tour Road.

Cumulative Impacts. When the impacts of Alternative A are added to the effects of other past, present, and future actions, no additional cumulative effects are expected.

Conclusion. Implementing Alternative A would result in long term negligible to minor adverse impacts on NPS operations at the Chalmette Unit. There

would be no overall cumulative effects.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative B

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative B would also impact NPS operations at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 20 space car and bus parking area near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Addition of a Center Road Trail to existing Tour Road;
- Construct a new 20 space car parking area and bus-turn-around east of the Malus-Beauregard House;
- Relocation of maintenance facilities;
- Increase in interpretive programs and activities;
- Addition of a program and special events staging area; and,
- Removal of trees, maintenance and rehabilitation of the battlefield landscape.

This alternative would have impacts to NPS operations by enlarging the historic battlefield to more accurately reflect the historic landscape during the battle. Removing trees from the battlefield would require additional labor for maintenance resulting in a short term minor adverse impact to maintenance operations. Similar to Alternative A, the addition of parking areas would increase maintenance resulting in a long term minor adverse impact to maintenance operations. Some additional opportunities would exist for interpretive activities

resulting in long term minor beneficial impacts to NPS operations through the expansion of programming activities but would also have a long term minor adverse impact on staffing. This alternative would have a long term minor beneficial effect on ensuring public health and safety due to the removal of autos from the Tour Road.

Cumulative Impacts. When the impacts of Alternative B are added to the effects of other past, present, and future actions, no additional cumulative effects are expected.

Conclusion. Implementing Alternative B would result in long term minor adverse impacts on NPS operations at the Chalmette Unit. There would be no overall cumulative effects.

Impacts from Implementing Alternative C

In addition to the impacts common to all action alternatives listed previously, the following actions proposed for Alternative C would also impact NPS operations at the Chalmette Unit:

- Construct a new 30 space car and bus parking area and bus-turnaround near the entrance to the Chalmette Battlefield;
- Construct a new 30 space parking area adjacent to the Chalmette Monument;
- Relocation of maintenance facilities;
- Increase in interpretive programs and activities;
- Maintenance of interpretive trails; and,
- Removal of trees, maintenance and rehabilitation of the battlefield landscape.

Similar to Alternatives A and B, Alternative C would provide additional parking that would result in a minor adverse impact over the long term to maintenance operations.

This alternative differs from the previous Alternatives in that it offers the greatest extent of restoration, rehabilitation and relocation of structures to provide not only an improved historic landscape but additional opportunity for a variety of interpretive programming by NPS staff. The removal and re-grading of the Tour Road and creation of interpretive trails including additional spur trails such as the Center Road Trail would result in an increase in labor to maintain the trails for visitors. Alternative C also proposes the largest extent of tree removal to re-create a more historic battlefield area which would result in further maintenance costs. Overall, Alternative C provides for a more authentic historic landscape but at a long term moderate adverse impact to park operations, interpretation and maintenance staff and budget.

Although Alternative C proposes the removal of the maintenance area to an off-site location which would provide a long term benefit to visitor experience, leasing a location would increase travel time to and from the Chalmette Unit as well as labor time and effort resulting in a long term minor adverse impact to NPS maintenance operations.

Alternative C as proposed would result in the highest degree of interpretive opportunities but would result in a long term moderate adverse impact to

staffing and labor required to provide additional programs.

Impacts to maintenance and interpretive operations could be offset by the hiring of additional staff which would result in a long term minor beneficial impact to NPS park operations but would also cause a long term minor adverse impact to administration staff due to increased personnel management and administrative responsibilities.

Alternative C would have a long term negligible impact on ensuring public health and safety. Alternative C would have a long term minor adverse impact on employee safety due to the increase in maintenance operations and increased use of machinery resulting in a potential increase in injuries to staff compared to the other action alternatives.

Cumulative Impacts. When the impacts of Alternative C are added to the effects of other past, present, and future actions, no additional cumulative effects are expected.

Conclusion. Implementing Alternative C would result in long term moderate impacts on NPS operations at the Chalmette Unit. There would be no overall cumulative effects.

OTHER IMPACTS

Unavoidable Moderate or Major Adverse Impacts

Under Alternatives A, B, and C there would be new development as structures and roads are constructed at the Chalmette Unit. However, these actions

would be temporary in nature and would result in no moderate or major adverse impacts on park resources or visitor enjoyment.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Alternative A - Implementing this alternative would result in the irretrievable loss of some vegetation and soil productivity due to construction of facilities (i.e., parking areas, entrance station kiosk, and unstaffed Visitor Information Station) as well as the rehabilitation of some portions of the park landscape.

Alternative B - Implementing this alternative would result in the irretrievable loss of some vegetation and soil productivity due to construction of facilities (i.e., parking areas, entrance station kiosk, and unstaffed Visitor Information Station) as well as the rehabilitation of some portions of the park landscape.

Alternative C - Implementing this alternative would result in the irretrievable loss of some vegetation and soil productivity due to construction of facilities (i.e., parking areas, and entrance station kiosk). In addition Alternative C may have additional vegetation removal and soil disturbance for the development of interpretive trails and the rehabilitation of portions of the park landscape.

Relationships between Short Term Uses of the Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long Term Productivity

The primary purpose of the Chalmette Unit is to preserve the site of the Battle of New Orleans and to interpret and educate visitors on the Battle of New Orleans and the War of 1812. In addition, other historic uses and features of the site are preserved and interpreted. NPS manages these areas to maintain natural ecological processes, while promoting and supporting cultural resources and visitor experience at the Chalmette Unit. Any actions NPS staff would take would be intended to ensure that human uses do not adversely affect the cultural resources or productivity of existing biotic communities.

Alternative A would result in a minimal amount of new development (two new parking areas, a designated pedestrian lane, and unstaffed Visitor Information Station) and would have a low potential for reducing long term natural productivity.

Alternatives B and C contain slightly higher degrees of improvement. Under Alternative B, there would be a slight increase in development with the following proposed: two new parking areas, realignment of the Tour Road, unstaffed Visitor Information Station, and alterations to the existing landscape (tree removal). This development may result in a minor, short-term loss of productivity as unpaved parking, roads, and buildings are constructed under Alternative B. Alternative C also provides a slightly higher degree of development that would result in a minor loss of long term

productivity as construction of two large parking areas, service/special event access road, and additional interpretive trails occurs in addition to tree removal. By doing so, Alternative C could result in a minor loss of long term productivity in the footprints for proposed development activities.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION



PUBLIC SCOPING

Scoping is an effort to involve agencies and the general public in determining the scope of issues to be addressed in the environmental document. Scoping includes consultation with any interested agency, or any agency with jurisdiction by law or expertise to obtain early input. Among other tasks, scoping determines important issues and eliminates issues determined to be unimportant; allocates assignments among the interdisciplinary team members and/or participating agents; identifies related projects and associated documents; identifies other permits, surveys, consultations, etc. required by other agencies; and creates a schedule that allows adequate time to prepare and distribute the environmental document for public review and comment before a final decision is made.

External scoping is the process used to gather public input for the General Management Plan Amendment/Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment (GMPA/DCP/EA). For this project, a scoping newsletter was mailed to individuals, organizations, stakeholders, and agencies in January 2004 in order to notify the public that a planning study is underway at the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery. The newsletter provided information on the planning process and how it will affect the future of the park. The newsletter also notified the public about the following two open house meetings:

- Tuesday, January 27, 2004 at the Chalmette Battlefield Visitor Center, Chalmette, Louisiana.
- Thursday, January 29, 2004 at the Council Chambers, St. Bernard Parish Government Complex, Chalmette, Louisiana.

Afterwards, planning for the GMPA/DCP/EA resumed, taking into account input received during the public meetings. A second newsletter was sent out in April 2005 to notify the public of a second round of meetings to discuss preliminary concept designs for the GMPA/DCP/EA:

- An open house style meeting on May 5, 2005 at Chalmette Battlefield Visitor Center, Chalmette, Louisiana.
- An NPS presentation with a question and answer session on May 5, 2005 at St. Bernard Parish Government Complex, Chalmette, Louisiana.

At these meetings, the planning team briefed the public on the development of the preliminary design concepts for Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery.

Copies of the newsletters received at the meetings are included in Appendix D.

AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Consultation letters were mailed to local and federal agencies on

June 8, 2009, to tribal governments on June 12, 2009, and to the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) on September 10, 2009 requesting consultation and comments regarding the proposed GMPA/DCP/EA at Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery. The following agencies and tribal governments received the consultation letter:

- NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service
- USFWS
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
- Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer
- Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR) - Office of Conservation
- LDNR - Coastal Management Division
- Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
- Caddo Nation
- Chickasaw Nation
- Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana
- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
- Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
- Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
- Kialegee Tribal Town
- Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
- Muscogee (Creek) Nation
- Poarch Band of Creek Indians

- Shawnee Tribe
- Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
- Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana

A sample copy of an agency and tribal government consultation letter can be found in Appendix D. Comments were received from LDNR Office of Conservation, LDNR Office of Coastal Restoration and Management, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Comments and responses are summarized in Table 5-1. Copies of the agency and tribal government responses are included in Appendix D.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act Consultation

Consultation has been initiated with the Louisiana SHPO to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended. A consultation letter on the proposed project was sent to the Louisiana SHPO on September 10, 2009; no comments have been received. Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties, and to afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment. If the Preferred Alternative meets the criteria for an "undertaking" or has the potential to cause effects to historic properties,

consultation with the Louisiana SHPO is required.

An Assessment of Actions Having an Effect on Cultural Resources will be prepared and sent to the Louisiana SHPO for review. In addition, a copy of the GMPA/DCP/EA will be sent to the Louisiana SHPO for review. These efforts are being done to comply with Section 106 of the NHPA. Section 106 requires consultation with federally recognized American Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis, as specified in Executive Order 13175. Consultation has been initiated with 15 tribal governments (listed previously) to comply with Section 106. Consultation letters on the proposed project were sent to the tribal governments on June 12, 2009. Comments were received from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma, and Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (Table 5-1). Further consultation will be afforded to the tribal governments - a copy of the GMPA/DCP/EA will be sent to each of the 15 tribal governments for review.

Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) Consistency

Agency consultation has been initiated with LDNR's Coastal Management Division for consistency with the approved Louisiana Coastal Resource Program (LCRP) as required by Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1920, as amended. A consultation letter on the proposed project was sent

to the Coastal Management Division of LDNR on June 8, 2009.

The NPS has determined that the proposed project is in compliance with the LCRP. NPS will prepare a letter to LDNR requesting concurrence that the project is in compliance with the LCRP. A copy of the GMPA/DCP/EA will also be sent along with the consistency determination letter. If LDNR determines that the project is in compliance, a notice of agreement would be sent from LDNR to NPS, thus completing all relevant CZM requirements.

PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE GMPA/DCP/EA

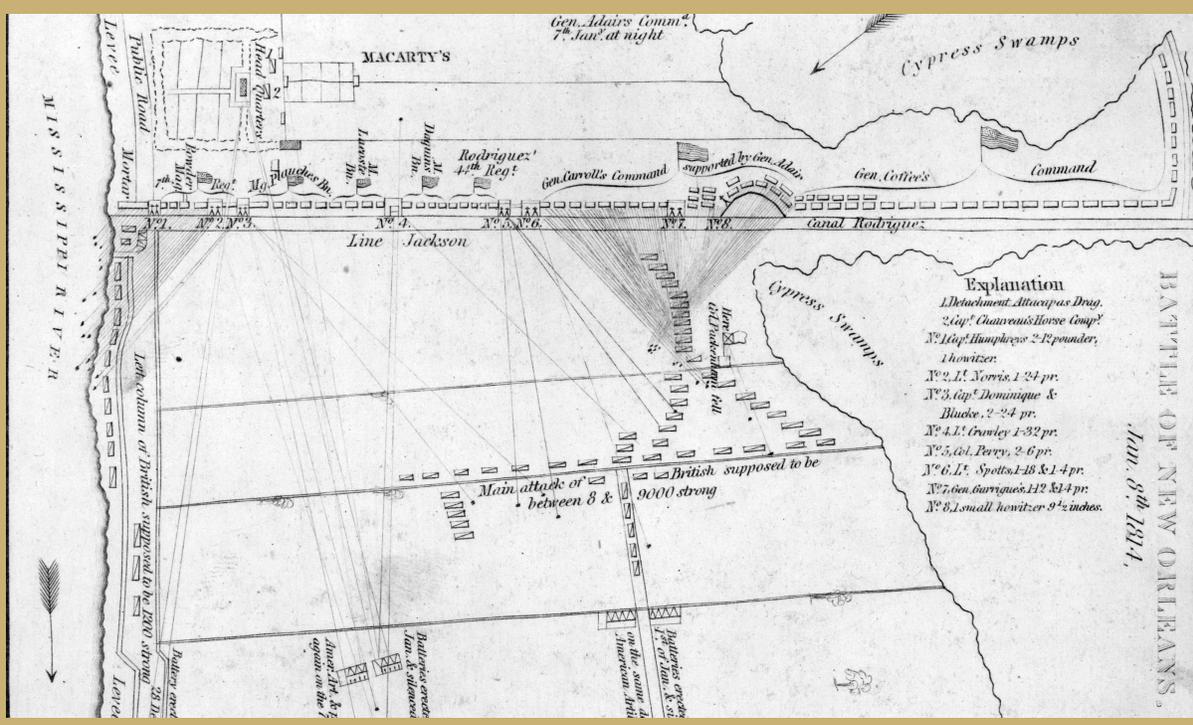
This GMPA/DCP/EA will be distributed to agencies, tribal governments, and the public for review and comment for a period of at least 30 days; comments received will be addressed in an errata sheet to be attached to the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), assuming there are no issues that may lead to significant impacts from the Preferred Alternative. Following the completion of the GMPA/DCP/EA and response to comments, the FONSI will be signed and dated by the NPS Regional Director.

TABLE 5-1
SUMMARY OF AGENCY AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENT SCOPING COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED
GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT/DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR CHALMETTE
UNIT OF JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK AND PRESERVE

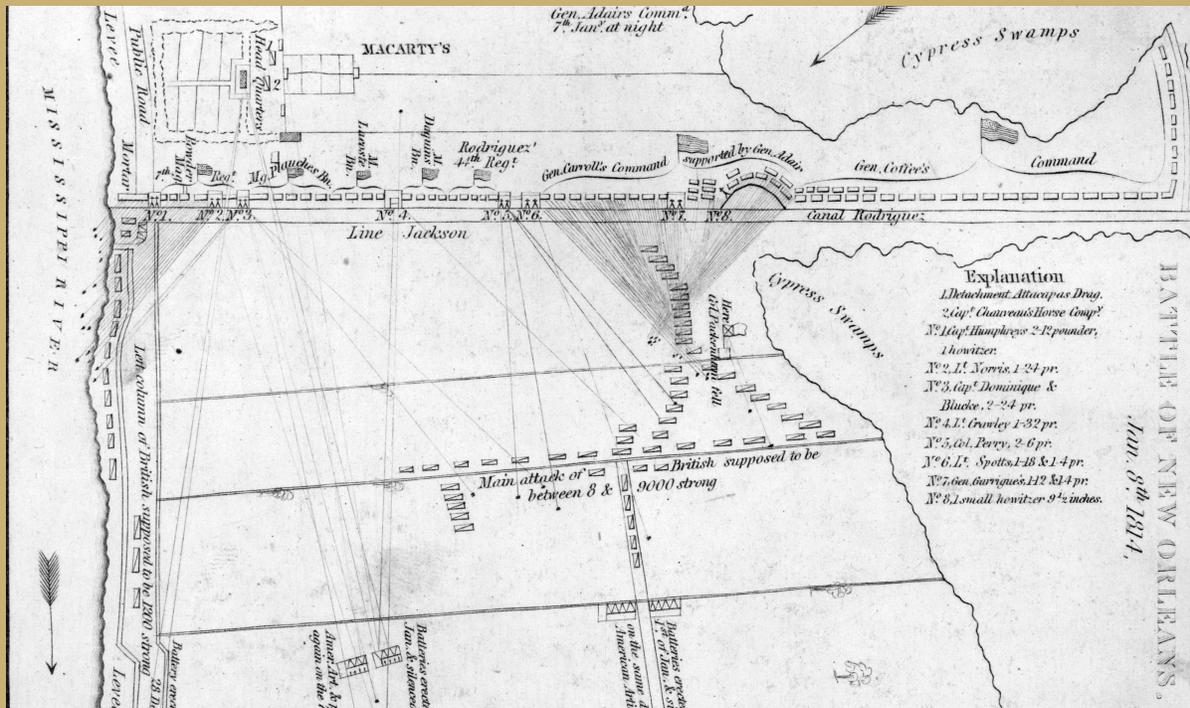
NAME AND ORGANIZATION	COMMENTS / SUGGESTIONS	RESPONSE TO COMMENTS
<p>James H. Welsh Commissioner of Conservation State of Louisiana Department of Natural Resources Office of Conservation</p>	<p>Computer records indicate the existence of one dry hole drilled in search of oil and gas in the industrial area southeast of the National Park. Although there have been no registered water wells found in the DOTD database, due care should be taken to locate any water wells installed in the area before registration was required.</p>	<p>Thank you for bringing this information to our attention. Before construction of the proposed project NPS will identify if any water wells were installed on NPS property. If existing wells are located they will not be disturbed by the proposed project.</p>
<p>Gregory J. DuCote Administrator Interagency Affairs/Field Services Division State of Louisiana Department of Natural Resources Office of Coastal Restoration and Management</p>	<p>The proposed action has gone through preliminary review for consistency with the approved Louisiana Coastal Resource Program (LCRP) as required by Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1920, as amended. However, final approval by this agency must await the submittal of a Consistency Determination when plans have been finalized for the Park and Preserve.</p>	<p>NPS will prepare a letter to LDNR requesting concurrence that the proposed project is in compliance with the LCRP. A copy of the GMPA/DCP/EA will also be sent along with the Consistency Determination letter for LNDR to review.</p>
<p>Miles M. Croom Assistant Regional Administrator Habitat Conservation Division US Department of Commerce NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service</p>	<p>Based on NOAA's knowledge of the project area, none of the proposed work would be located in areas supportive of marine fishery species or categorized as essential fish habitat and as such, there is not potential for adverse project-</p>	<p>Thank you for your review of the proposed project.</p>

NAME AND ORGANIZATION	COMMENTS / SUGGESTIONS	RESPONSE TO COMMENTS
	related impacts to NMFS trust resources.	
Terry D. Cole Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma	After further review of the project, The Choctaw National of Oklahoma wishes to consult on the project.	Thank you for your response, and we look forward to your consultation on the GMPA/DCP/EA.
Elizabeth Bird Administrative Assistant United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma	On behalf of Chief Wickliffe, it is requested that information regarding NAGPRA, historical or cultural issues be directed to: Lisa Stopp, Preservation Officer United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee PO Box 746 Tahlequah, OK 74465	Thank you for your response. The contact information will be updated.
James F. Boggs Supervisor Louisiana Field Office Fish and Wildlife Service US Department of the Interior	Confirmation is needed that the Chalmette unit does not contain critical habitat for species listed on the USFWS website, in compliance with section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (as amended).	Thank you for your response. We noted that St. Bernard Parish contains critical habitat for the piping plover and Gulf sturgeon. We have confirmed that the Chalmette unit does not contain critical habitat for these species.

APPENDICES, BIBLIOGRAPHY, PREPARERS AND INDEX



APPENDIX A: ENABLING LEGISLATION



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.

(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

Establishment.
16 USC 230.

Description.

Lands, waters
and interests,
acquisition.
16 USC 230a.

Guidelines or
criteria, con-
sultation.

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.

(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:

- (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.

(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.

(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.

(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 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

Values,
preservation
and
protection.

Authority,
ceding.

Acquisitions.

Boundaries,
revision.

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

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 (5) 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 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.

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

Consultation.

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

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

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.

(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

Administration

16 USC 1 et
seq.
16 USC 461
note.

Delta Region
Preservation
Commission,
establishment
and member-
ship.
16 USC 230f.

Compensation
and expenses.

Functions.

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 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.

Appropriation
authorization.
16 USC 230g.

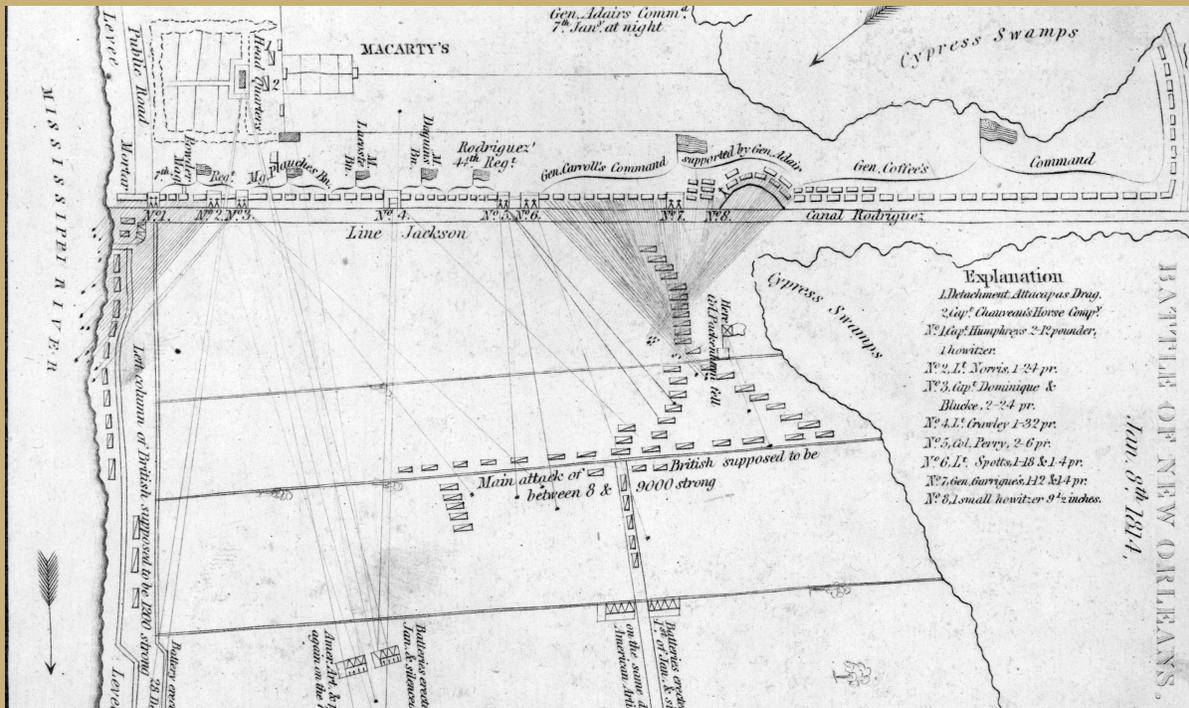
General
management
plan,
submittal to
congressional
committees.

