

development concept plan
environmental assessment

june 1983

NATCHEZ TRACE

COLBERT FERRY / LAUDERDALE



NATIONAL PARKWAY / ALABAMA

DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

COLBERT FERRY/LAUDERDALE
NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY

ALABAMA

Denver Service Center
National Park Service
United States Department of the Interior



SUMMARY

This development concept plan/environmental assessment (DCP/EA) sets forth the National Park Service (NPS) proposal and alternatives for development at Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale, sites on the NPS-administered Natchez Trace Parkway in Colbert and Lauderdale counties, Alabama.

Natchez Trace Parkway memorializes a frontier roadway that followed ancient Indian trails in the region between Nashville, Tennessee, and Natchez, Mississippi. Upon completion of the 449-mile parkway, possibly within this decade, facilities and services in the proposal would complement and support existing visitor recreational and interpretive activities.

One of the park's management objectives is to provide high quality services and facilities to accommodate the needs of parkway visitors. In order to do this and to provide an economically feasible opportunity for a concessioner, a full-service, year-round resort including a lodge and cabin complex with restaurant, meeting rooms, swimming pools, and an activity center; an 18-hole golf course with clubhouse and pro shop; and a service station/information center would be built at Colbert Ferry.

In addition a 200-unit campground, three group campsites, a campstore, and a 15-slip boat dock would be constructed adjacent to Colbert Bay.

A maintenance area would be constructed to service the entire complex.

A 200-slip boat marina at Lauderdale was considered but is economically infeasible at this time. If a subsequent, more thorough market analysis indicates the feasibility of a marina, it could again be considered as part of the proposed concession complex.

The proposal is for implementation by private enterprise under the supervision of the National Park Service. All development costs would be borne by the private entity except for construction of improved parkway access and bicycling and hiking trails. The National Park Service would issue a prospectus soliciting proposals from the private sector. Given the current economic climate, it is unlikely that the National Park Service itself can undertake any major construction in the foreseeable future; thus, if no outside group undertakes the development, the proposed plan would not be feasible.

Two alternatives to the proposal were considered. Alternative 1 (Existing Conditions), would allow the continuation of existing management programs and policies and would allow flexibility for management to make changes where appropriate and necessary. Alternative 2 would implement a modified version of 1970 development concept plans (never implemented), which expand upon the existing development.

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

The purpose of this DCP/EA is to provide an opportunity for agency and public analysis/evaluation of a proposal and alternative strategies to develop and manage the Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale areas of Natchez Trace Parkway. Following consideration of comments, the National Park Service will select the most appropriate plan for developing and managing the sites and decide whether an environmental impact statement is necessary.

Development concept plans for Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale were approved in 1970; however, they have not been implemented. In the interim, economic conditions have changed, and private enterprise has expressed interest in developing the area into a major resort complex.

The Natchez Trace Parkway received almost 17 million visits in 1982. Based on population projections for the area, the use of the parkway will increase approximately 20 percent to 20 million visits by the year 2000. Current facilities at Colbert Ferry are not adequate to meet even the existing demand; they are for day use only, essentially serve the local residents, and are used to capacity during the summer vacation season. Parkway needs include overnight accommodations, food, and fuel service. Colbert Ferry is designated a recreation zone in the parkway's "Statement for Management."

The proposal would provide the major recreation complex on the parkway; it would be built and operated by private enterprise or the nonprofit sector under National Park Service supervision.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The following park management objectives are relevant to this proposal:

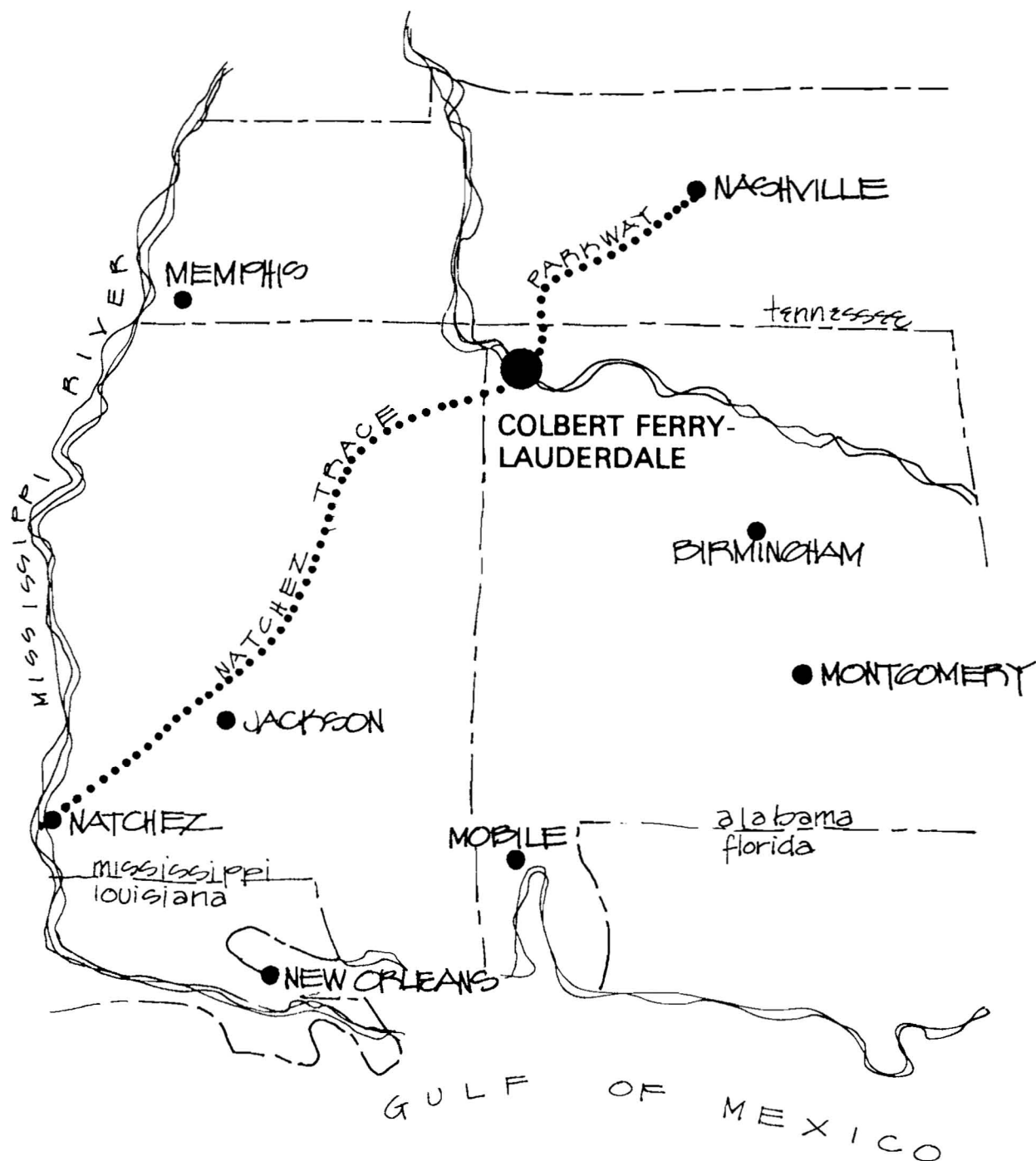
Management, Administration, and Support

- to provide adequate services and facilities to accommodate the needs of parkway visitors

- to encourage the provision of commercial facilities and services in appropriate locations outside the parkway

- to provide high quality commercial services on the parkway, where necessary and not provided in the local community

- to keep the public well informed of parkway plans and programs



NORTH
NO SCALE

COLBERT FERRY-LAUDERDALE REGION

NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY
ALABAMA/MISSISSIPPI/TENNESSEE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR/
NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

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DEVELOPMENT

Under the proposal the National Park Service would seek a private firm to build and operate the following new facilities at Colbert Ferry: a 200-site campground with store and fee collection station; 15 boat slips; a 150-room-lodge/50-cabin complex with a restaurant, meeting facilities, swimming pools, and an activity center; an 18-hole golf course with clubhouse and pro shop; a service/information station; a maintenance building, and a 150,000-gallon water tank. The existing boat launch, swimming beach, and picnic area would remain and would be operated by the concessioner.