Chalmette
Unit, redesi-
gnation.
16 USC 230h.

Report to
congressional
committees.
16 USC 230i.

APPENDIX B:

SERVICEWIDE LAWS AND POLICIES





CHOOSING BY ADVANTAGES January 21, 2009

Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery

Components Evaluated: Proposed General Management Plan Amendment Alternatives

PHASE I - INFORMATION

History

In 2015, the 200th anniversary of the battle will be celebrated at the park. The goal of the General Management Plan Amendment is twofold:

1. Establish a 20-year management strategy, and
2. Develop a schematic site design and development program (Development Concept Plan) that enhances the historic environment and improves visitor service infrastructure in ways that can be implemented prior to the 2015 celebration.

In August 2002, Secretary of the Interior Norton established the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force (Task Force); a Federal Advisory Committee to advise the National Park Service (NPS) on suggested improvements to the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery. The Task Force completed a report with a series of recommendations for the planning team, which have helped inform the scoping process for this document.

The approved General Management Plan Amendment will be the basic document for managing the Chalmette unit for the next 15 to 20 years. The purposes of this general management plan are as follows:

- Confirm the purpose, significance, and special mandates of the Chalmette unit.
- Clearly define resource conditions and visitor uses and experiences to be achieved at the Chalmette unit consistent with the site's purpose and significance statements.
- Provide a framework for NPS managers to use when making decisions about how to best protect Chalmette unit resources, how to provide quality visitor uses and

experiences, how to manage visitor use, and what kinds of facilities, if any, to develop in/near the unit.

- Ensure that this foundation for decision making has been developed in consultation with interested stakeholders and adopted by the NPS leadership after an adequate analysis of the benefits, impacts, and economic costs of alternative courses of action. Legislation establishing the National Park Service as an agency and governing its management provides the fundamental direction for the administration of all units and programs of the national park system. This general management plan will build on these laws and the legislation that established the Chalmette unit to provide a vision for this historic site's future.

Choosing By Advantages Panel

The following individuals participated in the Choosing by Advantages (CBA) Value Analysis process.

Office	Name	Title	Panel Position
National Park Service - Jean Lafitte National Historic Park and Preserve	David Luchsinger	Superintendent	Facilitator/Voting Participant
	Allison Pena	Anthropologist	Voting Participant
	Brian Strack	Facility Manager	Voting Participant
	Cidney Webster	Supervisory Park Ranger	Voting Participant
	David Muth	Chief of Resources	Voting Participant
	Kathy Lang	Curator	Voting Participant
	Elizabeth Dupree	Chief of Resource Education	Voting Participant
	Paul Vitale	District Maintenance Supervisor	Voting Participant
National Park Service - Southeast Regional Office	Steven Wright	Environmental Program Manager	Facilitator/Voting Participant

Choosing By Advantages

During the week of January 20, 2009, a CBA panel convened for one day at the Jean Lafitte National Historic Park and Preserves Headquarters, New Orleans, Louisiana. The purpose of this meeting was to select a preferred alternative for the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery General Management Plan Amendment located in Chalmette, Louisiana. The analysis consisted of evaluating the three proposed action alternatives using the CBA method. These included:

Alternative A

Alternative A seeks to improve park operations and visitor opportunities with minimal changes to most current unit facilities. The tour road would be improved to help it safely accommodate both vehicles and pedestrians. A small un-staffed Visitor Information Station would be added adjacent to a re-routed tour boat pedestrian entrance. Additional parking and staging areas would be added.

Alternative B

Alternative B seeks to improve park operations and enhance visitor opportunities with changes to most current unit facilities. The changes would be designed to provide for greater opportunities for interpretation and visitor education. The tour road would be converted to a pedestrian only path for visitors, though it would continue to serve as a service road for NPS and emergency operations. A large (500 s.f.) un-staffed Visitor Information Station would be added adjacent to a re-routed tour boat pedestrian entrance. Traffic would be rerouted for safer pedestrian access from the VC to the restrooms, M-B House, and Rodriguez site. A new road would connect Monument Road with River Road, and parking would be added along the new road for access to the VC and Malus-Beauregard (M-B) House. Special event staging areas would be added. The Maintenance Area would be moved to the Fazendeville Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) site, and the Carriage House would be converted to interpretive use for the Cemetery visitor, with adjacent parking.

Alternative C

Alternative C seeks to restore the historic character of the battlefield with changes to most current unit facilities. The changes would be designed to remove modern features and restore elements of the cultural landscape integral to the story of the battle. The tour road would be removed. A new linking road would connect Monument Road to the River Road, and River Road would resume its historic place as the site's primary transportation artery, providing access between and among the Monument, VC, Rampart Display, Rodriguez Site, M-B House, battlefield trails, and the cemetery. All trace of the Fazendeville STP site would be removed and the battlefield topography restored.

Factors and Attributes:

The following set of factors and attributes were developed prior to, and during, the CBA meeting. After reviewing these, the panel determined that; (1) there was little or no difference among alternatives with regard to some of these factors; or that (2) a particular factor was not pertinent to the analysis. These NPS factor revisions are reflected in the CBA matrix included in this report.

I. Protect Natural and Cultural Resources

A. Prevent Loss of Cultural Resources

- B. Prevent Loss of Natural Resources
- C. Maintain and Improve Condition of Cultural Resources
- D. Maintain and Improve Condition of Natural Resources

II. Provide for Visitor Enjoyment

- A. Provide Visitor Services and Educational and Recreational Opportunities
- B. Compatibility of park design with current and projected special events
- C. Provides interpretive opportunities
- D. Provide for Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

III. Improve Efficiency of Park Operations

- A. Improve Operational Efficiency and Sustainability
- B. Provide for Employee Health, Safety and Welfare

IV. Provide Cost-effective, Environmental Responsible and Otherwise Beneficial Development for the NPS

- A. Provide Other Advantages to the National Park System

PHASE II – EVALUATION

Alternative Selection Evaluation

The panel determined that the advantage of Alternative B, under Factor 2a (see CBA matrix), Maintain and Improve Condition of Cultural Resources, was the Paramount Advantage in this analysis. This advantage was given the score of 100. All other advantages were weighed relative to its importance and the importance of all other advantages. The total Importance of Advantages score of 445 for Alternative B was the highest of the three action alternatives.

A separate cost analysis of the alternatives was completed in July 2008. These costs are reflected in the attached matrix. The panel weighed the projected costs for the three action alternatives in relation to their respective total of Importance of Advantages scores. As a result, the panel felt that the benefits of Alternative B's total of Importance of Advantages score was significant in relation to the modest cost increase when compared in relation with Alternative A.

PHASE III – RECONSIDERATION

The panel reviewed the CBA and Cost Benefit Analysis of the three alternatives. Discussions involved potential ways of improving Alternative B from the aspect of visitor enhancement and Cultural Resource protection. As a result, the panel recommended that the proposed parking lot adjacent to the VC and Malus-Beauregard House be relocated approximately 150 feet to the southeast. In addition, the panel recommends that the proposed east-west trail in Alternative C be incorporated into Alternative B to enhance visitor access to the Battlefield. The panel then re-evaluated the three alternatives considering these proposed changes and found no change in the total Importance of Advantages scores for the three alternatives. These revisions will be incorporated and presented as a Modified Alternative B within the General Management Plan Amendment. Therefore, the panel recommends that Modified Alternative B be forwarded as the National Park System Preferred Alternative.

**Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery
General Management Plan Amendment**

Choosing by Advantages Matrix

FACTOR	ALTERNATIVES					
	Alternative <u>A</u>		Alternative <u>B</u>		Alternative <u>C</u>	
PROTECT CULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES						
<p>FACTOR 1a - Prevent Loss of Cultural Resources Criterion: Least loss or damage to cultural resources is the preferred condition. Scale of Assessment: Subjective assessment. A high attribute means more protection or less potential loss or damage to cultural resources. Minimum Standard: none</p> <p>List of major cultural resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chalmette Battlefield Cultural Landscape 122 acres • Malus Beauregard House • Chalmette Monument • Spots Marker • Free men burial grounds • Chalmette National Cemetery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Historic Gates & Fence ○ Landscape 12.2 acres ○ Historic Masonry Wall ○ Grave Markers 15,500 ○ GAR Monument ○ Supt. Lodge ○ Carriage House • Non Military Markers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paved River Rd. • VC • Overlook • Super. Lodge • Buried Utilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paved River Rd. • VC • Overlook • Super. Lodge • Remove shed • Remove some trees • Maintenance moved to sewer site • Buried Utilities • New carriage house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paved River Rd. • VC • Overlook • Super. Lodge • Remove tour road • Remove shed • Remove more trees • Buried Utilities 			
Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Least amount of construction 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate construction 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal construction 	
Advantages	Most	35	<u>Less</u>	0	More	20

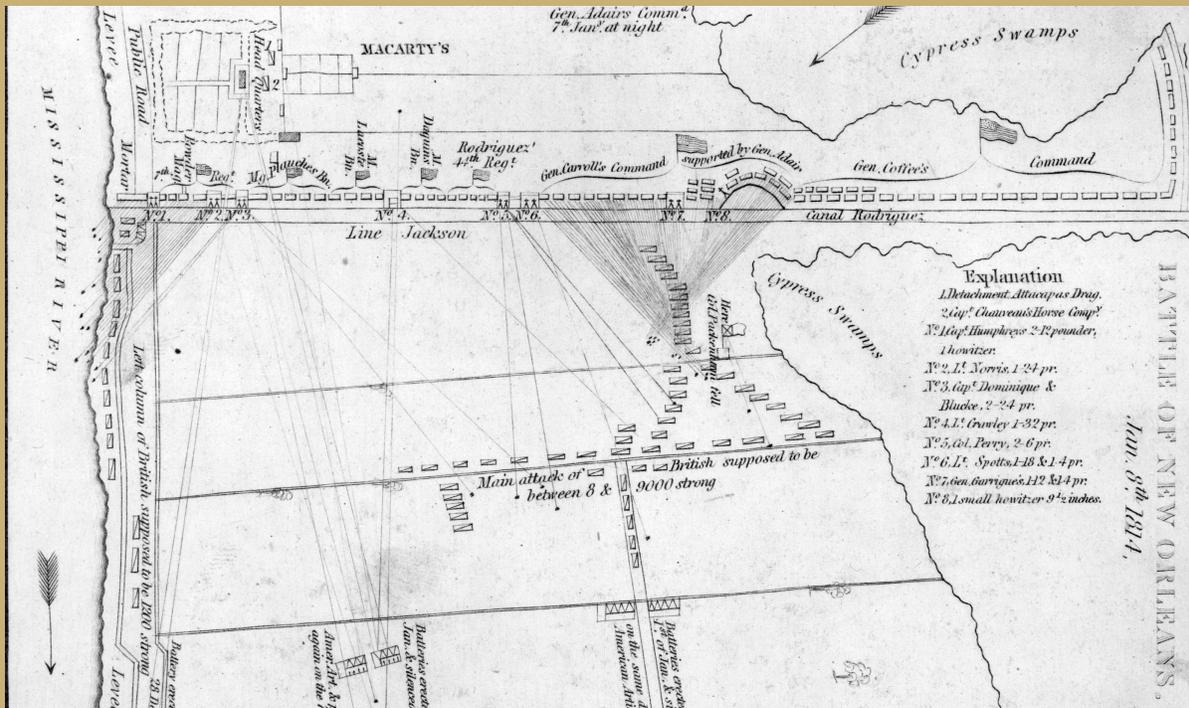
FACTOR	ALTERNATIVES					
	Alternative <u>A</u>		Alternative <u>B</u>		Alternative <u>C</u>	
Factor 1b – Prevent Loss of Natural Resources Criterion: Least loss or damage to natural resources is the preferred condition. Scale of Assessment: Subjective assessment. A high attribute means more protection or less potential loss or damage to natural resources. Minimum Standard: none List of major natural resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swamp Area 9.6 acres Mississippi River Levee 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove some wooded area 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove more wooded area 	
Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Least Impact 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some Impact 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most Impact 	
Advantages	Better	25	Medium	10	Worst	0
FACTOR 1c - Maintain and Improve Condition of Cultural Resources			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove some trees Tour loop road converted to pedestrian use only Add road to connect to the River Road 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removes more trees to restore historic landscape Removes tour loop road Add road to connect to the River Road 	
Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains existing conditions Tour loop road slightly widened for vehicle/pedestrian safety standards 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some restoration of historical landscape, but new road construction somewhat offsets gains 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greatest restoration of historical landscape 	
Advantages	<u>Minimal Improvement</u>	0	Slightly Better than Alt. A	20	Best	100
FACTOR 1d - Maintain and Improve Condition of Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal ground disturbance with Tour loop road Improvements 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most ground disturbance and vegetation removal with no offsets 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most trees removed offset by Tour loop road removal 	
Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal Disturbance 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More disturbance with no restoration offsets 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some disturbance with no restoration offsets 	
Advantages	Best	25	Worst	0	Slightly Better	10
PROVIDE FOR VISITOR ENJOYMENT						

FACTOR	ALTERNATIVES					
	Alternative <u>A</u>		Alternative <u>B</u>		Alternative <u>C</u>	
FACTOR 2a - Provide Visitor Services and Educational and Recreational Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor accessibility • Best design for visitor use patterns/flow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides pedestrian & vehicle access via tour loop rd. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides pedestrian only access via tour loop rd. • New parking area adjacent to Beauregard House 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides new pedestrian trails • Tour loop rd. removed 	
Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides most access (pedestrian & vehicle) • Provides some visitor flow 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides less access (pedestrian & vehicle) • Provides the most visitor flow 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides least access (pedestrian & vehicle) • Provides the least amount of visitor flow • Longest distance from parking to visitor services 	
Advantages	Best	95	Better	85	<u>Good</u>	0
FACTOR 2b - Compatibility of park design with current and projected special events			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 Car/Bus parking spaces 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 Car/Bus parking spaces 	
Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better flexibility/capacity 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best flexibility/capacity 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate flexibility/capacity 	
Advantages	Better	55	Best	65	<u>Moderate</u>	0
FACTOR 2c - Provides interpretive opportunities						
Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides least interpretive opportunities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides more interpretive opportunities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides most interpretive opportunities 	
Advantages	<u>Good</u>	0	Better	35	Best	85
FACTOR 2d – Provide for Public Health, Safety and Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor improvement 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminates Vehicle and pedestrian conflict 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency response times increased to visitors with elimination of tour loop rd. 	

FACTOR	ALTERNATIVES					
	Alternative <u>A</u>		Alternative <u>B</u>		Alternative <u>C</u>	
Attributes	• Better visitor safety		• Best visitor safety		• Moderate visitor safety	
Advantages	Better	40	Best	50	Poor	0
IMPROVE EFFICIENCY OF PARK OPERATIONS						
FACTOR 3a - Improve Operational Efficiency and Sustainability						
Attributes	• <u>Status quo</u>		• Modern maintenance facilities • Maintenance facility isolated from the visitor		• Operational loss of time due to relocated maintenance facility • Less road surface to maintain • more trails	
Advantages	Poor	0	Best	75	Better	30
FACTOR 3b – Provide for Employee Health, Safety and Welfare						
• Law enforcement • Maintenance						
Attributes	• Status Quo		• Best emergency vehicle access • Relocates maintenance area to a more secure location on-site		• Emergency vehicle access restricted	
Advantages	Better	40	Best	50	Poor	0
PROVIDE COST-EFFECTIVE, ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE, AND OTHERWISE BENEFICIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THE NPS						
FACTOR 4a – Provide Other Advantages to the National Park System						
Attributes			• Moves incompatible functions out of historic structures • Reutilizes disturbed lands and existing utilities within the park for modern facilities		• Moves incompatible functions out of historic structures and offsite from the park	
Advantages	No advantage	0	Better	55	Best	60
TOTAL IMPORTANCE OF ADVANTAGES		315		445		305
Initial Cost (Net)	\$5,534,235		\$6,767,633		\$7,494,179	
Re-design Cost						
Compliance						

FACTOR	ALTERNATIVES					
	Alternative <u>A</u>		Alternative <u>B</u>		Alternative <u>C</u>	
Life Cycle Cost (Net)						
TOTAL						

APPENDIX C: PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT



Charter
2002

CHALMETTE BATTLEFIELD TASK FORCE

1. DESIGNATION.

The official designation of this Federal advisory committee is the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force (Task Force).

2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of the Task Force is to advise the National Park Service on recommendations for suggested improvements to the Chalmette Battlefield site within Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. The Task Force will review the condition of only federally-owned buildings and artifacts within the boundary of the Chalmette National Cemetery and Chalmette Battlefield units of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. Recommendations of the Task Force should address non-Federal cost sharing. The Task Force recommendations will be analyzed and a plan of action developed.

3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

The duties of the Task Force are solely advisory, and are as stated in paragraph B above.

4. MEMBERSHIP.

1. The Task Force will be comprised of 12 members appointed by the Secretary of the Interior as follows:
 - a. Superintendent, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve;
 - b. One representative of the St. Bernard Parish government;
 - c. Two representatives of the St. Bernard Parish Council;
 - d. One representative of the St. Bernard Port and Harbor Terminal District;
 - e. One representative of the Lake Borgne Basin Levee District;
 - f. One representative of the Louisiana Society of United States Daughters of 1812;
 - g. One representative of the Fazendeville Descendants, from nominations by The Battle Ground Baptist Church;
 - h. One representative from nominations by the New Orleans Regional Chamber of Commerce;
 - i. One representative of the St. Bernard Historical Society;
 - j. One representative from nominations by the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer; and
 - k. One representative from nominations by the Jackson Barracks Unit of the Louisiana Army National Guard.

2. Members will be appointed for 2-year terms. If no new member is appointed on or prior to the expiration date of an incumbent's term, the incumbent member may continue to serve until the new appointment is made. Any vacancy on the Task Force will be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.
3. Any member who fails to attend two successive meetings of the Task Force or who otherwise fails to substantively participate in the work of the Task Force, may be removed from the Task Force by the Secretary and a replacement named.
4. Members of the Task Force serve without compensation. However, while away from their homes or regular places of business, members engaged in Task Force business approved by the Designated Federal Official will be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in the same manner as persons employed intermittently in Government service under section 5703 of title 5 of the United States Code.

5. ADMINISTRATION.

1. **CHARTER.** The Task Force is subject to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C. Appendix, and shall take no action unless the charter filing requirements of Sections 9 and 14(b) of the Act have been complied with. The Task Force is subject to biennial review and will terminate 2 years from the date this charter is filed, unless, prior to that time, the charter is renewed in accordance with Section 14 of FACA.
2. **DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICIAL.** The Task Force reports to the Regional Director, Southeast Region, National Park Service, Atlanta, Georgia. The Regional Director or a Federal employee designated by the Regional Director, will serve as the Designated Federal Official (DFO) for purposes of Section 10 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act to oversee the management of the Task Force.
3. **CHAIRPERSON.** The Task Force will select a Chairperson from among the membership.
4. **SUPPORT AND COSTS.** Support for the Task Force is provided by the National Park Service. The estimated annual operating cost of the Task Force is \$25,000, which includes the cost of 1/4 work-year of staff support.
5. **MEETINGS.** It is expected that the Task Force will meet every 2 months for 18 to 24 months. All meetings will be subject to the provision of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, and will be held at the call of or with the advance written approval of the Regional Director. Notice of meetings and agendas will be published in the *Federal Register* and in State and local newspapers having a distribution that generally covers the area affected by Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. Task Force meetings will be held at locations and in such a manner as to ensure public access and involvement.
6. **QUORUM.** Seven members of the Task Force will constitute a quorum. Consensus of the members is to be desired. However, where consensus cannot be reached, the Task Force will act and advise by affirmative vote of a majority of the members voting at a meeting at which a quorum is present. Task Force will act and advise by affirmative vote of a majority of the members voting at a meeting at which a quorum is present. Vacancies on the Task Force will not affect its power to function, if there remain sufficient members to constitute a quorum. The Task Force will provide to the Designated Federal

Official

both the minority and majority opinions on issues that must be resolved by vote.

7. SUBGROUPS. In carrying out its duties, the Task Force may form subgroups drawn in whole or in part from the full Task Force, provided that the role of such subgroups will be merely to provide information and recommendations for consideration by the full Task Force. Any such subgroups will be chaired by a member of the full Task Force. Membership on and meetings of the subgroups are subject to approval by the Designated Federal Official.

6. DURATION AND DATE OF TERMINATION.

It is anticipated that the Task Force will require approximately 2 years to complete its work. The Task Force will terminate once the National Park Service has made a final decision. All appointments will terminate with the Task Force.

7. AUTHORITY.

The Chalmette Battlefield Task Force is established by authority of the Secretary of the Interior under Section 3(c) of Public Law 91-383, August 3, 1970 (16 U.S.C. 1a-2(c)).

_____/s/ Gale A. Norton
Secretary of the Interior

_____|_____
Date Signed

Date Charter Filed _____
August 23, 2002

The filing date of this first charter constitutes the date of establishment of the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force.

FINAL REPORT OF THE
CHALMETTE BATTLEFIELD TASK FORCE
TO THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
FOR RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS AT THE CHALMETTE UNIT OF
JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE
CHALMETTE, LOUISIANA

AUGUST 23, 2004

INTRODUCTION

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve Advisory Commission was established August 23, 2002, by Public Law 92-589 to provide for free exchanges of ideas between the National Park Service and the public to facilitate the solicitation of advice or other counsel from members of the public for suggested improvements to the Chalmette Battlefield site within Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. In August, 2002, twelve members of the committee were appointed by the Secretary of the Department of the Interior for terms until August 23, 2004. The duties and responsibilities of the Task Force are solely advisory.

Task Force members, along with their organizations are as follows:

1. Superintendent Geraldine Smith, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
2. Ms. Elizabeth McDougall, LCTP, Director of Tourism, St. Bernard Parish
3. Ms. Faith Moran, Assistant Principal, St. Bernard Parish
4. Mr. Anthony A. Fernandez, Jr., Attorney at Law, St. Bernard Parish Sheriff's Office
5. Mr. Drew Heaphy, CPA, St. Bernard Port
6. Mr. Paul Perez, CFP, Chamber of Commerce
7. Mrs. George W. Davis, United States Daughters of 1812
8. Mr. Eric Cager, Representing Fazendeville
9. Captain Bonnie Pepper Cook, St. Bernard Historical Society
10. Mr. Alvin W. Guillot, Lake Borgne Basin Levee District
11. Mr. Michael L. Fraering, Port Hudson State Historic Site
12. Col. John F. Pugh, Jr., Louisiana Army National Guard

This is the final report of the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force. Contained in this report is an analysis of the Chalmette Battlefield and the Chalmette National Cemetery with recommendations to the National Park Service for improvements to these two facilities.

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Task Force was needed to advise the National Park Service on recommendations for suggested improvements to the Chalmette Battlefield site within Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. The Task Force will review the condition of only federally-owned buildings and artifacts within the boundary of the Chalmette National Cemetery and Chalmette Battlefield units of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. Recommendations of the Task Force should address non-Federal cost sharing. The Task Force recommendations will be analyzed and a plan of action developed.

The Task Force is subject to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act and shall take no action. The Task Force will take two years to complete its work, ending August 23, 2004, and will terminate once the National Park Service has made a final decision.

The goal and objective of the Task Force is to analyze all aspects of the Chalmette National Battlefield and the Chalmette National Cemetery. After the analysis specific recommendations will be given to the National Park Service.

BACKGROUND

Task Force members, along with their organizations and who they represent, are as follows:

1. Ms. Geraldine Smith, Superintendent
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
Representing Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
2. Ms. Elizabeth McDougall, LCTP, Chairman of the Task Force
Director of Tourism, St. Bernard Parish
Representing the St. Bernard Parish Government and the Tourism Industry
3. Ms. Faith Moran
Assistant Principal, Lacoste Elementary
Member of the Board of Zoning Adjustments
Representing St. Bernard Parish Council
4. Mr. Anthony A. Fernandez, Jr., Attorney at Law
St. Bernard Parish Sheriff's Office
Representing the St. Bernard Parish Council

5. Mr. Drew Heaphy, CPA
Director of Administration and Planning Services
St. Bernard Port, Harbor and Terminal District
Representing St. Bernard Port and Harbor Terminal
6. Mr. Paul Perez, CFP
Board member of the St. Bernard Chamber of Commerce
Representing the St. Bernard Chamber of Commerce
7. Mrs. George W. Davis
Honorary Vice President, National Society of the Daughters of 1812
Representing the Louisiana Society of United States Daughters of 1812
8. Mr. Eric Cager
New Orleans, Louisiana
Representing the Fazendeville Descendants
9. Captain Bonnie Pepper Cook, Vice-Chairman of the Task Force
St. Bernard Parish Sheriff's Office
Representing the St. Bernard Historical Society
10. Mr. Alvin W. Guillot
Arabi, Louisiana
Representing the Lake Borgne Basin Levee District
11. Mr. Michael L. Fraering
Port Hudson State Historic Site
Zachary, Louisiana
Representing Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office
12. Col. John F. Pugh, Jr.
Director of Human Resources, Jackson Barracks
New Orleans, Louisiana
Representing the Jackson Barracks unit of the Louisiana Army National Guard

At the first meeting of the Task Force, Superintendent Geraldine Smith introduced Mr. Rich Sussman, Chief, Planning and Compliance Division, attending as acting Federal Officer for Patricia Hooks, Acting Regional Director, Southeast Region. At the January 29, 2003 meeting, Mr. David Muth introduced Mr. Tim Bemisderfer as the currently assigned Federal Designated Officer. Mr. Bemisderfer is a Landscape Architect in the Planning and Compliance Division, National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office-

Atlanta. Ms. Dee Landry will serve as Administrative Assistant for Resource Management.

At the January 29,2003 meeting Mr. David Muth presented slides and an overview of past and present conditions of the Chalmette Battleground and National Cemetery. The Task Force members as well had concerns regarding the condition of the park and cemetery. There was a general discussion of ideas for possible improvements that could be made to the park and cemetery. A subcommittee was formed of Task Force members who were asked to list and express their personal concerns. Task Force members were encouraged to solicit ideas and opinions from the general public. These concerns were listed and given in a report to the general Task Force membership at the March 26,2003 meeting. The Task Force continued to meet regularly through August 2004 to identify items of concern and potential recommendations to include in the Final Report.

ISSUES OF CONCERN

CONCERN 1:

The Chalmette National Battlefield and the Chalmette National Cemetery are lacking a visitor-friendly atmosphere. It was stated in earlier discussions that the purpose of the park was merely to accurately interpret the historic significance of the January, 1815 Battle.

CONCERN 2:

The grounds were in much need of maintenance and care. Upon visual inspection, regular maintenance and systemic grooming seem to be lacking. Cemetery tombs need attending. Weeds are growing out of the Chalmette obelisk, and the wall around the cemetery needs repair.

CONCERN 3:

Proper signage and landscaping is needed to call attention to the significance of the National Park and Cemetery. It is easy to drive past not realizing the park is there.

CONCERN 4:

The Malus-Beauregard House, constructed in 1834, should be restored, interpreted, and utilized for various events.

CONCERN 5:

Information concerning the entire story of the Battle of New Orleans should be available to the public. There is nothing to see except the monument and the Malus-Beauregard House, which is empty and deteriorating.

CONCERN 6:

This Task Force Committee should continue as an on-going Committee to maintain communication between the park and the community. In this way community needs and concerns could be addressed on a regular basis. In the absence of this Task Force or similar on-going committee, community needs and concerns may not be addressed on a regular basis.

CONCERN 7:

Cooperation between volunteer groups and the park is not evident. The park should be open to meet the needs of volunteer groups who want to enhance the living history of the park.

CONCERN 8:

Transportation to and from downtown New Orleans should be implemented.

CONCERN 9:

Arrangements should be made for the park to be used after 5:00 P.M.

CONCERN 10:

The Chalmette National Battlefield and the Chalmette National Cemetery should stand alone, separated from the Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve system.

CONCERN 11:

Erosion of Coastal Louisiana threatens sites of national historic treasures such as the Chalmette Battlefield and the Chalmette National Cemetery, that we seek to preserve.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ADDRESS ISSUES OF CONCERN

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ADDRESS CONCERN 1:

- A. Sign-in sheets vs. comment sheets should be available. Valuable marketing information including where people are visiting from and how they heard of the battlefield could be analyzed and used to promote the park.
- B. Tourists could be provided with information about the local area and its attractions.

- C. Install an elevated river-front overview in the area of the Mallus-Beauregard house for visitors to appreciate the important role the Mississippi River played in the Battle of New Orleans.
- D. We would support the placement of commemorative markers around the base of the monument to acknowledge the participation of all militia/troops engaged on the American side of the Battle of New Orleans.
- E. Park benches could be placed around the park where visitors can rest
- F. Work with the Committee regarding the availability of the Battlefield site for events and meetings.
- G. The visitor center should be enlarged or relocated to provide more space for improved interpretation and other historical activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ADDRESS CONCERN 2:

- A. Chalmette needs improved maintenance on a continuous basis to maintain the grounds properly. Having a regular maintenance crew who can concentrate on just the Chalmette Park would alleviate a lot of these concerns.
- B. The historic trees need maintaining; the grass needs cutting properly; cemetery headstones need straightening, cleaning, and better manicuring.
- C. The wall around the cemetery needs repair.
- D. A plan for better drainage should be developed.
- E. The Task Force would support the implementation of the recommendations of the Cemetery Assessment Report.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ADDRESS CONCERN 3:

- A. Change or enhance the sign at the front of the park; perhaps, put an additional sign on the median in front of or across from the entrance to the battlefield.
- B. Eliminate some vegetation in order to open a view of the battlefield from St. Bernard Highway.

C. Consider lighting the monument.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ADDRESS CONCERN 4:

- A. The Malus-Beauregard House could be used as an interpretive site for the other events associated with the cultural landscape and history of the site. The Malus-Beauregard House would be a proper location to tell the story of Fazendeville and to present interpretive mention of the architectural style of the house to the river plantations, stressing the connection to General Beauregard as a former owner.
- B. Restoration and furnishing of the house, first and second floors, would add to its charm.
- C. Climate control would further ensure that the house and its furnishings would be preserved for future generations. The house could then be used for social functions.
- D. Reactivating of the Little Colonels, who wore ante-bellum period dresses and served as docents at the house in the past, would further enhance use of the house and be an interesting visitor attraction.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ADDRESS CONCERN 5:

- A. The rampart and cannons are the visual reference points that connect the battle to the visitors experience. It would be beneficial to purchase a cannon for every gun emplacement in the ramparts.
- B. Wooden timbers should be replaced in the ramparts.
- C. The height of the ramparts should be increased.
- D. Audio or multi-media stations on the ramparts should be added. More information should include the Naval segments of the campaign. Much of the larger story needs to be interpreted. Some specific points stressed would be the context of the entire campaign in St. Bernard Parish, the effect of the battle on the nation, and why control of the Port of New Orleans was so significant to the nation.
- E. The flag pole should be relocated and refurbished and should fly the 15 star flag.
- F. An interpretation of the flank movements of the British could be available.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ADDRESS CONCERN 6:

- A. The Task Force should be a permanent advisory committee consisting of Task Force members whereby regular meetings are scheduled and issues addressed that the Park superintendent is required to attend.
- B. Reevaluate the mission statement of the park addressing not only how the park should be historically interpreted, but also how to promote the importance of the events in an interesting manner, creating an atmosphere whereby visitors want to return
- C. Archeological resources, although not a visible resource, are indeed present and should be interpreted even if only by wayside exhibits.
- D. This advisory committee and/or Task Force should not be disbanded until another advisory committee is authorized or appointed.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ADDRESS CONCERN 7:

- A. Incorporated in the permanent advisory committee would be a plan to meet the needs and requests of groups that want to use the park for various activities.
- B. Information of upcoming events should be communicated to volunteers.
- C. ROTC should be apprentices of the living history volunteers so that they can be properly trained in the interpretation techniques regarding this battle.

RECOMMENDATION THAT ADDRESSES CONCERN 8:

- A. Coordinate a cooperative effort transit system with the St. Bernard Urban Rapid Transit (SBURT) and the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) in New Orleans. This would allow a convenient method of transit for visitors to access the National Park in addition to the river boat.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ADDRESS CONCERN 9:

- A. Allowing the park to be used before and after park hours would offer recreational opportunities such as cycling, jogging, walking, and bird watching.
- B. The park should be available for special public events.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ADDRESS CONCERN 10:

- A. The Chalmette National Battlefield and the Chalmette National Cemetery would have it's own personnel to address the issues of maintaining the facilities.

B. Local concerns unique to the park would be addressed on a regular basis.

RECOMMENDATION THAT ADDRESSES CONCERN 11:

A. Through a joint effort with local, state, and federal agencies, exhibits and literature concerning Louisiana coastal erosion issues could be available at the joint local and federal visitor center at the Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette Cemetery site.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ADDRESS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING

FUNDING OPTIONS FOR CONCERN 1:

Funding for enlarging the visitor center could come from several sources: petition Congress for the funding; establish a non-profit group “Friends of the Chalmette Battlefield”, and apply for grants. A cooperative effort between the Chalmette National Park and local and state government would provide funding opportunity for a visitor center that would promote the parish of St. Bernard, state of Louisiana, and the national park.

FUNDING OPTIONS FOR CONCERN 2:

Petition the National Park Service to allow Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette Cemetery to have its own maintenance team, allocating funds to accomplish this. Local historical, veterans, civic groups, and garden clubs could be encouraged to participate in the upkeep and maintenance of the park and cemetery.

FUNDING OPTIONS FOR CONCERN 3:

Enhancing the entrance could be funded by applying for grants. Since making the park more attractive would, hopefully, bring in more tourists, request funds from the local parish government

FUNDING OPTIONS FOR CONCERN 4:

Restoring and renovating the Malus-Beauregard House could be achieved by applying for grants. Corporate sponsors could be solicited.

FUNDING OPTION FOR CONCERN 5:

Funding for physical improvements made to the battlefield and cemetery would have to come from the budget and/or Congressional funds.

FUNDING OPTION FOR CONCERN 6:

Recommendation 6 would not require any funding except for providing archeological resources through wayside exhibits. This could possibly be included in the funding for Recommendation 5.

FUNDING OPTION FOR CONCERN 7:

Recommendation 7 would require minimal funding and time.

FUNDING OPTION FOR CONCERN 8:

Funding should be self supporting due to the fares collected from the passengers.

FUNDING OPTIONS FOR CONCERN 9:

Funding would be related to the event. Recreational activities would have no additional impact on the park's interstructure and requires no additional funding. Special events would have to be self-supporting.

FUNDING OPTIONS FOR CONCERN 10:

The Chalmette National Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery would be granted the funds necessary to adequately maintain the sites. These funds would come out of the budget assigned to the Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve system. Assistance from local interests would be a viable option for additional funding.

FUNDING OPTION FOR CONCERN 11:

Efforts to urge Congress to establish a permanent funding source for coastal restoration projects in Louisiana should be considered in order to protect the future of our national historic treasures and its cultural landscape.

CONCLUSIONS

Creating the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force gave citizens of St. Bernard Parish and the metropolitan area the opportunity to have input into a historic site that is an integral part of the community. As the Task Force worked on making recommendations to improve the battlefield and cemetery, it was evident that there were many issues to be discussed and solved. The Task Force listed issues it felt were most important, and if resolved, would enrich the lives and opportunities of all citizens.

In 2015, the 200th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans will be commemorated at the Chalmette Battlefield. History has shown, based on the lack of funding from previous Master Plans for Chalmette, that no significant improvements have been made to one of the most important battle sites in United States history. Therefore, it is the

recommendation of the Task Force to rectify this situation by separating the park and cemetery from the Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve system. The park and cemetery should stand alone as the Chalmette National Historical Battlefield with its own funding and superintendent.

The Task Force's main objective was to use this process as a launching pad for future improvements. All members of the Task Force felt this was important work that needed to be done.

The Task Force would like to recognize the hard work the Superintendent and her staff have made in preserving the historical character of the park. The combined knowledge of the Facilitator, Superintendent, her staff, and the Southeast Regional Office has made the task of assembling this report a positive learning experience for all.

APPROVAL OF FINAL REPORT

Members of the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force voted to approve the Final Document at its August 18, 2004 meeting.



Background Information

The Chalmette Battlefield Task Force (referred to interchangeably as CBTF or task force) was designated a federal advisory committee by the Secretary of the Interior on August 23, 2002. The purpose of the CBTF, as stated in its charter, was to provide the National Park Service (NPS) with recommendations for potential improvements to the artifacts and facilities within the boundary of the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery (referred to interchangeably as CBNC or park). A copy of the CBTF charter is provided in Attachment A of this document.

Members of the CBTF were appointed by the Secretary from a wide range of federal, state, and local government agencies, non government organizations, and local stakeholders. Task force meetings were conducted every other month for a period of 24 months at either the park or the St. Bernard Parish Government Complex. Public notice for all meetings was published in the *Federal Register* and the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, a regional newspaper with distribution generally covering the State of Louisiana. Meeting minutes were recorded and made available for public review to ensure public access and involvement.

Task force members gathered information about site conditions through detailed site inspections and continuous dialogue with local stakeholders and park personnel. Upon the conclusion of their deliberations, a list of draft recommendations was created and refined. Task force members approved a final list of recommendations by majority vote at its August 18, 2004 meeting. The CBTF's final report (provided in Attachment B) was delivered to the Federal Designated Officer on August 23, 2004.

The Secretary directed the NPS to analyze the recommendations of the task force and prepare a plan of action. This document fulfills that responsibility using one or more of the following approaches:

1. Some NPS Action Plan (AP) responses indicate that the park has already taken steps to address the referenced concern. In most cases, such actions were initiated in response to preliminary discussions and recommendations by task force members expressed during their bi-monthly meetings in 2003 and 2004.
2. The AP also describes NPS actions that will be initiated in the near future or as soon as appropriate funding is acquired. In many cases, these actions represent the first steps toward a more comprehensive and complex future action.
3. Some AP responses propose future NPS actions. In most cases, such responses are tied to the ongoing General Management Plan Amendment and Development Concept Plan (GMP/DCP) process and indicate that further data gathering and public consultation must occur before a preferred implementation strategy can be determined.

Integrating NPS Action Plan and GMP/DCP

Many of the task force's recommendations involve complex cultural and natural resource management issues. Given the sensitive nature of park resources, we believe it is prudent to investigate a range of alternative strategies before identifying a preferred NPS action. In order to study these issues more thoroughly and solicit additional input from some of our other planning partners, the NPS plans to integrate them into the GMP/DCP planning process.

The NPS multi-disciplinary team responsible for conducting the GMP/DCP has worked closely with the CBTF for over 12 months to develop and refine a range of potential improvements for consideration by all of our planning partners. The planning team would like to take this opportunity to express its sincere appreciation to each member of the task force for their active participation and valuable contributions to the scoping and alternative development phases of the project.

The NPS will respond accurately and in good faith to each concern expressed by the CBTF. To ensure a clear integration of actions proposed in the AP and GMP/DCP, the CBTF final report and this AP will be incorporated into the GMP/DCP as an appendix. In addition, a reference table will be provided in the GMP/DCP so readers can quickly cross reference recommendations and proposed actions from one document to another.

An overview of general management plans and development concept plans is presented in the following paragraphs.

General Management Amendment Planning

A GMP Amendment clarifies and articulates the future goals and objectives to be achieved at a park over a 15- to 20-year period. Based on guidance from its enabling legislation, information and suggestions gathered during consultations, and a consideration of potential environmental impacts, a variety of management alternatives are developed. A range of prescriptive management zones is often developed and overlaid in different combinations within the park to reflect the intent or focus of each alternative. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) serves to enhance stakeholder understanding of the various advantages and disadvantages of each alternative and, ultimately, as a tool for selecting a preferred course of action.

A GMP Amendment is conducted by a multi-disciplinary planning team of NPS managers, technical support personnel and park staff. As part of the planning process, the planning team typically reconfirms the park's purpose, significance, and mission goals and consults with federal, state, and local governmental agencies, interested parties, and the general public. Full and open public participation is promoted to encourage a sense of public ownership and confidence in the decision making process.

Development Concept Planning

A DCP makes a more detailed analysis of a park, structure, or specific area within a park. Based on the framework established by its enabling legislation, the CBNC DCP will identify a range of alternative designs that illustrate how proposed developments could be implemented. A preferred alternative will be selected based on information gathered during consultation and a consideration of potential environmental impacts. Potentially significant environmental impacts will be documented and analyzed in the GMP EIS. While still schematic in nature, the conceptual designs of a DCP are expected to provide a level of detail that will enable a future team of architects and engineers to prepare construction documents and specifications to implement the recommended actions.

NPS Action Plan

The following section describes NPS responses and proposed actions for each recommendation in the CBTF final report. Task force recommendations are highlighted in italics. NPS responses and proposed actions follow each recommendation in plain type. For easier reference, NPS responses employ the same numbering and lettering system as the final report.

CBTF Recommendation 1A

“Sign in sheets vs. comment sheets should be available. Valuable marketing information including where people are visiting from and how they heard of the battlefield could be analyzed and used to promote the park.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 1A

We agree with the CBTF about the benefits of clearly understanding visitors and visitor preferences. Who visits Chalmette Battlefield? When do they come, where do they come from, and what do they look for? Who doesn't visit, and why? These are compelling questions whose answers would likely influence the full spectrum of management decisions at the park.

Periodic visitor studies are prepared for Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve by the University of Idaho Park Studies Unit. The most recent study was conducted in the spring of 1998, had a sample size of 776, and a 72% response rate. An analysis of the study data indicates that, generally, most persons who visited Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve were first time

visitors, came as part of a family group, were between the ages of 41-65, received information about the park from friends or relatives, and had a special interest in southern Louisiana history and culture. Persons were most likely to visit the French Quarter visitor center, Chalmette Battlefield, or Barataria Preserve (29%, 26%, and 24%, respectively) and the facilities most used by visitors were visitor centers and restrooms. Unfortunately, the 1998 study provides only limited site specific information about Chalmette because most of the analysis is reported in the context of the greater Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

In response to the CBTF's recommendation, the park will take the following actions:

1. Pursue placement of NPS sign-in visitor register at an appropriate location within the existing visitor center.
2. A copy of the 1998 study will be provided to the Chalmette Parish Department of Tourism for their use and record.
3. A future comprehensive visitor use study specifically focused on the CBNC will be recommended in the GMP/DCP. Study options will include, but not be limited to, focusing the existing NPS survey instrument on CBNC, using private contractors or other specialists to conduct a similar study, and/or a study of community-wide visitor trends in partnership with St. Bernard Parish or another local or regional government entity. The cost and feasibility of various options will be discussed in the GMP/DCP.

CBTF Recommendation 1B

"Tourists could be provided with information about the local area and its attractions."

NPS Action for Recommendation 1B

National parks have been interwoven with tourism and the tourism industry from the earliest days of the National Park System. Park managers recognize that it is in the best interest of the NPS and the CBNC to understand and actively communicate with local and regional tourism businesses and those who visit the parks as tourists. It is important for our friends and partners in the local community to understand that visitor safety and protection of park resources must be the highest priority of any national park. Our desire to maintain obstruction free circulation patterns in the visitor center and to preserve essential park resources unimpaired for future generations sometimes limits the park's ability to meet the marketing desires of the commercial tourism industry at CBNC.

In response to the CBTF's recommendations, the park will continue or initiate the following actions:

1. While remaining mindful of the limitations imposed by law and policy, NPS planners and designers will identify new opportunities in each GMP/DCP alternative that enhance park visitors' awareness of local area attractions.
2. The park will continue to provide information about local area attractions to park visitors by displaying and distributing the St. Bernard Parish Department of Tourism brochure in the visitor center and by strengthening our partnership relationships with the St. Bernard Parish Department of Tourism and other local and regional park stakeholders.
3. The Crescent City District Interpretive Supervisor will continue to serve as a member of the St. Bernard Parish Tourism Advisory Board which meets bi-monthly throughout the year.
4. The Crescent City District Interpretive Supervisor's position description and employment performance standards will continue to include requirements to develop and maintain positive working relationships with surrounding communities, existing and potential park partners, and educational institutions. As part of this requirement, the Crescent City District Interpretive Supervisor will continue to engage community leaders, state and local officials, and other park stakeholders to share program and event information, discuss emerging trends in tourism, identifying mutually beneficial opportunities to engage tourists, and brainstorming ideas for the park.