The preliminary proposal presented at workshops held in the development area in July 1982 also included a large boat marina at Colbert Creek Bay in Lauderdale. After careful consideration, the National Park Service has determined that a marina is not economically feasible at this time. If at a later date it becomes economically feasible, the concept would be reconsidered. The importance of the three known archeological sites in the immediate area would be determined and a plan to protect and/or salvage the sites would be completed before any action is taken.

Implementation of the proposal would provide the largest recreation development on the Natchez Trace Parkway in conjunction with interpretation of the historic trace. Estimated annual visitation to the two sites after implementation would be 400,000. The complex would be expected to be a major attraction for visitors as well as an important component in the Tennessee Valley Authority's plans for recreational development in the Pickwick Lake region, serving local and regional recreationists, and parkway users. The development would be compatible with the surroundings and nearby architecture along the parkway through the harmonious use of materials, colors, forms, and textures.

The complex would be sufficiently large for a private concessioner to profitably build and operate. The National Park Service would invite offers from interested and qualified parties. The concessioner would develop and operate the area under NPS supervision and standards and would bear all development costs except for improved parkway access and the bicycle/hiking trails, which would be built by the National Park Service.

Locations of facilities are shown on the Colbert Ferry/Lauderdale Proposal map. Alternative approaches that were not considered as feasible are described under the "Environmental Consequences of the Proposal and Alternatives" section.

VISITOR USE/INTERPRETATION

A proposed trail system (for bicycling, hiking, and horseback riding) would lead from Tupelo, Mississippi, to Colbert Ferry. This trail, constructed by the National Park Service, would be a part of the

Details and costs are:

PHASE I
\$741,000

- 200-site campground, electric/water hookup
- primitive/group campsites (3) and comfort stations
- 15-slip marina
- campstore/fee collection
- bicycle/hiking trails (by NPS)
- sewage dump station
- dredging

PHASE II
\$9,083,000

- 150-room lodge, restaurant and swimming facilities (expandable to 300 rooms)
- 50 cabins (expandable to 75)
- parking for 200 vehicles (expandable to 400)
- activity center
- service station/visitor information/sewage dump station (developed by oil company)
- 150,000-gal. water tank (to serve entire complex)
- maintenance building
- bicycle/hiking trails (by NPS)
- improved parkway access (by NPS)

PHASE III
\$1,400,000

- 18-hole golf course, clubhouse, pro shop

GRAND TOTAL: \$11,224,000 net construction cost, 1982 dollars
Of this total, approximately \$407,000 will be an investment by the National Park Service and \$10,817,000 by the concessioner. Utility infrastructure costs are included in the above totals and will be borne by the concessioner.

Annual Operating Costs (Using 1982 Base Year)

<u>Colbert Ferry</u>	<u>Concessioner</u>	<u>NPS</u>
Operation and Maintenance	\$2,800,000	\$41,000
Staffing (Person Years)	110	2

specialists. All feasible planning or design measures would be taken to avoid or minimize impairment of the resources. Unavoidable adverse effects would be mitigated by professional data retrieval involving controlled excavation, architectural recording, or other acceptable means.

THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale are located in northwestern Alabama along Natchez Trace Parkway, about 130 miles south of Nashville, Tennessee, (see Region map). Both border Pickwick Lake, an impoundment on the Tennessee River. Lauderdale (158 acres) is situated on the north shore, and Colbert Ferry (728 acres) is on the south shore.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The terrain at Lauderdale is primarily flat to gently rolling and rises gradually from Pickwick Lake. There are some scattered limestone outcroppings along the shoreline that have been exposed by wave action. In contrast, the terrain of Colbert Ferry varies from level and gently rolling to steep with sheer rock outcroppings that rise up to 100 feet above the shoreline of Pickwick Lake. Sinkholes and several caves can also be found within the boundary.

Soils are composed of red and gray loam with fragmented chert at Lauderdale, while Colbert Ferry primarily has clay loam. Both areas contain highly erodable soils.

The average annual daytime temperature is 60°F. Winter temperatures average in the high 30s and summer temperatures average in the high 80s.

Precipitation averages 50 inches annually and is well distributed throughout the year. Occasional snows occur during the winter months.