CBTF Recommendation 1C

“Install an elevated river-front overview in the area of the Malus-Beauregard house for visitors to appreciate the important roll the Mississippi River played in the Battle of New Orleans.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 1C

The CBTF’s recommendation on this issue echoes and reinforces similar advice we have received from other park stakeholders during public scoping meetings for the GMP/DCP. In response, the park will take the following actions:

1. The NPS planning and design team will determine the feasibility of developing a river-front overview feature in the GMP/DCP. If feasible, a range of design options will be developed and analyzed.
2. The park will provide the public an opportunity to comment on the range of design options and consider, in good faith, all recommendations or suggestions for improvements to the concepts being considered.
3. A final recommendation for creating a river-front overview will be presented and the rationale for that decision justified in the GMP/DCP.

CBTF Recommendation 1D

“We would support the placement of commemorative markers around the base of the monument to acknowledge the participation of all militia/troops engaged on the American side of the Battle of New Orleans.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 1D

The park appreciates the support of the task force on this issue. New commemorative markers recognizing the diverse groups of regulars and civilians who fought for the United States at the Battle of New Orleans will be dedicated in a special ceremony on January 8, 2005 during the 190th anniversary of the battle.

CBTF Recommendation 1E

“Park Benches could be placed around park where visitors can rest.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 1E

The CBTF’s recommendation on this issue echoes and reinforces similar advice we have received from other park stakeholders during public scoping meetings for the GMP/DCP. In response, the park will take the following actions:

1. Up to 5 additional benches will be purchased and temporarily placed in appropriate locations throughout the park in 2005.
2. The NPS planning and design team will define a strategy to consider the placement of additional future benches in the GMP/DCP.
3. The park will provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the strategy and, in good faith, take into consideration all recommendations or suggestions for each alternative being considered.
4. A final strategy will be identified in the final GMP/DCP.

CBTF Recommendation 1F

“Let community know about the availability of the battlefield for events and meetings.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 1F

NPS facilities may be used for special events and meetings (36 CFR Chapter1, Section 2.50) provided there is a meaningful association between the park area and the event and the event contributes to visitor understanding of the park and its mission. The facilities at CBNC have always been available for public use when the proposed activities conform to established guidelines. Unfortunately, the battlefield landscape is a very sensitive environment and only one small indoor multi-use space in the

existing visitor center is suitable for meetings. Under present circumstances, the park feels it would be misleading to widely advertise the availability of park facilities for special events or meetings when it does not, in most instances, have the capacity to accommodate those requests.

Providing opportunities for appropriate public enjoyment is a goal of the park and an important part of the NPS mission. However, the laws governing the management of national parks are very clear that the first responsibility of park managers is to protect park resources and values and, correspondingly, to manage all uses for those purposes. Because park managers cannot knowingly authorize a park use that would harm park resources, requests for uses that could potentially cause negative or adverse impacts must be fully evaluated, appropriate public involvement obtained, and a compelling management need demonstrated before any significant activity can be permitted.

If the potential impact of a requested use is not known or in doubt, the Superintendent must protect the park's resources. To help park managers better assess the potential for negative impacts, a special-use permitting system is used. The park understands that the laws and policies governing the public use of NPS facilities can be complex and that this may sometimes lead to misunderstandings about what types of uses can and cannot be permitted. The following actions will be undertaken to enhance communication and understanding between the park and local stakeholders about this issue:

1. The park will continue to make its existing park facilities available for public use within the guidelines of law and policy.
2. The park will prepare a short and concise information guide or pamphlet that clarifies its position on special uses, the facilities available, and the special use permitting process. This information will be provided on the park web page and otherwise as appropriate.
3. The NPS planning and design team will identify alternate ways of increasing the park's ability to accommodate appropriate community events and meetings in the GMP/DCP.

CBTF Recommendation 1G

"The visitor center should be enlarged or relocated to provide more space for various activities."

NPS Action for Recommendation 1G

The CBTF's recommendation on this issue echoes and reinforces similar advice we received from other park stakeholders during public scoping meetings for the GMP/DCP. In response, the park will take the following actions:

1. The NPS planning and design team will determine the feasibility of enlarging and/or relocating the visitor center as part of the GMP/DCP. If feasible, a range of design options will be developed and analyzed.
2. The park will provide the public an opportunity to comment on the range of design options and consider, in good faith, all recommendations or suggestions for improvements to the concepts being considered.
3. A final recommendation for enlarging and/or relocating the visitor center will be presented and the rationale for that decision justified in the final GMP/DCP.

CBTF Recommendation 2A

"Chalmette needs improved maintenance on a continuous basis to maintain the grounds properly. Having a regular maintenance crew who can concentrate on just the Chalmette Park would alleviate a lot of these concerns."

NPS Action for Recommendation 2A

The CBNC employs five full time maintenance workers. While members of the park maintenance staff occasionally assist on projects at other locations, NPS records indicate that over 95% of their total working hours are spent training for or directly working on projects at the CBNC. Based on recommendations provided by the CBTF prior to publishing its final report, the Maintenance Division and Resource Management Division have redefined grooming standards for the park grounds. The maintenance staff began implementing the revised standards in spring 2004. Also, additional

maintenance staffing needs will be evaluated based on the range of alternatives considered in the GMP/DCP process.

CBTF Recommendation 2B

“The historic trees need maintaining; the grass needs cutting properly; cemetery headstones need straightening, cleaning, and better manicuring.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 2B

Specific project funding has been requested in the 2005-2010 combined budget request for pruning and lightning protection for all of the large oak trees in the CBNC.

Please also refer to NPS Actions 2A and 2C.

CBTF Recommendation 2C

“The wall around the cemetery needs repair.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 2C

The park completed a comprehensive condition assessment of the Chalmette National Cemetery in 2004. The Cemetery Condition Assessment Report provides a detailed analysis of the cemetery wall, iron fencing and gates, monuments and headstones and makes a variety of treatment recommendations to stabilize the wall, clean and straighten the headstones, and correct drainage issues.

In addition, all recommendations contained in the Cemetery Condition Assessment Report will be incorporated by reference into in the GMP/DCP document. A copy of the final Cemetery Condition Assessment Report will be provided to the chairperson of the CBTF for her use and record.

Please also refer to NPS Action 2E.

CBTF Recommendation 2D

“A plan for better drainage should be developed.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 2D

The mild slope and poor drainage characteristics of the soil make it very difficult to provide effective drainage at this time. However, the park has long recognized that storm water management is an important issue both on the battlefield and in the cemetery. To provide future relief, the park has been working cooperatively with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) and the Lake Borgne Levee District to ensure that the storm drainage improvements currently being installed along the St. Bernard Highway will provide adequate outfall connections from the battlefield and cemetery for future corrective actions.

The corrective actions that need to be taken will not be known precisely until a preferred alternative is identified in the GMP/DCP. Consequently, corrective actions must be delayed until the completion of that planning process.

CBTF Recommendation 2E

“The Task Force would support implementation of the recommendations of the Cemetery Assessment Report.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 2E

The park appreciates the support of the CBTF on this issue. Recommendations in the report have resulted in a \$3.2 million line item construction budget request for implementation of the preferred alternative. This budget request has been approved by the Washington Office of Construction and Budget and is currently in the formulated 2008 Interior budget request.

CBTF Recommendation 3A

“Change or enhance the sign at the front of the park; perhaps, put an additional sign on the median in front of or across from the entrance to the battlefield.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 3A

Based on recommendations provided by the CBTF prior to publishing its final report, the entrance signs at the battlefield and cemetery entrances were upgraded in 2003. Also, a variety of landscape design alternatives that further enhance the entrances are being considered in the GMP/DCP.

A comprehensive strategy to address signage and directional issues outside the park was prepared by the park staff in 2003. Implementation of the plan’s recommendations is dependent on future funding and approval of the proposed sign design and locations by LADOTD. LADOTD has sole jurisdiction over all roadway and highway directional signage decisions.

The NPS will continue to work with LADOTD on this issue. In the interim, the designs and implementation strategy prepared in 2003 will be updated to reflect current standards, and incorporated as an appendix in the GMP/DCP for consideration by future planners and park managers.

CBTF Recommendation 3B

“Eliminate some vegetation in order to open a view of the battlefield from St. Bernard Highway.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 3B

The potential for opening selected views into the park will be fully explored in the GMP/DCP. All alternatives will include proposals to enhance views and update the park entrance features on the St. Bernard Highway.

CBTF Recommendation 3C

“Consider lighting the monument.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 3C

A lighting system for the Chalmette Monument was donated to the park in 1968 by the St. Bernard Parish Business and Professional Women’s Association. The system consisted of four pedestals, each supporting two mercury-vapor lamps. Lighting of the monument was discontinued to conserve electricity during the energy crisis of the early 1970s. When turned back on in 1976, it was discovered that two mercury-vapor lamps were inoperative. The park continued to light the monument using the remaining operational units until 1978 when additional lamps began to fail. Cost estimates to repair or replace the 10-year old system exceeded available funding and given the large annual expenditure for electricity, it was abandoned and removed.

Given that significant advancements in lighting technology and energy conservation have occurred since the 1970’s, the planning and design team will examine the feasibility of installing a modern accent lighting system for the monument as part of the GMP/DCP.

CBTF Recommendation 4A

“The Malus-Beauregard House could be used as an interpretive site for the other events associated with the cultural landscape and history of the site. The Malus-Beauregard House would be a proper location to tell the story of Fazendeville and to present interpretive mention of the architectural style of the house to the river plantations, stressing the connection to General Beauregard as a former owner.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 4A

A wide variety of potential uses and treatments for the Malus-Beauregard House, including opportunities to interpret the history of its occupancy and the Fazendeville community has been

suggested by park staff and other stakeholders during public scoping for the GMP/DCP. In response, the park will take the following actions:

1. Based on suggestions from the CBTF and other stakeholders, the planning and design team is developing a range of feasible alternative uses and interpretive themes for the Malus-Beauregard House as part of the GMP/DCP.
2. The planning and design team will provide all stakeholders an opportunity to comment on the range of alternatives developed and, in good faith, take into consideration additional recommendations or suggestions for change or improvement.
3. A final recommendation on the future use of the Malus-Beauregard House will be documented and justified in the GMP/DCP.

CBTF Recommendation 4B

“Restoration and furnishing of the house, first and second floors, would add to its charm.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 4B

Please refer to NPS Action 4A and 4C.

CBTF Recommendation 4C

“Climate control would further ensure that the house and its furnishings would be preserved for future generations. The house could then be used for social functions.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 4C

The planning and design team will weigh the advantages and disadvantages of a range of alternative uses and interpretive treatments for the Malus-Beauregard House in the GMP/DCP (See also NPS Action 1F and 4A). None the less, many obstacles stand in the way of returning climate control and restored historic furnishings to the Malus-Beauregard House.

The interior spaces of the Malus-Beauregard House were climate controlled when the structure served as the park visitor center from the early 1970s until the early 1980s. NPS experience with the Malus-Beauregard House during this period and with similar structures at other NPS units in the Southeast Region suggests that returning a climate control system without also installing a vapor barrier would likely cause significant sweating or wicking of moisture into the interior rooms. This conclusion is based on the following discussion.

Because it is a gas, moisture vapor always moves from high to lower pressure areas. This normally means it tends to diffuse from the higher humidity levels of a building’s interior toward the lower humidity levels outside. This flow is reversed when hot, humid conditions exist outdoors and a building’s interior spaces are cool – which is the existing condition at Chalmette during much of the year.

Most building materials offer little resistance to the passage of moisture vapor. This is particularly true for the Malus-Beauregard House whose exterior walls are constructed of unusually permeable brick and whose slab floor sits only 18 inches above the high water table. Without the installation of a vapor barrier, cooling the Malus-Beauregard House’s interior spaces will draw moisture vapor from the humid outside air and underlying saturated soil through its walls and floor. When this humid air comes into contact with the cool surfaces inside the structure, it will condense from gas to liquid and collect on the interior wall surfaces and interior furnishings. The constant presence of moisture on these surfaces will cause unacceptable damage to both the wall and furniture finishes. Over time, uncontrolled condensation may also promote conditions favorable to mold and fungus growth which could deteriorate the wooden beams and joists supporting the structure’s upper levels and exterior porches.

Placing a vapor barrier on the outer surfaces of the structure’s brick walls, though technically feasible, would necessitate covering or replacing the brick walls. Adding a vapor barrier to interior spaces would require the construction of a ventilated interior wall system – essentially an interior shell between the exterior walls and interior spaces. Installing a ventilated wall system would be

problematic on the restored first floor but could be carried off with somewhat less impact on the upper levels. The expense associated with installing such a system would be substantially higher than traditional construction and very difficult to justify in a cost-benefit analysis.

The structural integrity of the Malus-Beauregard House has been examined by NPS engineers and architects. Overall, the building is structurally sound. The upper level framework of the building was never designed to support large groups of people and NPS estimates suggest that no more than 20 persons can be safely accommodated on the second and third levels at one time.

Given the likelihood that returning air conditioning to the Malus-Beauregard House will prove impracticable, the GMP/DCP planning and design team will explore the potential of using humidity resistant reproduction period furniture in some or all of the home's interior spaces.

CBTF Recommendation 4D

“Reactivating of the Little Colonels, who wore ante-bellum period dresses and served as docents at the house in the past, would further enhance the use of the house and be an interesting visitor attraction.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 4D

The NPS agrees that programs featuring persons dressed in period appropriate clothing greatly enhance the understanding of historical events among our visitors and serve as a significant tourism attraction. The park interpretive staff welcomes the participation of volunteers of all ages and its long and successful history of supporting interpretive programs that involve persons dressed in period clothing speaks to the park's strong commitment to this form of education and communication. Presently, the NPS planning and design team is considering a variety of alternatives in the GMP/DCP that provide additional opportunities for interested persons to actively participate in these types of “living-history” programs. Historic areas such as the reconstructed rampart and Malus-Beauregard House are ideal locations for such programs.

However, with due respect for the historical importance of the late antebellum period in St. Bernard Parish, the park's interpretive program must remain focused on educating visitors about events associated with the Battle of New Orleans in 1815. Clothing fashions typically worn by persons in 1815 were significantly different than those worn by persons in the 1860s. Persons dressed in late ante-bellum period clothing, as were the “Little Colonels,” would confuse rather than educate visitors about the park's period of significance.

CBTF Recommendation 5A

“The rampart and cannons are the visual reference points that connect the battle to the visitor's experience. It would be beneficial to purchase cannon for every gun emplacement in the ramparts.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 5A

The addition of historically accurate artillery pieces would help communicate the significance and magnitude of the battle to visitors. However, when contemplating the placement of additional artillery pieces, one must also consider the cost of acquisition (reproduction cannons typically range between \$25,000 and \$50,000) and the need to determine accurate historic dimensions of the rampart at the time of the battle. In response, the park will take the following actions:

1. Identify and undertake the archival and archeological research needed to determine historically accurate dimensions and materials used to construct the rampart as well as the locations and dimensions of the various gun embrasures positioned along the rampart.
2. Acquire historically accurate artillery pieces as funding allows.
3. Analyze a variety of alternative strategies to reconstruct portions of the rampart and include the addition of historically accurate artillery pieces in the GMP/DCP.

4. Provide an opportunity for public comment on the range of alternatives and consider, in good faith, all recommendations or suggestions for improvement.
5. The range of alternatives considered, potential environmental impacts, and the NPS recommended action will be documented and justified in the final GMP/DCP.

CBTF Recommendation 5B

“Wooden timbers should be replaced in the ramparts.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 5B

Funding to replace the existing wooden battens of the rampart has been obtained. However, replacing the battens has been delayed pending additional data gathering and consideration of a wider range of potential options in the GMP/DCP.

The planning and design team is currently re-examining the most current archeological information to gain a clearer understanding of the rampart’s historic dimensions and the precise locations of gun embrasures. Potential construction and maintenance costs are also an important consideration. A recommendation about the most suitable construction materials will be included in the GMP/DCP.

Please also refer also to NPS Action 5A.

CBTF Recommendation 5C

“The height of the ramparts should be increased.”

NPS Action for Recommendation for Recommendation 5C

Please refer to NPS Actions 5A and 5B.

CBTF Recommendation 5D

“Audio or multi-media stations on the ramparts should be added. More information should include the Naval segments of the campaign. Much of the larger story needs to be interpreted. Some specific points stressed would be the context of the entire campaign in St. Bernard Parish, the effect of the battle on the nation, and why control of the Port of New Orleans was so significant to the nation.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 5D

The use of a wide variety of potential alternative interpretive media techniques has been expressed by park staff and stakeholders during the public consultation phase of the GMP/DCP. In response, the park will take the following actions:

1. Fully explore the CBTF’s recommendations along with recommendations documented during scoping about alternative ways to interpret the rampart, naval actions, regional and national contexts, and other battle related events in the GMP/DCP.
2. Describe the potential options and provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the range of design options. Consider all comments, ideas, recommendations, and suggestions for improvement, in good faith, and incorporate them into the alternatives as appropriate.
3. Document the range of alternatives considered, potential environmental impacts, and the NPS recommended action in the Chalmette Battlefield GMP/DCP.

CBTF Recommendation 5E

“The flag pole should be relocated and refurbished and should fly the 15 star flag.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 5E

The park currently flies the historic 15-star flag on special occasions and the contemporary 50-star flag on other days. We believe flying the 15-star flag should reflect a consideration of its relationship to the historic scene.

Several alternative locations for the flag pole are being considered in the GMP/DCP. At this point, it is expected that the frequency of flying the 15-star flag will increase with proximity to major historic

resource elements. That is, a flag pole at a new contemporary visitor center would likely fly the 15-star flag only on special occasions and a flag pole associated with interpreting the reconstructed rampart might fly the 15-star flag almost exclusively. The planning and design team will remain open to further suggestions on this issue as the GMP/DCP planning process continues.

The CBTF's recommendation on this issue echoes and reinforces similar advice received from other park stakeholders during public scoping meetings for the GMP/DCP. In response, the park will take the following actions:

1. The NPS planning and design team will develop a range of alternative flag pole locations in the GMP/DCP.
2. The park will provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the alternative locations and, in good faith, take into consideration all recommendations or suggestions for each alternative being considered.
3. A final recommendation for relocating the flag pole will be presented and the rationale for that decision justified in the final GMP/DCP.

CBTF Recommendation 5F

“An interpretation of the flank movements of the British could be available.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 5F

We agree. However, space limitations at the existing visitor center prevent the installation of large interpretive displays on this subject at the present time. Please also refer to NPS Action 1G and 5D.

CBTF Recommendation 6A

“The Task Force should be a permanent advisory committee consisting of Task Force Members whereby regular meetings are scheduled and issues addressed that the Park Superintendent is required to attend.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 6A

The CBTF successfully completed its mission and submitted a final report before its charter expired on August 23, 2004. The park does not have the authority to create a new task force or advisory group.

Guided by the Federal Advisory Commission Act (FACA), the project manager for the Chalmette Battlefield GMP/DCP will continue to consult with members of the CBTF as private citizens and work, in good faith, to incorporate the recommendations of the CBTF into the decision making process.

The Superintendent of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve will propose a one day annual meeting between park managers and the St. Bernard Parish President and other parish government officials to coordinate planning efforts, exchange information and ideas, and identify issues of mutual interest or concern. The Superintendent will outline her proposal in a letter to the parish President by January 1, 2005.

CBTF Recommendation 6B

“Reevaluate the mission statement of the park addressing not only how the park should be historically interpreted, but also how to promote the importance of the events in an interesting manner, creating an atmosphere whereby visitors want to return.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 6B

Each unit of the National Park System is provided guidance for how it is to be managed by the Presidential proclamation or Congressional legislation that authorizes and establishes it. The proclamation or legislation creating a park unit is further interpreted by the NPS and expressed as its mission. Park missions are composed of three kinds of statements: mission, purpose, and significance which collectively provide the foundation for sound decision-making at the park.

Park mission statements for the CNBC are currently being reevaluated as part of the GMP/DCP planning process. The revised statements below were shared with the public in a February 2004 newsletter, during public meetings, and via the park web site.

Mission Statement:

The Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve is dedicated to commemorating the lives and stories of those soldiers and civilians who participated in the Battle of New Orleans in 1815. Their legacy and contribution to American independence is honored through the interpretation of historic and contemporary cultural resources at the Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery.

Purpose Statements:

Purpose statements reaffirm the reasons for which the park was set aside as part of the National Park System. They are intended to document NPS's assumptions about what the park's establishing legislation really means so that those assumptions can be understood by others.

The purpose of Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery is:

- To honor and commemorate those who fought and died to preserve American independence at the Battle of New Orleans.
- To care for and manage the archeological artifacts, historic structures, and other objects of historic and scientific importance for the benefit of future generations through preservation, interpretation, education, and inspiration.

Significance Statements:

Significance statements clearly describe the regional, national, or global significance of those park resources that preserve a portion of America's heritage. Significance statements help the NPS identify what is most important about the park and prioritize the allocation of limited funding and staff resources accordingly.

The Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery is significant because it:

- Contains archeological and cultural landscape remnants of one of the most significant battlefields of the War of 1812.
- Commemorates a dramatic turning point in the development of the United States where European influence on the Mississippi River was ended and the path for western migration and settlement opened.
- Is associated with the military actions of Andrew Jackson who, as a result of his stunning victory at the Battle of New Orleans, became a national hero and began his political journey to the 7th U.S. Presidency.
- Honors and memorializes the military service of over 10 generations of American soldiers.

To further address this and related recommendations about mission statements, the park will undertake the following actions:

- The planning and design team will continue to solicit public comment on the revised statements and consider, in good faith, all recommendations or suggestions for improvements to the statements as part of the public scoping requirement.
- Revised mission statements will be documented in the GMP/DCP.

CBTF Recommendation 6C

“Archeological resources, although not a visible resource, are indeed present and should be interpreted even if only by wayside exhibits.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 6C

The park joins the CBTF in acknowledging the presence and historic significance of archeological resources at the CNBC. A variety of interpretive methods to highlight these important resources are being explored in the alternative development phase of the Chalmette Battlefield GMP/DCP.

CBTF Recommendation 6D

“This advisory committee and or Task Force should not be disbanded until another advisory committee is authorized or appointed.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 6D

Please refer to NPS Actions 1F, 4A, and 6A.

CBTF Recommendation 7A

“Incorporated in the permanent advisory committee would be a plan to meet the needs and requests of groups that want to use the park for various activities.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 7A

Please also refer to NPS Actions 1F, 4A, and 6A.

CBTF Recommendation 7B

“Information of upcoming events should be communicated to volunteers.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 7B

We agree that communication between the park and all park stakeholders, including volunteers, is important. Upcoming events at the CNBC are continuously highlighted in the semi annual park newspaper, on the park web site, and via special flyers at the information desk located in the visitor center. Other methods of communication, must, of course, reflect a consideration of staff time and fund availability and will continue to be considered on a case by case basis.

Please also refer to NPS Actions 1B, 1F, and 10B for additional actions intended to enhance communication between the park and park stakeholders.

CBTF Recommendation 7C

“ROTC should be apprentices of the living history volunteers so that they can be properly trained in the interpretation techniques regarding this battle.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 7C

2005 is the fourth year that the park has partnered with New Orleans schools to train local high school JROTC cadets to portray soldiers and civilians from the Battle of New Orleans during living history events at the Chalmette Battlefield and elsewhere. The free men of color of New Orleans formed two battalions that fought during the battle and were noted for their excellent marksmanship.

To be successful, interpretive and educational programs at the park must continue to be based on current scholarship and research about the history, science, and condition of park resources as well as research about the needs, expectations, and behavior of visitors. To accomplish this, a dialogue must be established and maintained among interpreters, education specialists, resource managers, scientists, curators, archeologists, sociologists, ethnographers, historians, and other experts for the purpose of offering the most current and accurate programs to the public.

Within the limits imposed by funding and personnel, the park interpretive staff will continue to be available and eager to engage in a constructive dialogue with all persons whose perspectives may enhance the park’s interpretive programs. However, to ensure quality control and the appropriateness of interpretive programs at the park, NPS policy requires that the park’s interpretive staff be involved

in the planning, approval, training, monitoring, and evaluation of all interpretive services provided by others at the park.

CBTF Recommendation 8A

“Coordinate a cooperative effort transit system with the St. Bernard Urban Rapid Transit (SBURT) and Regional Transit Authority (RTA) in New Orleans. This would allow a convenient method of transit for visitors to access the National Park in addition to the river boat.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 8A

The park joins the CBTF in acknowledging the potential benefit of a cooperative transportation arrangement and will explore potential options with SBURT, RTA, and private coach operators as part of the GMP/DCP alternative development process.

CBTF Recommendation 9A

“Allowing the park to be used before and after park hours would offer recreational opportunities such as cycling, jogging, walking, and bird watching.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 9A

The Chalmette Battlefield has historically been used for a variety of compatible community recreation uses. Park managers have no desire to restrict access to the park outside of normal operating hours as long as these activities continue to contribute to the overall mission of the park and do not negatively affect park resources or the fundamental historic integrity of the site. Recreational activities such as skate boarding, sun bathing, kite flying, driver’s training, and off road bicycle riding represent the types of recreational activities that would be considered inappropriate at any time because of their potentially negative impact to the historic scene. Visitors in the Chalmette National Cemetery will continue to be encouraged to conduct themselves in a manner befitting the solemn and dignified nature of the site.

CBTF Recommendation 9B

“The park should be available for special public events.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 9B

Please refer to NPS Action 1F.

CBTF Recommendation 10A

“The Chalmette National Battlefield and the Chalmette National Cemetery would have its own personnel to address the issues of maintaining the facilities.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 10A

Please refer to NPS Action 2A

CBTF Recommendation 10B

“Local concerns unique to the park would be addressed on a regular basis.”

NPS Action for Recommendation 10B

Improved communication between the park and its neighbors is fundamental to successfully addressing this recommendation. The park will enhance its ability to communicate and respond to the concerns of its local stakeholders with the following actions:

1. Guided by the Federal Advisory Commission Act (FACA), the project manager for the Chalmette Battlefield GMP/DCP will continue to consult with members of the CBTF as private citizens and work, in good faith, to incorporate the recommendations of the CBTF into the decision making process.
2. The Superintendent of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve will propose a one day annual meeting between park managers and the St. Bernard Parish President and other parish government officials to coordinate planning efforts, exchange information and ideas,

and identify issues of mutual interest or concern. The Superintendent will outline her proposal in a letter to the parish President by January 1, 2005.

CBTF Recommendation 11A

“Through a joint effort with local, state, and federal agencies, exhibits and literature concerning Louisiana coastal erosion issues could be available at the joint local and federal visitor center at the Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette Cemetery site.”

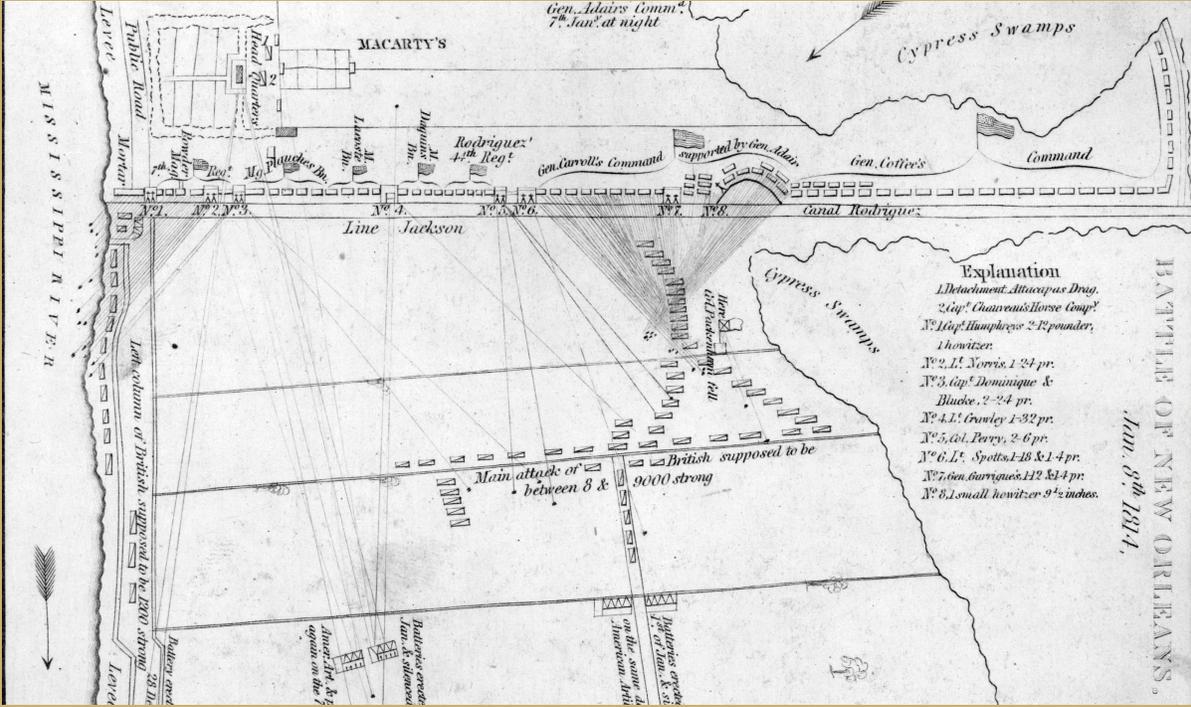
NPS Action for Recommendation 11A

The park shares the CBTF’s concern about coastal erosion in Louisiana and will incorporate this suggestion into one or more of the alternatives analyzed in the GMP/DCP.

Conclusion

The NPS extends its sincere appreciation to those government officials, business leaders, and park neighbors who participated as task force members over the past 24 months. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of Chairperson Elizabeth McDougall and Vice Chairperson Bonnie Pepper Cook whose leadership and commitment to partnership were essential to completing the work of the task force. The recommendations contained in this action plan and the task force final report serve admirably as a reminder of the many benefits of cooperative decision making and our mutual commitment to good stewardship of the historic resources that make Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery and Chalmette Parish such special places. We look forward with great anticipation to the continued involvement of those who served on the task force and other park stakeholders as we work, together, to complete the park’s GMP/DCP and prepare for the bicentennial anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans in 2015.

APPENDIX D: PUBLIC SCOPING AND AGENCY CONSULTATION



SCOPING NEWSLETTERS

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery
General Management Plan Amendment and Development Concept Plan



Two Public Meetings Scheduled for May 5th to Discuss Preliminary Concept Designs

Drawing from the ideas and recommendations you shared with us during the past year, the National Park Service (NPS) has developed three preliminary design concepts for the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery. Just to be sure we're on the right track, the NPS would like to share these concepts with you and ask for any additional advice and recommendations you might have to improve them.

Two public meetings will be held on May 5th in Chalmette. The first meeting will take place from 11 am to 2 p.m. at the Chalmette Battlefield Visitor Center and the second from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Council Chamber of the St. Bernard Parish Government Complex.

The early meeting at the Battlefield Visitor Center will use the open house meeting format. Open house

meetings are designed to promote informal information sharing and dialogue among park stakeholders and NPS planners. Meeting participants may come and go at their leisure anytime during the session. Open-house meetings do not generally include a prepared presentation. Instead, a series of information stations will be set up in the multi-purpose room where visitors may view large scale drawings of the concepts and share their ideas, questions, and concerns directly with NPS representatives.

The 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. meeting at the Parish Government Complex will include a 30 minute presentation of the concepts by NPS representatives. A question and answer session will follow the formal presentation. More information about the concepts and public meetings are presented inside this newsletter.

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Friends,

Much progress has been made on the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery GMP and DCP since our last meeting in January, 2004. Our work is going well because we have received valuable input from you. In particular, we would like to extend a special thank-you to members of the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force for their assistance in this important work.

The NPS has refined your recommendations and ideas into three preliminary conceptual designs. At this stage of the planning process, the designs are only intended to encourage constructive discussion about the relative advantages and disadvantages of different approaches. You are invited help us improve these concepts by attending one of the public meetings on May 5th.

As always, we welcome your thoughts and ideas. Comments need not be limited to the designs we have come up with. Feel free to suggest additional approaches at one of the public meetings or in writing if you would like. A postage paid response form is enclosed in this newsletter for those who are unable to attend a public meeting but would still like an opportunity to contribute their ideas to the planning process.

I hope to see you at one of our public meetings on May 5th in Chalmette.

Best regards,

Geraldine Smith, Superintendent
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

Two Public Meetings on May 5th:

- 11-2pm @ Chalmette Battlefield Visitor Ctr.
- 6-8pm @ St. Bernard Parish Gov't Complex



Elizabeth McDougall, Chairperson of the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force (right) and Tim Bemisderfer of the National Park Service endorse the Task Force's Final Report.

Full story on page 2

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National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Contact Information:

Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery
GMP Amendment and DCP

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Web Site: www.nps.gov/sero/planning

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



Chalmette Battlefield Task Force Members

Front row, left to right:

Mrs. George W. Davis, Mr. Alvin W. Guillot, Ms. Geraldine Smith (Superintendent), Ms. Elizabeth McDougall (Chairperson), and Ms. Bonnie Pepper Cook (Vice Chairperson).

Back row, left to right:

Mr. Anthony A Fernandez, Jr., Ms. Faith Moran, Mr. Eric Cager, Mr. Tim Bemisderfer (NPS Designated Officer), Mr. Drew Heaphy, and Colonel John F. Pugh, Jr.

Not in picture: Michael Varnado

The Task Force's Final Report and corresponding NPS Action Plan are available on the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery GMP/DCP project web site. Point your web browser to www.nps.gov/sero/planning.

Chalmette Battlefield Task Force Completes Final Report

The NPS would like to express its sincere appreciation to each member of the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force for their active participation and valuable contributions to this project. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of Chairperson Elizabeth McDougall and Vice Chairperson Bonnie Pepper Cook whose leadership and commitment to partnership were essential to completing the work of the task force.

The Chalmette Battlefield Task Force was designated a federal advisory committee by the Secretary of the Interior on August 23rd, 2002. The purpose of the task force, as stated in its charter, was to provide the NPS with recommendations for potential improvements to the artifacts and facilities within the boundary of the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery. Members of the task force were appointed from a wide range of federal, state, and local government agencies, non government organizations, and local stakeholders. Task force meetings were held every other month for a period of 24 months at either the park or the St. Bernard Government Complex. Members gathered information about site conditions at the park through site inspections and dialogue with local stakeholders and park personnel. After their investigation was complete, task force members created and refined a list of draft recommendations.

Task force members documented their refined recommendations in a Final Report completed in August, 2004. A corresponding Action Plan was prepared by the NPS to show how the Task Force's recommendations will be addressed. Copies of the Task Force Final Report and NPS Action Plan are available on the project website (www.nps.gov/sero/planning). Both reports serve admirably as a reminder of the many benefits of cooperative

decision making and our mutual commitment to good stewardship of the historic resources that make Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery and Chalmette Parish such special places.

The NPS looks forward with great anticipation to the continued involvement of those who served on the task force and other park stakeholders as we work, together, to complete the parks GMP and DCP and prepare for the bicentennial anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans in 2015.

<i>Project Timetable</i>	
Date	Public Involvement
Spring 2005 Refine preliminary design concepts	Newsletter, response form, public review, public meetings
Summer 2005 Refine preliminary alternatives including PMZs and site design schematic	Newsletter, response form, public review, public meetings
Fall - Winter 2005 Prepare and publish draft plan and EIS	Public distribution of draft plan, 60-day official comment period, response form, public review, public meetings
Spring 2006 Prepare and publish final plan and EIS	Public distribution of final plan, 30-day official comment period, response form, public review, public meetings, and Record of Decision

Project Update

General Management Plan Amendments

A General Management Plan (GMP) describes a vision for the future of a park and a practical framework for decision making and guides park managers on how to best protect park resources, provide for quality visitor experiences, and manage visitation and visitor use. A successful GMP identifies goals based on the legislative intent of the park, analyzes existing conditions and future possibilities, and recommends the best course of action to accomplish these goals.

The most significant product of a GMP is the creation and placement of prescriptive management zones (PMZs) within the park. PMZs are similar to the zoning ordinances often used by local governments to locate appropriate types and densities of development in suitable locations and separate incompatible uses from each other. NPS planners use PMZs in parks to achieve very similar goals.

The PMZs defined in the park's current GMP are outdated. Based in part on the feedback provided about the preliminary concepts, the existing PMZs at the park will be modified and reapplied to reflect current and anticipated conditions. The adjusted PMZs will be presented with the refined concepts at our next public meeting this summer.

Development Concept Plans

A Development Concept Plan (DCP) makes a more detailed analysis of a structure or specific area within a park than a GMP. While schematic in nature, the goal of a DCP is to provide enough detail about site design and facility development so that a future team of architects and engineers can prepare the construction documents and specifications to design and create them. The preliminary concepts discussed in this newsletter represent a significant step towards completing a DCP for the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery.

What we heard from you

The following paragraphs summarize many of the comments and suggestions we heard during the information gathering phase of our planning process.

Park Entrances on St. Bernard Highway

Stakeholders almost unanimously agree that the Battlefield and Cemetery vehicle entrances on St. Bernard Highway need significant upgrades. Recommended improvements include new landscaping, redesigned walls/fences/gates, accent lighting, and an appropriate entrance sign. Because both entrances cross an active rail spur, potential improvements must never impair the visibility of train engineers or the ability of trains to cross the site safely.

Visitor Center

Stakeholders were very clear that they feel the existing visitor center is inadequate. Construction of a new facility at a different location or expansion of the existing structure were both suggested as possible solutions. The need for a new or expanded facility was most often justified by the desire to provide additional indoor space for interpretive displays, program staging, classroom activities, meetings, bookstore, and administrative office space.

Historic Character of Battlefield

Current conditions on the Battlefield bear little resemblance to conditions on the day of the battle. While recognizing that it would be nearly impossible to recreate the battlefield landscape in its entirety, most stakeholders expressed a keen desire for a stronger connection between existing conditions and the landscape as it appeared during the period of significance. Recommended improvements include removing portions of the auto tour loop to increase the contiguous battlefield



Diagrams of the preliminary concepts are shown on pages 7 through 10 of this newsletter

area, rehabilitating or reconstructing the rampart and Rodriguez Canal to better reflect their historic dimensions, placing additional historically accurate artillery along the rampart, maintaining vegetation in ways that more accurately reflect historic conditions, acknowledging the historic drainage canals which significantly influenced British battle tactics, and removing trees from battlefield areas of high interpretive value.

Malus-Beauregard House

Stakeholders expressed profound disappointment over existing conditions at the Malus-Beauregard House. Recommendations for improving the structure ranged over a variety of potential alternative uses such as placing period reproduction furnishings in each room and use as a small visitor center, administrative office, multi-purpose interpretive space, and/or storage space. Rehabilitating the landscape immediately surrounding the structure to the period of architectural significance was generally supported by stakeholders. Readers interested in a more detailed assessment and discussion of existing conditions at the Malus-Beauregard House are encouraged to read the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force Final Report and NPS Action Plan.

Historic Character of National Cemetery

Stakeholders and park staff expressed much concern about the deteriorating condition of the cemetery wall and the tendency of headstones to shift position over time. The park conducted a comprehensive assessment of those and other conditions at the cemetery in 2002. After considerable study and consultation with structural experts and local stakeholders, a strategy to rehabilitate the cemetery walls and standards for when to reset and align headstones was determined and published in 2003. The standards adopted in the assessment will be adopted and incorporated into the GMP Amendment and DCP.

Considerable progress has been made over the past few years to replant trees that have been damaged or destroyed by storms. The type and location of these trees is being guided by recommendations in the 1999 NPS Cultural Landscape Report. The standards and guidelines for rehabilitating vegetation in the national cemetery will be adopted and incorporated into the GMP Amendment and DCP.

Stakeholders interested in viewing the 2003 Cemetery Assessment Report or the 1999 Cultural Landscape Report should contact Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve (504-589-3882).

Many stakeholders commented on the appearance of parked maintenance vehicles and bulk materials like wood or stone near the cemetery entrance. While acknowledging the need for these items, many persons asked whether a more appropriate location to store them might be identified.

Vehicle Parking and Circulation

Some stakeholders indicated that the large number of vehicles often parked outside the entrance gates at the Battlefield and Cemetery, particularly after 5 p.m., is unsightly and potentially unsafe. While few ideas to resolve the issue were offered, the level of concern seemed significant enough to consider options that might improve the situation.

A safety concern was expressed about potential conflicts between people and vehicles on the auto tour loop. While the present number of visitors and vehicles simultaneously using the tour loop makes the situation manageable, an increase in visitation might substantially elevate the risk of accidents. Pull-in automobile parking areas along the tour loop were thought to increase the risk of accidents by forcing drivers to back out into oncoming traffic and pedestrians. Some stakeholders suggested that vehicles and pedestrians should be separated by creating an interpretive trail system for people only.

Battle and Non-battle Related Interpretive Themes

Many stakeholders commented that the regional and national contexts of the Battle of New Orleans were not being effectively interpreted. Most recommendations for interpreting battlefield events at Chalmette within their larger contexts were generally associated with recommendations for additional interpretive venues and specifically associated with recommendations for a larger visitor center. A strong emphasis was placed on the important role local and regional partners could play in achieving this goal.

There was strong interest by some stakeholders to identify appropriate ways of acknowledging the park's non-battle related cultural resources. Most notably, the Chalmette National Cemetery which was established in 1864 to honor Federal soldiers killed in the Civil War; the Malus-Beauregard House (c. 1835); and the archeological remains of Fazendeville, an African-American community that existed on portions of the site from the 1870s until 1964 were mentioned as worthy of more focused interpretive attention.

Recreational Use

The limited availability of walking and hiking trails in the local community has caused the primary visitor experience for many local residents to

assume an increasingly recreational tone. While acknowledging the responsibility of park managers to protect the historic integrity of the site, it is also important to recognize that the park contains a large and scenic land base that is attractive to those who might wish to use park resources for activities not directly related to its historic significance. Park managers must constantly weigh their desire to accommodate these uses against the potential for undesirable intrusions on the historic environment.

Cost and Cost Recovery

The cost of implementing improvements proposed in a GMP/DCP is a very important consideration, especially at a time when federal funds are limited and expectations high to finish some of the proposed work in time for the 200th anniversary celebration of the Battle of New Orleans in 2015. While the goals and aspirations of stakeholders should be set high, everyone must be keenly aware that high-cost proposals are at greater risk of not receiving timely funding under present fiscal circumstances.

All potential NPS projects compete for funding from a limited pool of resources. While demonstrating need and describing anticipated benefits are important considerations in this competitive process, equally important is the amount of funding needed in relationship to what is available. NPS projects that demonstrate a potential for some cost recovery stand a significantly higher chance of being funded than those that do not. Cost recovery is simply a term to describe non-federal funds generated at the park that help offset operating and other expenses associated with a proposed project. Typically such funds are generated by charging entrance or participation fees to visitors or through non-federal donations and grants. It is clear that any alternatives in the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery GMP/DCP that propose expensive improvements must also include some form of cost recovery to be viable and feasible.

British Memorial

Some stakeholders expressed an interest in exploring ways to enhance the British Memorial noting that the existing interpretive wayside is neither attractive nor particularly functional.

Park Entrance at Tour Boat Landing

A great many stakeholders noted that the arrival point for tour boat visitors is presently unattractive but has great potential for redevelopment as an overlook and orientation point. There was also broad dissatisfaction among stakeholders with the concrete stair case leading from the top of the levee to the battlefield and particular concern for the



inconvenient and unpaved route that persons with disabilities must travel as an alternate to using the stairs.

Sewage Treatment Plant

There was universal consensus among stakeholders that removing the sewage treatment plant would greatly benefit the site. We are extremely grateful and pleased to acknowledge the recent progress made by St. Bernard Parish to facilitate its removal.

What we've done so far

The NPS planning team spent much of the past year gathering information about park resources, park visitors, and the surrounding community. Hundreds of helpful suggestions were received from park staff, the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force, local and state government officials, tribal governments, and park stakeholders. The planning team convened at the park several times to analyze the variety of ideas and recommendations we received. As you can imagine, some of these ideas were mutually compatible and some were not.

Shortly after the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force submitted its final recommendations, the NPS was ready to try and synthesize all these ideas into a few central concepts. The foremost goal of this process was to create a range of concept designs that expressed the broadest range of stakeholder's recommendations while remaining faithful to the central mission of the park and core values of the NPS. We would like to take this opportunity to share our preliminary concepts with you and ask for your comments and recommendations to improve them.

What's Next?

Your continued participation is critical to the success of this planning effort. We encourage you to attend one of the public presentations of the concepts on May 5th and to share your thoughts and concerns directly with the NPS planning team.

Continued on Page 6

Preliminary Concepts

Preliminary designs at this stage of the planning process are not intended to be perfect. They are, however, intended to express a wide range of possible management directions and encourage constructive discussion about the relative advantages and disadvantages of each approach.