Air quality is good. There are no communities or industries in the vicinity that materially affect the area's air quality.

Surface water quality is good and is suitable for public water supply, swimming, and fish and wildlife. Both Colbert and Colbert Creek bays receive nutrient-rich silt from the surrounding farmland areas.

Water for domestic use is available by connecting to the Cherokee, Alabama, water system or from groundwater at Colbert Ferry. Supplies are considered adequate for present and future needs.

Vegetation

Most of Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale were formerly cultivated and are now either undergoing natural reforestation or have been planted with pine. Such species as blackberry, sunflower, milkweed, and horsemint can be found in the open land.

The steeper areas have not been cultivated and are timbered. Lauderdale has an oak-hickory overstory while Colbert Ferry has pine and mixed hardwoods. In the forest understory can be found dogwood, redbud, hawthorne, wildgrape, and greenbriar.

inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Also located in the area was an inn operated by George Colbert; its location is unknown. There are several submerged archeological sites located just offshore at both Lauderdale and Colbert Ferry. Four additional sites above lake level at Lauderdale are potentially eligible for the National Register (see appendix A). In addition, Georgetown Cave at Colbert Ferry is also potentially eligible for the National Register (appendix C). The area may contain additional archeological sites eligible for the National Register.

SOCIOECONOMIC RESOURCES

The Colbert and Lauderdale county populations are 54 percent urban. Most of the population is located within the quad-cities of Florence, Sheffield, Tuscumbia, and Muscle Shoals.

Population in the counties has increased an average of 15 percent between 1970 and 1980. Lauderdale County increased from 68,111 to 80,504, and Colbert County increased from 49,632 to 54,519. In the same 10-year period, per capita income has more than doubled in each county, with \$4,900 in Colbert and \$5,052 in Lauderdale. The state average is \$4,712.

The primary industries consist of manufacturing, construction, utilities, and sanitary services. The area's unemployment rate in June 1982 was approaching 20 percent.

VISITOR USE/RECREATION

When completed, the Natchez Trace Parkway will provide a direct route from Nashville, Tennessee, to Natchez, Mississippi, a distance of 449 miles. It will also become one of the main routes from Nashville to New Orleans, Louisiana. Established as a unit of the National Park System in 1938, it is now only 65 miles short of completion.

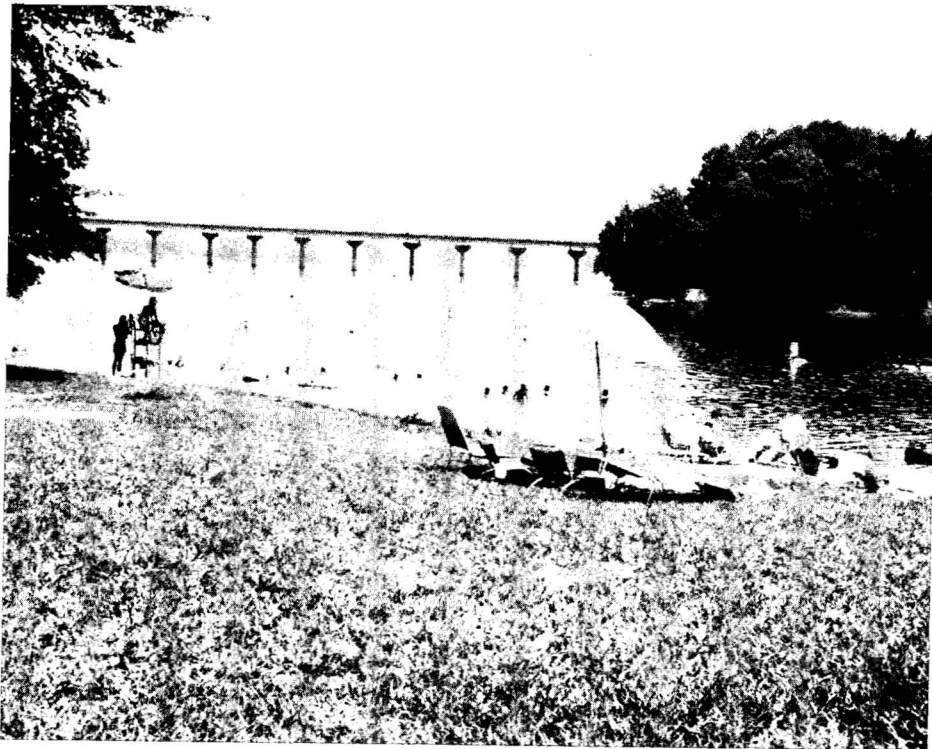
Use of the parkway has grown steadily to a near record 17 million visits in 1982. Completion is expected to increase visitation and correspondingly increase the need for visitor accommodations.

Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale are about 6 miles north of U.S. 72, a major east-west highway which links the Natchez Trace Parkway to the nearby Alabama cities of Florence, Tuscumbia, Muscle Shoals, and Sheffield. Recreationists also come from larger cities such as Birmingham and Huntsville, Alabama; Memphis and Nashville, Tennessee; and Jackson, Mississippi (population of more than 1,500,000), all less than a day's drive. The attractiveness of the area is reinforced by its proximity to Pickwick Lake.

Recreation opportunities within this region are oriented to boating on the lakes of the Tennessee River. State parks located along the Tennessee River in the area are J.P. Coleman in Mississippi, Pickwick Landing in Tennessee, and Joe Wheeler in Alabama. All have camping facilities, while Pickwick Landing and Wheeler also offer full-service resorts with 18-hole golf courses and large boat marinas.



Water Skiing in Pickwick Lake



Swimming at Colbert Bay

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROPOSAL
AND ALTERNATIVES

INTRODUCTION TO THE ALTERNATIVES

Several alternatives to the proposal were considered. The two that were the most viable, existing conditions (no action) and implementation of a modified version of 1970 DCPs, are described below, shown on the following map, and assessed for their environmental impact. Those not considered viable were eliminated and are described briefly at the end of this section.

Alternative 1: Existing Conditions (No Action)

This alternative would allow the continuation of existing management programs and policies and would permit management to make minor changes where necessary. Minor changes would mostly affect existing activities (e.g., picnicking, swimming, parking, etc.).

Alternative 2: Modified 1970 DCPs

In 1970 the National Park Service prepared DCPs for Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale that involved development by the Park Service and a concessioner but were never implemented. Because of the small scope of development, it has since been determined that it would not be economically feasible for a concessioner to participate in development. As a result, the following facilities would be built by the National Park Service then partially operated by a concessioner if this alternative were adapted.

Colbert Ferry: Campground with contact station, picnic area, 50 unit lodge/cabin complex with restaurant and swimming pool, small marina for campers (about 15 slips) with campstore and laundry, amphitheater, activity center/recreation area, trails, maintenance area, and service station with disposal station.

Lauderdale: picnic area, swimming, group picnic and campground, trails, and environmental study area.

Development cost would be \$9,015,600 (1982 dollars).

Annual cost (1982 dollars) would be:

	<u>NPS</u>	<u>Colbert Ferry Concessioner</u>	<u>Lauderdale NPS</u>	<u>Total</u>
Operation and Maintenance Costs	\$336,000	\$255,000	\$209,000	\$800,000
Staffing (person years)	12.5	15.5	6.5	34.5

would remove wildlife habitat by displacing wildlife species during construction. There would be no permanent displacement of birds and mammals--sparrows, mourning doves, mice, and squirrels.

There would be no effects on endangered species (see appendix B).

About 180 acres of prime farmland soils would be occupied by the golf course. None of this land is in cultivation and none would be irreversibly or irretrievably lost. In addition, this land has been dedicated for recreational use.

Development would expose and compact soils during construction but only over the short term. The erosion of exposed soils would be reduced by controlling stormwater runoff from construction sites. Contour ditching, berms, or bales of straw would be used to decrease runoff velocity. Water would be diverted into channels or onto more permeable ground. Erosion would also be controlled by sodding, mulching, or blanketing to protect exposed soils from falling and/or running water. Over the long term, planted vegetation on disturbed sites would control soil erosion. Thus, any fastland development should not result in any appreciable siltation or turbidity in adjacent surface waters. Any water quality effects--siltation or turbidity--would be minimal and short term. Disturbed sites would be restored quickly and long-term water quality levels are expected to be maintained.