Drawings describing the existing conditions at the park and the three preliminary concepts appear on pages 7 through 10 of this newsletter. We encourage you to review the concepts and forward any ideas, concerns, suggestions, or changes you think might improve them. Please note that your comments are not limited to these concepts alone. Feel free to suggest additional approaches or designs if you would like. A postage-paid response form is included with this newsletter for your convenience.

Elements Common to All Concepts

The following elements are included in all three preliminary concepts:

- Additional studies and archeological investigations would be conducted to confirm historic dimensions of the rampart, gun emplacements, and Rodriguez Canal.
- Additional studies and archeological investigations would be conducted to identify unknown but potentially significant archeological resources prior to any ground disturbing activity.
- The rampart would be reconstructed to its historic height and width including gun emplacements. Historically accurate reproduction artillery would be placed at each gun emplacement.
- The Rodriguez Canal would be rehabilitated to its historic width and depth. Storm water runoff would be drained through the canal to an existing out-fall on St. Bernard Highway.
- The Malus-Beauregard House and its historic landscape would be rehabilitated and incorporated into the park's interpretive program. The building would not be air conditioned. Reproduction furnishings could be used.
- A new levee overlook would provide visitors who arrive by boat or auto with interpretive vistas of the battlefield, river, and New Orleans skyline. Universal access would be provided between top of levee and battlefield.

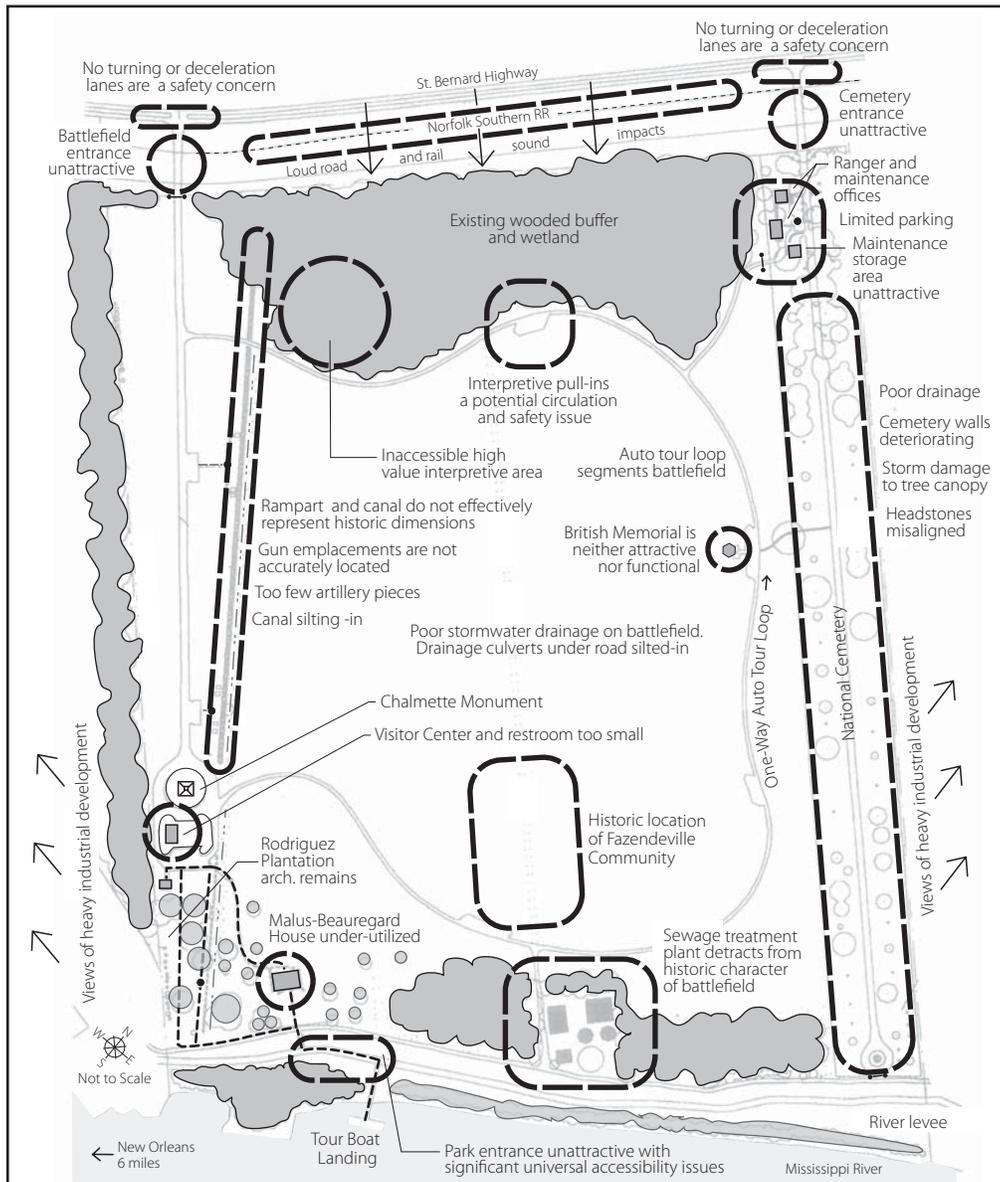
- Public access for walking would still be permitted after normal operating hours until dusk. After hours parking would be restricted to the new parking area near battlefield entrance gate.
- The existing sewage treatment plant would be removed.
- The battlefield and cemetery entrances on St. Bernard Highway would be landscaped to improve the park's visibility and appeal.
- New pedestrian only interpretive trails would enhance opportunities for a self-guided interpretive experience and improve visitor safety by separating vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- Pull-in parking areas on the tour loop would be replaced with pull-thru configurations.
- Cemetery walls, headstones, trees, and other landscape elements would be managed as specified in the 2003 NPS Cemetery Assessment Report and 1999 NPS Cultural Landscape Report.
- A rostrum (gazebo-like structure) would be constructed inside the cemetery and used for interpretive programs and special events.

Continued from Page 5

The planning team is scheduled to meet again formally in June to review all the comments received about the preliminary concepts. At that time, each concept will be reevaluated and adjustments made as necessary to reflect your input. PMZs will be developed and placed upon the map to guide future managers. We plan to share the revised alternatives with the public in late July or early August to make sure we are on the right track.

Using any additional input and guidance we receive from those meetings, a draft GMP\DCP and Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared and presented to the public for a 60-day official public comment period. The target for public release of the draft plan is Fall or Winter 2005.

The planning team will meet again in December 2005 to reconsider the alternatives based on any new substantial input and, if necessary, make final adjustments to the alternatives. A Final GMP\DCP and Environmental Impact Statement will then be prepared. The target for public release of the final plan is Spring 2006.



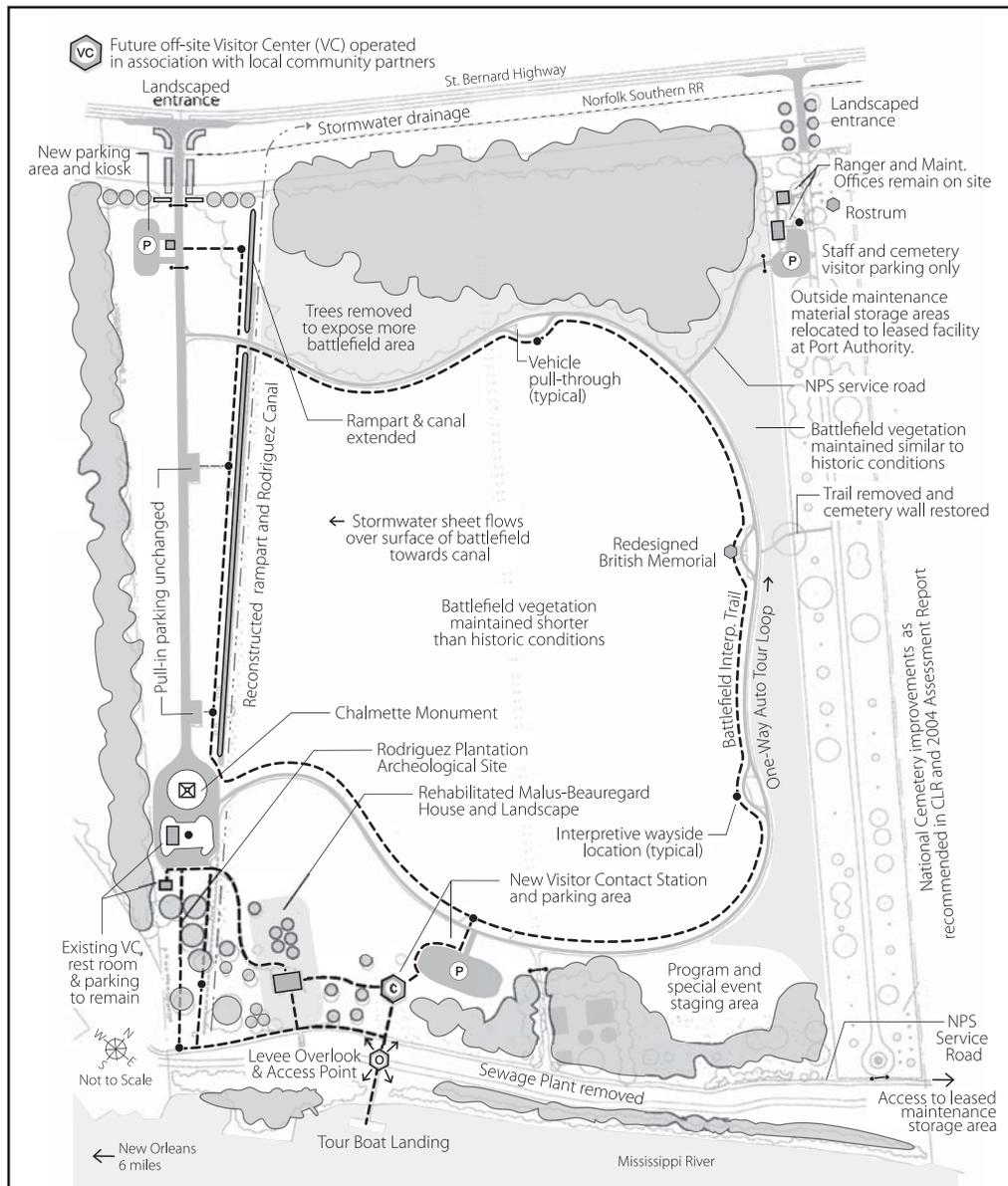
Map of Existing Conditions

This figure shows the existing layout of park infrastructure and highlights a few of the major concerns expressed by park stakeholders. It is not meant to be a comprehensive site analysis and shows only a small number of the many ideas and recommendations we received during the information gathering phase of our planning study.

Selected Planning and Development Issues:

- The existing Visitor Center (VC) does not support the desired level of visitor service. Proper visitor orientation is a significant issue.
- The auto tour loop road segments the battlefield and restricts stormwater drainage.
- The park's entrances on St. Bernard Hwy are hard to see and not attractive or inviting.
- The maintenance storage area diminishes historic character of the cemetery.
- The Malus-Beauregard House and its associated cultural landscape are significantly under-utilized.
- The rampart and Rodriguez canal do not adequately reflect historic conditions at the time of the Battle.
- There is a keen desire for additional self-guided and guided interpretive services. Current visitors struggle to comprehend both the scale of the battle and its significance in American history.
- Park access from the tour boat landing is not welcoming. Pedestrian access to the battlefield is difficult for persons with disabilities.

Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery

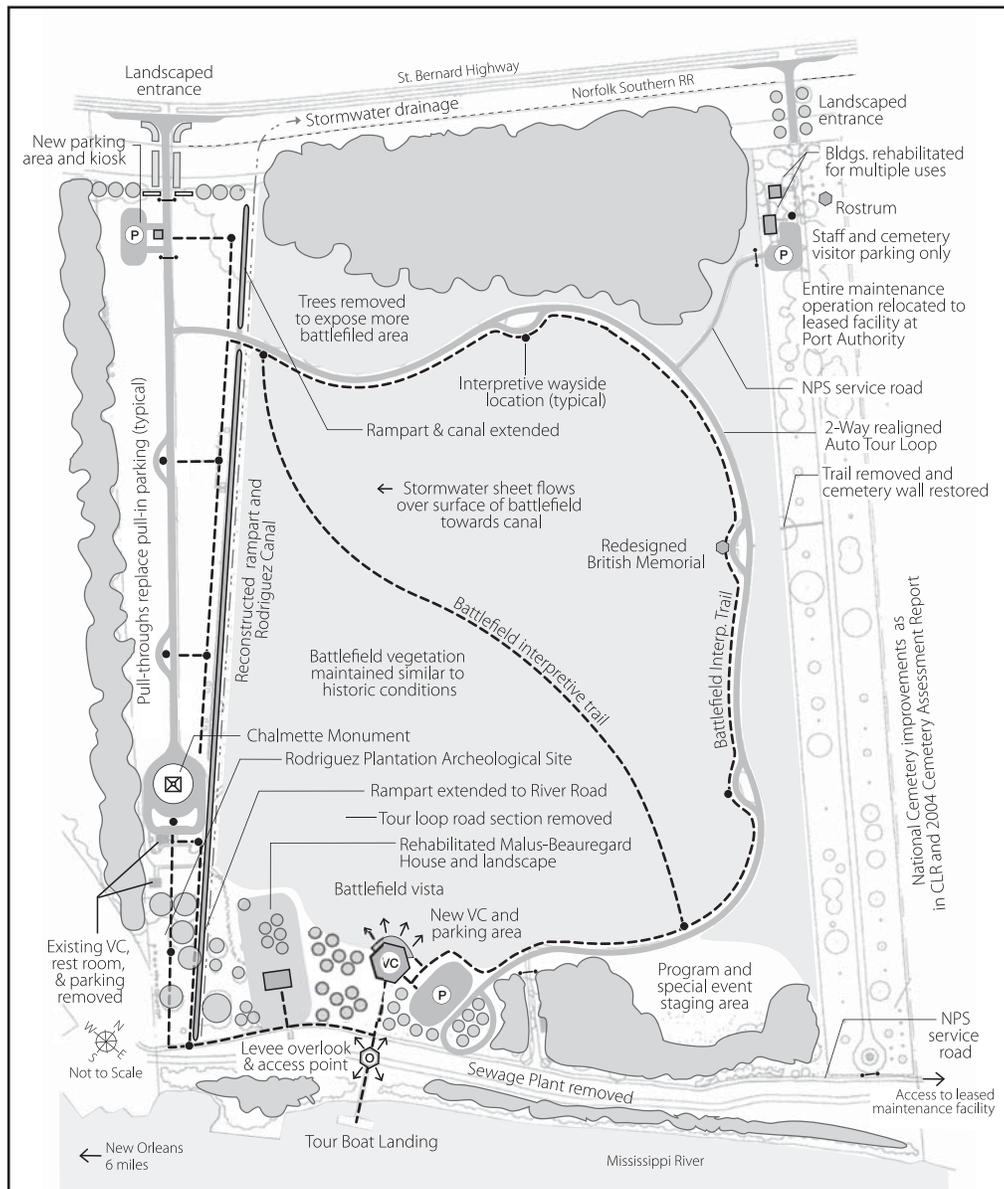


Preliminary Concept A

Concept A embraces the rich continuum of national, regional, and local history at the park. While maintaining its focus on the Battle of New Orleans, the NPS would also introduce visitors to the broader historical contexts of battle and non-battle related resources at the site. The NPS would work in close partnership with local and regional managers of related historic resources to promote cross visitation and improve access by all visitors to more historic resources than can be provided in the park alone.

Concept Highlights:

- A future off-site Visitor Center (VC) would be developed in partnership with Parish Gov't and others.
- A new visitor contact station and parking area near the tour boat landing would consolidate infrastructure and services for visitors who arrive by boat or automobile.
- Tour loop road alignment would not be changed.
- Rampart would be extended in northwest direction from tour loop to the park boundary.
- Battlefield vegetation is more manicured in appearance than other alternatives.
- Maintenance storage area moved off-site.
- Lower development and staffing costs than other alternatives.

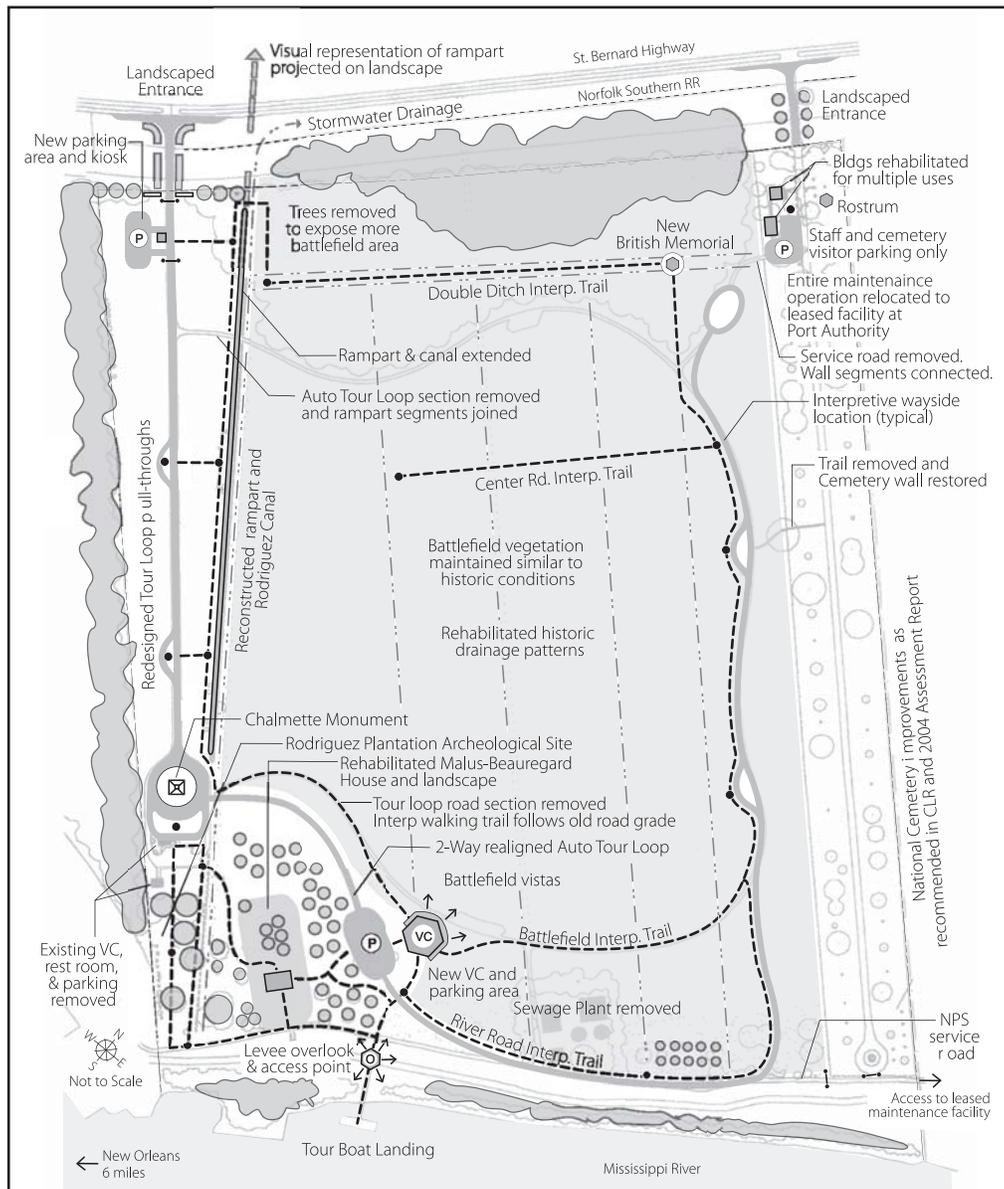


Preliminary Concept B

Concept B creates an active and dynamic interpretive environment that engages visitors both intellectually and physically. The concept significantly upgrades visitor service facilities and provides multiple opportunities for visitors to participate in self-guided and ranger or volunteer-led interpretive programs.

Concept Highlights:

- A full service Visitor Center would include space for visitor orientation, interpretive exhibits, classrooms, lectures, multi-media presentations, bookstore, and administrative offices. Consolidates visitor services at one convenient location for visitors arriving by automobile, tour bus, or tour boat.
- Existing VC and restrooms to be removed. Monument parking area redeveloped as a tour loop pull-through and drop-off area.
- Primary visitor parking area located near VC, Malus-Beauregard House, tour boat landing, and levee overlook.
- Creates the longest contiguous rampart segment of all concepts. The Park would work in cooperation with Parish Gov't and others to symbolically project rampart across St. Bernard Highway.
- Battlefield vegetation maintained to reflect historic conditions at time of battle.
- All maintenance facilities moved off-site.
- A southern section of the tour loop road would be removed and the remainder widened for two-way traffic.



Preliminary Concept C

Concept C substantially enlarges the contiguous battlefield by modifying the existing vehicle and pedestrian circulation systems. Historic drainage patterns are rehabilitated and new interpretive opportunities created by reconnecting the battlefield landscape to the Mississippi River, River Road, and levee.

Concept Highlights:

- Full service Visitor Center, amenities, and parking same as Concept B.
- Existing VC, restrooms, and parking area near monument same as Concept B.
- A northwest and southeast section of tour loop road would be removed, the south section realigned, and the remainder widened for two-way traffic.
- Unifies two rampart segments at a location where significant battle events occurred.
- Creates the largest contiguous battlefield landscape of all concepts.
- Better reflects the battlefield landscape during the colonial period by acknowledging the site's colonial drainage patterns and roadways.
- Relocates and redesigns the British Memorial.
- Accentuates the important historic relationship between Battlefield, Mississippi River, River Road, and levee.
- All maintenance facilities would be moved off-site.

Public Meeting Details

Two Meetings Scheduled for Thursday, May 5th, 2005

11 a.m. to 2 p.m. -- Open House Style Meeting

Location:

Chalmette Battlefield Visitor Center, 6806 St. Bernard Highway, Chalmette, LA 70043

Meeting Format:

Open house meetings are designed to promote informal information sharing between visitors and NPS planners. A prepared presentation by the NPS will not be part of the program and potential visitors are encouraged to come and go at their convenience anytime during the three hour meeting session.

Persons attending the Open House meeting are encouraged to visit one or more information stations to learn more about the preliminary concepts and express any ideas, questions, and concerns directly to a representative of the National Park Service.

Large scale drawings of the concepts will be on display and NPS technical experts representing a variety of discipline areas will be available to discuss details or concerns at length directly with visitors.

6 p.m. to 8 p.m. -- Presentation and Question & Answer Session

Location:

Council Chamber, St. Bernard Parish Government Complex, 8425 W. Judge Perez Drive, Chalmette, LA 70043

Meeting Format:

Representatives of the National Park Service will present a 30 minute overview of the preliminary concepts. After the formal presentation has concluded, a panel of NPS technical experts will respond to questions posed by members of the audience.

The NPS presentation will begin promptly at 6:15 so please plan to arrive early.

For additional information about the public meetings please contact Dee Landry at
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve Headquarters
Telephone: 504-589-3882 ext. 123 Email: dee_landry@nps.gov



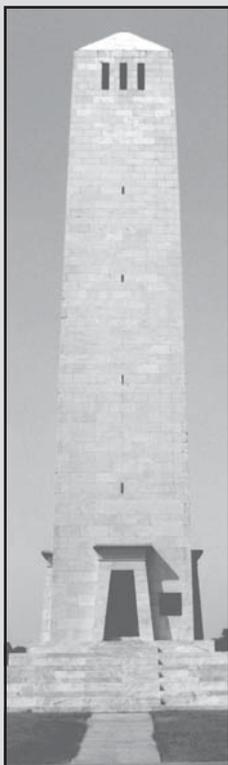
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Planning Team Leader - Chalmette GMP/DCP
National Park Service, Southeast Region
100 Alabama Street, 6th floor, 1924 Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery

Newsletter 2 / April 2005



Two Public Meetings on Thursday, May 5th, 2005

Open House Style Meeting

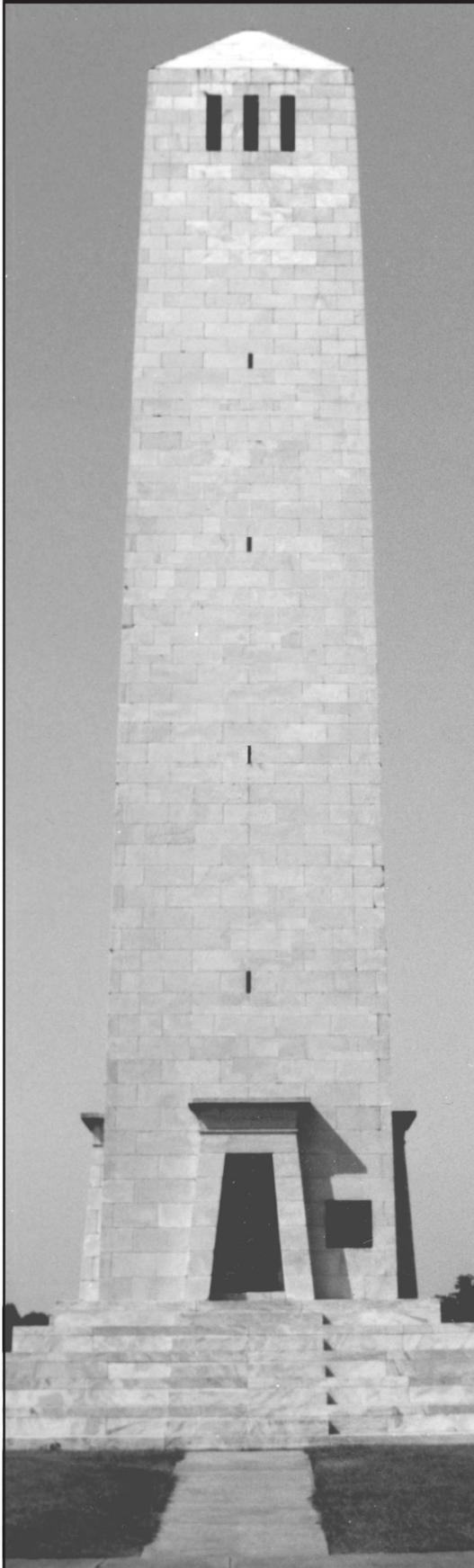
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Chalmette Battlefield Visitor Center
6806 St. Bernard Highway, Chalmette, LA 70043

Presentation and Question & Answer Session

6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Council Chamber, St. Bernard Parish Gov't Complex
8425 W. Judge Perez Drive, Chalmette, LA 70043



New Planning Study Underway at Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Friends,

For many of us, the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery holds a special place in our lives. Thousands of people visit the site each year to honor those Americans who fought at the Battle of New Orleans or served nobly in the U.S. Military and interred at the historic cemetery.

The National Park Service (NPS) is privileged to have helped preserve Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery since 1939. As we move forward into the 21st century, the NPS is undertaking a new planning study to examine potential management and development alternatives for the future. This newsletter provides a brief introduction to the planning process and describes several ways that you can be involved.

Your thoughts and ideas are important to us. How might we enhance a visitor's understanding of the park's national significance? What types of recreational activities are appropriate at the park and at what levels? How can we best work with our neighbors to address problems that affect both the park and surrounding community? What can we do to better protect and interpret the park's historic resources. What additional park facilities are needed, if any, and where should they be located?

Our goal is to develop a plan that continues to protect the park's cultural and natural resources, meets the needs of our visitors, and addresses the concerns of our neighbors. To achieve this, we will work closely with the citizens of Chalmette, the St. Bernard Parish government, other state and federal agencies, private landowners, interest groups, and the general public. The final product of this planning effort will guide management and development decisions at Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery for the next 20 years.

As always, I appreciate your interest and look forward to working with you on this very important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Geraldine Smith".

Geraldine Smith, Superintendent
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

What is planning and how will it affect the future of Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery?

Planning is a decision making process. In the National Park Service, a combined General Management Plan Amendment (GMP) and Development Concept Plan (DCP) are used to create a future vision for the park and establish a practical framework for decision making. The completed GMP amendment and DCP at Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery will describe how to best protect park resources, provide quality visitor experiences, manage visitation and visitor use, and serve as a blueprint for future park development.

The Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery GMP/DCP will be conducted by a team of NPS park managers and technical experts. Public participation will play a central role in the decision making process. The planning team will consult with other knowledgeable persons inside and outside the NPS, the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force, and any other interested groups or persons from the general public before developing its final recommendations.

As part of the study, the NPS will analyze existing conditions and future possibilities at the park. A full range of potential management and design alternatives will be developed and their impacts rigorously explored. In making decisions, the NPS will seek, to the extent possible, to reach agreement among the park staff, the NPS leadership, other agencies with jurisdiction by law or expertise, and the public on the most appropriate path forward. An environmental impact statement (EIS) will be prepared to help everyone better understand the advantages and disadvantages associated with each course of action and serve as the basis for selecting a preferred alternative.

As might be expected, some of the things that different people will want to happen at the park will be mutually compatible and others will not. The most appropriate mix of these wants will be determined by the NPS planning team based on the best information available and a systematic analysis of resource values and land uses.

What is the Chalmette Battlefield Task Force?

The Chalmette Battlefield Task Force is a Federal Advisory Commission created by the Secretary of the Interior to provide the NPS with recommendations about potential improvements to the park.

The Task Force is composed of representatives from State and local governments and citizens of St. Bernard Parish. The NPS planning team has been working closely with the Task Force to identify important management and development issues that should be addressed in the plan.

There are currently 11 persons actively serving on the Task Force:

Ms. Elizabeth McDougal, Committee Chairperson,
 Capt. Bonnie Pepper Cook, Com. Vice Chairperson
 Mr. Eric Cager
 Mrs. George W. Davis
 Mr. Anthony A. Fernandez, Jr.
 Mr. Alvin W. Guillot
 Mr. Drew Heaphy
 Ms. Faith Moran
 Mr. Paul V. Perez
 Col. John F. Pugh, Jr.
 Ms. Geraldine Smith

The Task Force met about 6 times in 2003. Its members will continue to meet until the commission's charter expires in August 2004. Most members of the Task force live and work in Chalmette or St. Bernard Parish. The NPS planning team encourages you to share any ideas or concerns freely with them. Task Force members would be delighted to bring your ideas to our attention at the next Task Force meeting.

Where are we now in the planning process?

There are typically four steps in planning: "scoping" or information gathering; alternative development and analysis; preparation and publication of a draft plan/environmental impact statement; and revision of the draft and publication of a final plan/environmental impact statement.

The planning project timetable below highlights these steps, anticipated completion dates, and additional opportunities for public involvement.

Project Timetable		
Step	Date	Public Involvement
1. Gather Information	Winter - Spring 2004	Newsletter, response form, public open house meetings
2. Develop and evaluate alternatives	Spring - Summer 2004	Newsletter, response form, public review, public meetings
3. Prepare and publish draft plan and EIS	Summer - Fall 2004	Public distribution of draft plan, response form, public review, public meetings
4. Revise and publish final plan and EIS	Winter - 2005	Newsletter, public distribution of final plan

(continued on left column of page 4)

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and PreserveNational Park Service
U.S. Department of the InteriorChalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery
General Management Plan Amendment and Development Concept Plan

ANNOUNCEMENT

General Management Plan Amendment and Development Concept Plan

Public Meetings Scheduled for Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery Planning Study

Public open house meetings will be held on January 27 and January 29, 2004 in Chalmette Louisiana.

Persons attending the meetings are encouraged to visit one or more information stations set up at the meeting location to learn about the planning process and express their ideas, questions, and concerns directly to an NPS representative. The focus of these meetings is to document the concerns, issues, expectations, or values of existing and potential visitors, park neighbors, people with traditional cultural ties to the land, park concessionaires, cooperating associations, scientists and scholars, and other governmental agencies.

Open house meetings are designed to promote informal information sharing between visitors and NPS planners. A prepared presentation by the NPS will not be part of the program and potential visitors are encouraged to come and go at their convenience anytime during the two hour meeting session.

Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations

Tuesday, January 27, 2004

Location:

Chalmette Battlefield Visitor Center, 6806 St. Bernard Highway, Chalmette, Louisiana 70043

Time:

2:00pm to 4:00pm. Come and go at your leisure, open house meeting format

Thursday, January 29, 2004

Location:

Council Chambers, St. Bernard Parish Government Complex, 8425 W. Judge Perez Drive, Chalmette, Louisiana 70043

Time:

6:00pm to 8:00pm. Come and go at your leisure, open house meeting format

For additional information please contact Dee Landry at
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve Headquarters
telephone: 504-589-3882 ext. 123 • website: www.nps.gov/jela • email: dee_landry@nps.gov

How you can participate in the planning process

Public involvement is critical to the success of this project. The planning team encourages all:

- existing and potential park visitors
- park neighbors
- people with traditional cultural ties to lands within the park
- park concessionaires
- cooperating associations
- scientists and scholars
- other government agencies

to share their comments, suggestions, concerns, issues, expectations, or ideas about future management and development options at the park.

Written Comments

We are pleased to accept written comments in any form or format you wish to submit them. Handwritten responses on plain paper will be accepted as readily as computer generated responses printed on official letterhead.

You can help us better understand your interests and concerns by answering the questions on the postage paid response form included in this newsletter. The response form is also available at various locations throughout the park and can be downloaded from the project web site (www.nps.gov/jela).

Written comments should be sent via U.S. mail to:

Planning and Compliance Division - Chalmette
Southeast Regional Office
National Park Service
100 Alabama Street, 6th Floor, 1924 Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Telephone Information

Persons interested in receiving additional newsletters, periodic email updates, or other information about the project are encouraged to call Dee Landry at 504-589-3882 ext. 123. We encourage persons with highly detailed ideas or comments to submit them in writing so they can be considered in their full context.

Public Meetings

Several public meetings will be held over the course of the project. Our first series of public meetings will be conducted in an open house format and focus on

explaining the planning process and listening to what visitors have to say about the park.

The project's first two public meetings will take place on January 27 and 29, 2004 in Chalmette, Louisiana. The meetings will be open house format and no formal presentation will be given. Instead, persons attending will be encouraged to visit one or more information stations to learn about the planning process and express their ideas, questions, and concerns directly to an NPS representative. Feel free to come and go as you wish anytime during the two hour meeting time. More information about meeting times and locations is provided on page 3 of this newsletter.

Newsletters

Several newsletters will be published to help people stay informed about public meetings, discussions, draft alternatives, and other important project information. It is easy to add your name to our mailing list. Just provide your full mailing address or email address by telephone, U.S. mail, email, or in person the next time you visit the park.

Email

Comments and questions can be submitted by email to the planning team at dee_landry@nps.gov.

Website

Point your web browser to the project web site at www.nps.gov/jela for additional information about the planning process, public meetings, newsletters, and to access other on-line information. Downloadable copies of response forms, newsletters, draft plans, and the final plan will be available from the web site as they are completed.

Park Mission

Each unit of the national park system is provided management guidance by the presidential proclamation or congressional legislation that authorizes and establishes it as a part of the national park system. This guidance is interpreted and expressed by the NPS as the park's mission.

Park mission contains three kinds of statements: mission, purpose, and significance which, collectively, establish the foundation for sound decision-making at the park. We invite you to review the following statements and let us know of any comments or concerns you may have regarding them.



Mission Statement:

The Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve is dedicated to commemorating the lives and stories of those soldiers and civilians who participated in the Battle of New Orleans in 1815. Their legacy and contribution to American independence is honored through the interpretation of historic and contemporary cultural resources at the Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery.

Purpose Statements:

Purpose statements reaffirm the reasons for which the park was set aside as part of the national park system. They are intended to document NPS’s assumptions about what the park’s establishing legislation really means so that those assumptions can be understood by others.

The purpose of Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery is:

- to honor and commemorate those who fought and died to preserve American independence at the Battle of New Orleans
- to care for and manage the archeological artifacts, historic structures, and other objects of historic and scientific importance for the benefit of future generations through preservation, interpretation, education, and inspiration

Significance Statements:

A significance statement(s) clearly describes the regional, national, or global significance of those park resources that preserve a portion of America’s heritage. Their purpose is to help the NPS identify what is most important about the park and prioritize the allocation of limited funding and staff resources accordingly.

The Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery is significant because it:

- contains archeological and cultural landscape remnants of one of the most significant battlefields of the War of 1812
- commemorates a dramatic turning point in the development of the United States where European influence on the Mississippi River was ended and the path for western migration and settlement opened
- is associated with the military actions of Andrew Jackson who, as a result of his stunning victory at the Battle of New Orleans, became a national hero and began his political journey to the 7th U.S. Presidency
- honors and memorializes the military service of over 10 generations of American soldiers

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE MEETINGS

Times, dates, and locations

Tuesday, January 27, 2004

Location:

Chalmette Battlefield Visitor Center, 6806 St.
Bernard Highway, Chalmette, Louisiana 70043

Time:

2:00pm to 4:00pm. Come and go at your leisure,
open house meeting format

Thursday, January 29, 2004

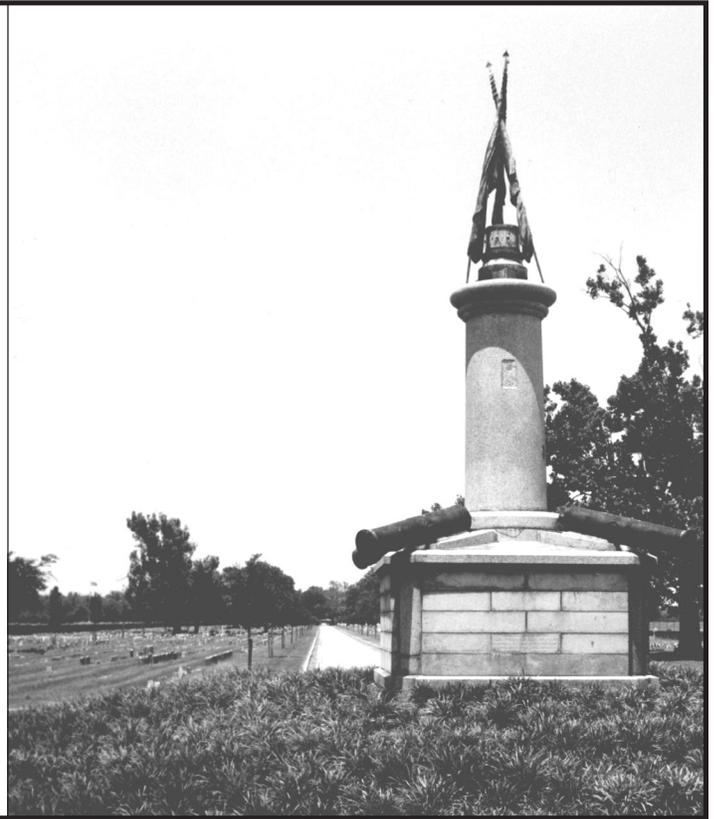
Location:

Council Chambers, St. Bernard Parish
Government Complex, 8425 W. Judge Perez
Drive, Chalmette, Louisiana 70043

Time:

6:00pm to 8:00pm. Come and go at your leisure,
open house meeting format

See page 3 of newsletter for additional details



Planning and Compliance Division - Chalmette
Southeast Regional Office
National Park Service
100 Alabama Street, 6th Floor, 1924 Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30303



**EXAMPLE OF AN AGENCY AND TRIBAL
GOVERNMENT CONSULATION LETTER**



United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
419 Decatur Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130-1035

IN REPLY REFER TO:

D18

June 8, 2009

Gib Owen
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160-0267

Dear Mr. Owen:

The National Park Service (NPS) is preparing a *Draft General Management Plan Amendment /Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment (GMPA/DCP/EA)* for the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, located just downriver from New Orleans in St. Bernard Parish (Figure 1). The purpose of this plan is to establish a 20-year management strategy for the park, and to develop a schematic site design and development program that enhances the historic environment and improves visitor service infrastructure in ways that can be implemented prior to the 2015 celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans.

The Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve consists of the Chalmette Battlefield, Chalmette Monument, Malus-Beauregard House, and Chalmette National Cemetery (Figure 2).

The GMPA/DCP/EA presents and analyzes four alternative future directions — the No-Action Alternative and Action Alternatives A, B, C — for the management and use of the Chalmette Unit. Alternative A seeks to improve park operations and visitor opportunities with minimal changes to most current unit facilities (Figure 3). Alternative B, the preferred alternative, seeks to improve park operations and enhance visitor opportunities with changes to most current unit facilities (Figure 4). The changes would be designed to provide for greater opportunities for interpretation and visitor education. Alternative C seeks to restore the historic character of the battlefield with changes to most current unit facilities (Figure 5). The changes would be designed to remove modern features and restore elements of the cultural landscape integral to the story of the battle. The environmental impacts of each alternative will be identified and assessed in the EA.

There are several proposed actions common to all three action alternatives, such as the construction of a new entrance; construction of additional parking; modifications to the tour road; paving of River Road, and several other smaller projects. Figures 3, 4, and 5 contain more detail on the proposed actions.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the proposed project and to request information you may have on resources potentially affected by the proposed action. Your response within 30 days from the date of receipt of this letter will be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact me at 504-589-3882, extension 111. Letters have also been sent to the agencies and tribal governments listed in Enclosure 1.

Send responses to:

Superintendent
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
419 Decatur Street
New Orleans, LA 70130-1035

Sincerely,

David Luchsinger
Superintendent

Enclosures:

Enclosure 1: List of Agencies and Tribal Governments
Figure 1. Regional Vicinity Map
Figure 2. Existing Conditions
Figure 3. Alternative A
Figure 4. Alternative B
Figure 5. Alternative C



United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
419 Decatur Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130-1035

IN REPLY REFER TO:

D18

June 12, 2009

Beasley Denson
Miko
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
P.O. Box 6010, Choctaw Branch
Philadelphia, MS 39350

Dear Miko Denson:

Federal regulations for the implementation of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, require consultation with federally recognized American Indian tribes (36 CFR 800.2) on a government-to-government basis, as specified in Executive Order 13175.

The administration of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve is committed to honoring in full good faith its obligations and responsibilities toward the sovereign, federally recognized Indian tribes under all United States laws, regulations, and policies. As part of my responsibility to “make a reasonable and good faith effort to identify Indian tribes...that shall be consulted in the 106 process,” I am writing to inquire if the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians desires to consult with Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve regarding the proposed project described below. We are also making a similar inquiry to tribal governments listed in Enclosure 1.

The National Park Service is preparing a *Draft General Management Plan Amendment/ Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment (GMPA/DCP/EA)* for the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, located just downriver from New Orleans in St. Bernard Parish (Figure 1). The purpose of this plan is to establish a 20-year management strategy for the park, and to develop a schematic site design and development program that enhances the historic environment and improves visitor service infrastructure in ways that can be implemented prior to the 2015 celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans.

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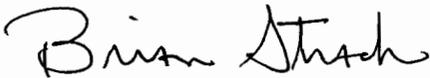
The GMPA/DCP/EA presents and analyzes four alternative future directions — the No-Action Alternative and Action Alternatives A, B, C — for the management and use of the Chalmette Unit. Alternative A seeks to improve park operations and visitor opportunities with minimal changes to most current unit facilities (Figure 3). Alternative B, the preferred alternative, seeks to improve park operations and enhance visitor opportunities with changes to most current unit facilities (Figure 4). The changes would be designed to provide for greater opportunities for interpretation and visitor education. Alternative C seeks to restore the historic character of the battlefield with changes to most current unit facilities (Figure 5). The changes would be designed to remove modern features and restore elements of the cultural landscape integral to the story of the battle. The environmental impacts of each alternative will be identified and assessed in the EA.

There are several actions common to all three action alternatives, such as the construction of an entrance station kiosk; construction of additional parking; modifications to the tour road; and several other smaller projects. Figures 3, 4, and 5 contain more detail on the proposed actions.

If the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians wishes to consult with Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve regarding this project as provided for under the regulations for the National Historic Preservation Act, please write to me or contact me at the address above, by phone at 504-589-3882, ext. 111, or e-mail at David_Luchsinger@nps.gov

Due to the GMP schedule, we would appreciate hearing from you by July 15.

Sincerely,

 David Luchsinger

Attachments:

- Enclosure 1: List of Tribal Governments
- Figure 1. Regional Vicinity Map
- Figure 2. Existing Conditions
- Figure 3. Alternative A
- Figure 4. Alternative B
- Figure 5. Alternative C

Enclosures

cc: Ken Carleton, THPO and NAGPRA Representative

AGENCY AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSES



BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
OFFICE OF CONSERVATION

SCOTT A. ANGELLE
SECRETARY
JAMES H. WELSH
COMMISSIONER OF CONSERVATION

July 8, 2009

TO: Mr. David Luchsinger
Superintendent
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
419 Decatur Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130-1035

RE: Solicitation of Views
Draft General Management Plan Amendment/
Development Concept Plan/ Environmental Assessment (GMPA/DCP/EA) for
Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

Dear Mr. Luchsinger:

In response to your letter dated June 8, 2009, concerning the referenced matter, please be advised that the Office of Conservation collects and maintains many types of information regarding oil and gas exploration, production, distribution, and other data relative to the petroleum industry as well as related and non-related injection well information, surface mining and ground water information and other natural resource related data. Most information concerning oil, gas and injection wells for any given area of the state, including the subject area of your letter can be obtained through records search via the SONRIS data access application available at:

<http://www.dnr.state.la.us/CONS/Conserv.ssi>

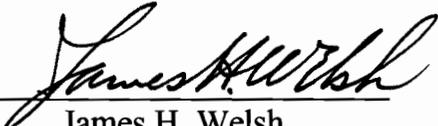
A review of our computer records for the referenced project area indicates the existence of one dry hole drilled in search of oil and gas in the industrial area southeast of the National Park. Although we have found no registered water wells in the DOTD database near the project area, due care should be taken to locate any water wells installed in the area before registration was required.

The Office of Conservation maintains records of all activities within its jurisdiction in either paper, microfilm or electronic format. These records may be accessed during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, except on State holidays or emergencies that require the Office to be closed. Please call 225-342-5540 for specific contact information or for directions to the Office of Conservation, located in the LaSalle Building, 617 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. For pipelines and other underground hazards, please contact Louisiana One Call at 1-800-272-3020 prior to commencing operations. Should you need to direct your inquiry to any of our Divisions, you may use the following contact information:

<u>Division</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Phone No.</u>	<u>E-mail Address</u>
Engineering	Jeff Wells	225-342-5638	JeffW@dnr.state.la.us
Pipeline	Steven Giambronne	225-342-2989	StevenG@dnr.state.la.us
Injection & Mining	Laurence Bland	225-342-5515	LaurenceB@dnr.state.la.us
Geological	Mike Kline	225-342-3335	MikeKl@dnr.state.la.us
Ground Water	Tony Duplechin	225-342-5528	TonyD@dnr.state.la.us

If you have difficulty in accessing the data via the referenced website because of computer related issues, you may obtain assistance from our technical support section by selecting "Help" on the SONRIS tool bar and submitting an email describing your problems and including a telephone number where you may be reached.

Sincerely,


James H. Welsh
Commissioner of Conservation

JHW:MBK

BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR



SCOTT A. ANGELLE
SECRETARY

State of Louisiana
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
OFFICE OF COASTAL RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT

July 31, 2009

David Luchsinger
Superintendent
US Dept. of the Interior
National Park Service
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Preserve
419 Decatur Street
New Orleans, LA 70130-1035

RE: **C20090371** Solicitation of Views
National Park Service
Draft General Management Plan Amendment/Development Concept Plan/Environmental
Assessment for the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve,
St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Luchsinger:

The above referenced project has been preliminarily reviewed for consistency with the approved Louisiana Coastal Resource Program (LCRP) as required by Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1920, as amended. However, final approval by this agency must await your submittal of a Consistency Determination when you have finalized your plans for the Park and Preserve. If you have any questions concerning this information request, please contact Brian Marcks of the Consistency Section at (225)342-7939 or 1-800-267-4019.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory J. DuCote".

Gregory J. DuCote
Administrator
Interagency Affairs/Field Services Division

JGJD/JH/bgm

cc: Mr. William McCartney, St. Bernard Parish
Frank Cole, CMD FI



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southeast Regional Office
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

June 29, 2009

F/SER46/RH:jk
225/389-0508

Mr. David Luchsinger, Superintendent
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
419 Decatur Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130-1035

Dear Mr. Luchsinger:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has received your letter dated June 8, 2009, transmitting plans to enhance the historic environment and improve visitor service at the Chalmette Unit of the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. In your letter, you requested information on resources potentially affected by the proposed action.

NMFS has reviewed the information transmitted with your letter. Based on our knowledge of the project area, none of the proposed work would be located in areas supportive of marine fishery species or categorized as essential fish habitat. As such, there is not potential for adverse project-related impacts to NMFS trust resources.

Sincerely,

for Myles M. Croom
Assistant Regional Administrator
Habitat Conservation Division

c:
F/SER46, Swafford
Files





Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

P.O. Box 1210 • Durant, OK 74702-1210 • (580) 924-8280

Gregory E. Pyle
Chief

Gary Batton
Assistant Chief

July 13, 2009

David Luchsinger
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
419 Decatur Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130-1035

Dear David Luchsinger:

We have reviewed the following proposed project (s) as to its effect regarding religious and/or cultural significance to historic properties that may be affected by an undertaking of the projects area of potential effect.

Project Description: Draft General Management Plan Amendment/Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment for the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

Comments: After further review of the above-mentioned project (s), The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma wishes to consult on the project. Please feel free to contact our office @ 1-800-522-6170 ext. 2137 with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Terry D. Cole
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

By: *Ian Thompson*
Ian Thompson PhD, RPA
NAGPRA Specialist/Tribal Archaeologist
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

IAT:vr

**United Keetoowah Band
of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma**

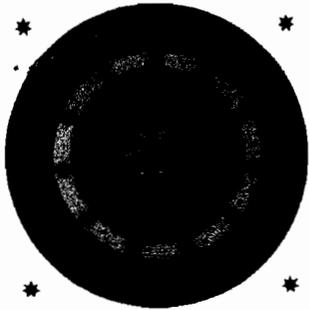
P.O. Box 746 • Tahlequah, OK 74465

2450 S. Muskogee • Tahlequah, OK 74464

Phone: (918) 431-1818 • Fax: (918) 431-1873

Toll Free: 1-877-431-1818

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Saline District

Barry Dotson
Sequoyah District

Betty Holcomb
Tahlequah District

USDI Jean Lafitte National
Historical Park and Preserve
419 rue Decatur
New Orleans, Louisiana 73130-1025

Dear Sir or Madam:

Enclosed you will find a copy of an envelope addressed to George G. Wickliffe, Chief.

On behalf of Chief Wickliffe, I respectfully request a change so that information on NAGPRA, historical, or cultural issues will be sent directly to his designee.

If you would, please change the addressee on your mailing list:

From: Mr. George G. Wickliffe, Chief
United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians
PO Box 746
Tahlequah, OK 74465-0746

To: Lisa Stopp, Preservation Officer
United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee
PO Box 746
Tahlequah, OK 74465

She will update him on information.

Thank you for your attention. If I may answer any questions regarding this matter, you may contact me at 918-431-1818 x149.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Bird
Administrative Assistant

Encl.

Allison
Pena/JELA/NPS

To
09/04/2009 01:43 PM David Muth/JELA/NPS@NPS
cc

Subject
Tribal Response to GMPA

David,

As per your request we have received only one official letter expressing a desire to consult on the GMPA:

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Durant, OK

Verbally, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians expressed a desire to consult on the GMPA also.

We did receive another letter from the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma but it only requested that all future correspondence on "information on NAAGPRA, historical, or cultural issues" be sent to the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer directly.

Allison

Allison H. Pena
Cultural Anthropologist
Acting Regional Ethnographer & NAGPRA Coordinator Jean Lafitte National
Historical Park and Preserve
419 Decatur Street
New Orleans, LA 70130
Telephone: (504) 589-3882, x 113
Mobile: (504) 382-4951
Fax: (504) 589-3851
email: Allison_Pena@nps.gov

Allison
Pena/JELA/NPS

To
09/14/2009 11:26 AM David Muth/JELA/NPS@NPS
cc

Subject
GMPA reply from Mississippi Band of
Choctaw Indians

David,

Please see the email from Chris Evans, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI) below.

I did respond to Mr. Evans and explained the process. I also told him that the THPO for the tribe, Ken Carleton also received the GMPA letter with attachments.

This response from the MBCI and the one from the Choctaw Tribe of Oklahoma were the only replies we have received from the tribes.

Allison

----- Forwarded by Allison Pena/JELA/NPS on 09/14/2009 11:20 AM -----

David
Luchsinger/JELA/N
PS To
"Evans, Chris"
07/03/2009 12:40 PM <chris.evans@choctaw.org>
cc
Allison Pena/JELA/NPS@NPS
Subject
Re: (Document link: Allison Pena
(Archive))

Good Afternoon Chris-

Thanks for your email. First let me give you a heads up that I have left Jean Lafitte to become the Superintendent of the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island. I am forwarding you note to Allison Pena. She can better explain the 106 process than I could anyway. Have a great and safe 4th.

Dave

-----"Evans, Chris" <chris.evans@choctaw.org> wrote: -----

To: <David_Luchsinger@nps.gov>
From: "Evans, Chris" <chris.evans@choctaw.org>
Date: 06/30/2009 03:53PM
Subject:

Good afternoon,

David,

I am just following up on a letter that was sent to our Tribal Chief (Miko Denson) regarding the proposed project that is set for the (Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve). And it's my understanding that you want to know if we (MBCI) would like an input in this up coming project? I am not real familiar with how the 106 process works.

Christopher A. Evans

Director of Choctaw Wildlife and Parks

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

125 River Ridge Circle/P.O. Box 6010

Choctaw , MS 39350

Tel: 601-663-7827/601-663-7828

Fax: 601-663-7829

43440 -2009 -FA -2799

43440- 2009 -TA -3260



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

646 Cajundome Blvd.
Suite 400
Lafayette, Louisiana 70506

September 24, 2009

Carol A. Clark
Acting Superintendent
National Park Service
Jean Lafitte Historical Park & Preserve
419 Decatur Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130

Dear Ms. Clark:

Please reference your September 9, 2009, letter to this office, in which you requested confirmation of the species distribution list posted on our website at URL <http://www.fws.gov/lafayette/section7/>. In accordance with provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) confirms that the species distribution list, as it is currently posted on the above-mentioned internet site, is accurate and up-to-date. The Service periodically updates the species distribution list as new information becomes available to maintain the accuracy of the content available for viewing.

Additionally, as you requested in your letter, the Service confirms that the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery, located in Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Preserve, St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana does not contain designated critical habitat for the piping plover or the Gulf sturgeon.

We appreciate the opportunity to assist the National Park Service in complying with applicable provisions of the Endangered Species Act. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Monica Sikes (337/291-3118) of this office.

Sincerely,

James F. Boggs
Supervisor
Louisiana Field Office

cc: LDWF, Natural Heritage Program, Baton Rouge, LA



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Preserve
419 Decatur Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130



N1621

September 9, 2009

Jim Boggs
Field Supervisor
Lafayette Ecological Services Field Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
646 Cajundome Boulevard, Suite 400
Lafayette, LA 70506

Re: Section 7 Consultation for *Draft General Management Plan Amendment /Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment* for the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

Dear Mr. Boggs:

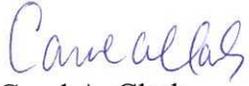
The National Park Service is currently developing a *Draft General Management Plan Amendment /Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment* (GMPA/DCP/EA) for the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, located just downriver from New Orleans in St. Bernard Parish (Figure 1). The purpose of this plan is to establish a 20-year management strategy for the unit, and to develop a schematic site design and development program that enhances the historic environment and improves visitor service infrastructure in ways that can be implemented prior to the 2015 celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans. Our title for this project is 'Chalmette Battlefield / National Cemetery GMP and DCP,' and the internal project number in our Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) system is 12588. We wrote to you on June 8 of this year to introduce the project, and solicit initial comments.

In compliance with section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (as amended), we are requesting your concurrence that the species distribution list we obtained from your website is accurate. We visited <http://www.fws.gov/lafayette/section7/> on September 9, 2009. The last update for the list downloaded from the site was August 8, 2008. The St. Bernard Parish listing includes the West Indian manatee, brown pelican, piping plover, Gulf and pallid sturgeons, and the green, hawksbill, Kemp's ridley, leatherback, and loggerhead sea turtles. We noted that St. Bernard Parish contains critical habitat for the piping plover and Gulf sturgeon. We are also requesting confirmation that the Chalmette unit, which is shown on the attached map (Figure 1), does not contain critical habitat for these species.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (504) 589-3882 extension 111, or via

email at jela_superintendent@nps.gov. Please respond at the letterhead address. I appreciate your consideration of our requests.

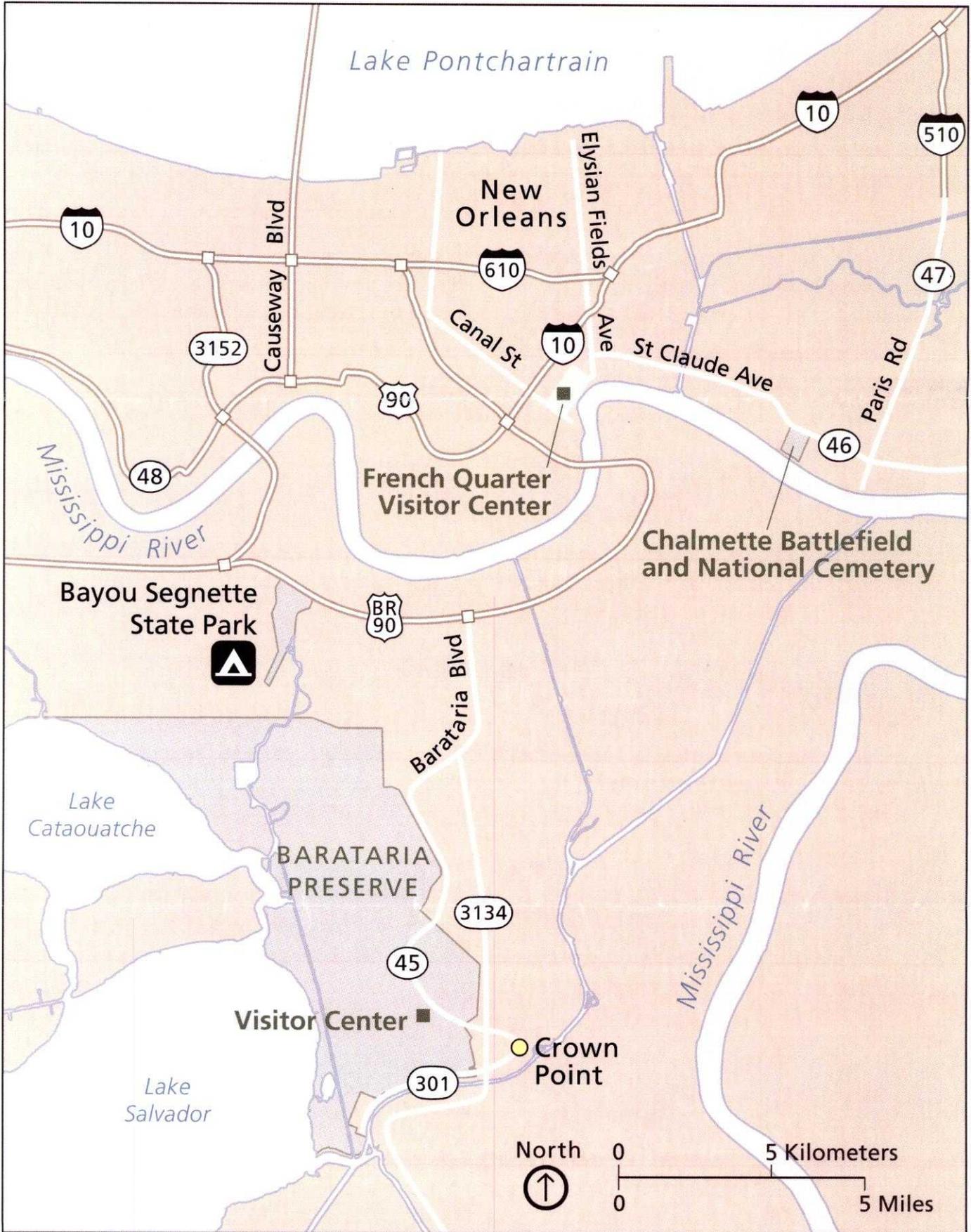
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carol A. Clark". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

Carol A. Clark
Acting Superintendent

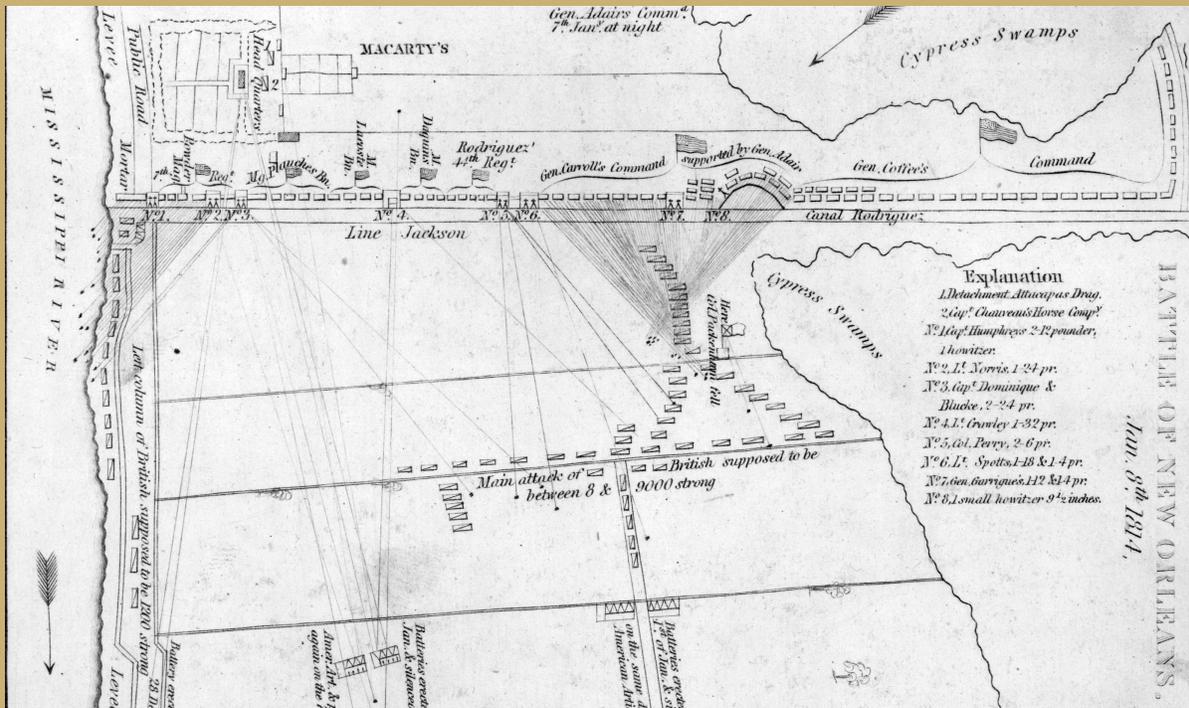
Enclosure

FIGURE 1



CHALMETTE BATTLEFIELD AND NATIONAL CEMETERY
REGIONAL VICINITY MAP

APPENDIX E: SELECTED REFERENCES



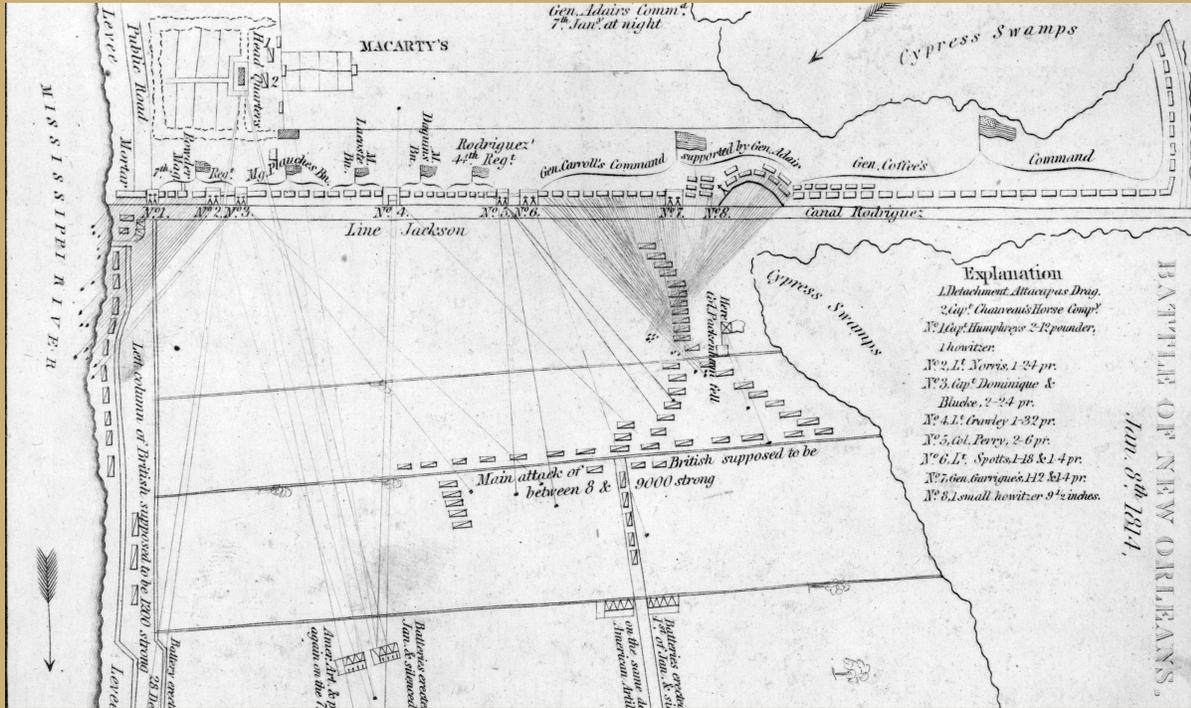
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APPENDIX F: PREPARERS AND CONSULTANTS



Appendix F: Preparers and Consultants

Southeast Regional Office

Steven M. Wright, Project Manager, Planning and Compliance Division
Charles Lawson, Archeologist, Southeast Archeological Center

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

David P. Muth, Chief of Planning and Resource Stewardship
Allison Pena, Cultural Resource Specialist
David Luchsinger, Park Superintendent (former)
Brian Strack, Facility Manager

HNTB Infrastructure

Theresa Backhus ASLA, Designer
Anna Bentley, Urban Planner
Joseph Clemens AICP, Senior Planner, Project Manager
Lauren Mansfield, Administrative Assistant/ Writer Support
Marita Roos, Principal Planner

EA Engineering, Science and Technology Inc.

Suzie Boltz - Senior NEPA Specialist
Tracy Layfield - NEPA Specialist
Mary Alice Koeneke - Senior Environmental Scientist
Jeff Elseroad - Senior Technical Reviewer

John Milner Associates, Inc.

Laura L. Knott ASLA, Principal Landscape Architect