Storm water runoff from newly constructed impervious surfaces should not be of major significance, and any runoff would be channeled into upland areas and away from surface waters. There would be no significant effect on groundwater recharge because runoff from developed areas would be distributed in a manner which would allow for filtration into the groundwater system. In addition, special care would be taken to maintain the status quo of the water patterns which affect existing caves in the area.

There would be a temporary increase in noise levels during construction periods.

In the short term there would be an increase in particulates (dust) because of construction activity and in exhaust emissions because of construction equipment. During construction and for a short time thereafter the disturbance to the landscape caused by development would be evident to visitors.

Docks, boat fuel stations, and boats would be designed and operated to minimize contaminating waters in Colbert Bay and the Tennessee River. Some petroleum products released from normal boat use and maintenance would be unavoidable, but they are not expected to significantly affect the area's resources. Most pollutants affecting the quality of waters in the park area would continue to come from sources outside the park.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF ALTERNATIVE 1 (No Action)

Impacts on Natural Resources

There would be little change to the natural resources in the area even if existing activities were modestly expanded. There would be no effects on rare and endangered species or wetlands.

Impacts on Cultural Resources

Expansion of the parking lot and picnic area could affect unknown archeological resources in the area. Present visitation levels to the old Colbert homesite, the ferry crossing site, and historic Natchez Trace have not deteriorated these sites; however, the modern day road crossing over Natchez Trace has impacted the historic scene. Increases in visitation levels in the area could lead to further deterioration of these historic sites. Visitation levels and site condition would be monitored and necessary mitigation measures would be undertaken before deterioration occurs.

Socioeconomic Impacts

Tourist related income would continue to grow modestly.

Impacts on Visitors

Existing facilities would continue to be heavily used during the summer season. The demand for water-based recreation would continue to be greater than the supply.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF ALTERNATIVE 2 (1970 DCPs)

Impacts on Natural Resources

Approximately 60,000 cubic yards of material would be dredged from Colbert Bay. Dredging would increase turbidity, which would be short-term in nature. This would be a temporary increase in siltation and would be reduced by the use of filter screens and/or bulkheading during the dredging process. Both Colbert and Colbert Creek Bays have received nutrient-rich silt from the surrounding farm areas. Although some of these nutrients would be released into Pickwick Lake, the initial impact would be minimal and of short duration.

About 45 acres of mixed second-growth hardwoods and pines and 85 acres of reclaimed farmland would be removed or modified for site preparation for the campground(s), lodge/cabin complex, activity center, parking areas, playfields, picnic areas, group picnicking and camping, and hiking and bicycle trails.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

The following are among those consulted in preparation and/or who will be afforded an opportunity to comment on this document.

Federal Agencies

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Environmental Protection Agency
Federal Emergency Management Agency
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Department of the Interior
 Bureau of Land Management
 Fish and Wildlife Service
 Geological Survey
U.S. Department of Transportation
 Federal Highway Department

Alabama State Agencies

State Clearing House
State Historic Preservation Officer
Joe Wheeler State Park

Other

Tennessee Valley Authority, Office of Economic and Community
 Development, Muscle Shoals, Alabama
Colbert and Lauderdale counties boards of supervisors, Alabama
Pickwick State Park, Tennessee

taken into consideration.

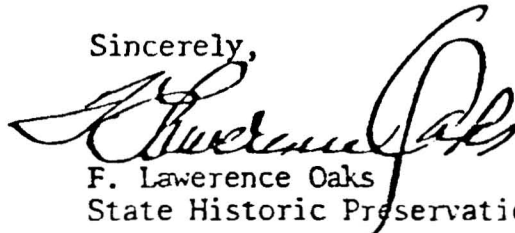
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1 Lu 51	1 Ct 38
1 Lu 52	1 Ct 39
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	1 Ct 41
	1 Ct 43
	1 Ct 138

All of the above sites were discovered as a result of the Pickwick Reservoir survey in 1937 and can be found in BAE Bulletin 129 "Record of Archaeological Findings for Pickwick Reservoir".

Unfortunately, only the bank of the river where 1Lu48, 54, 55, and 56 are located was surveyed as part of the 1937 survey. The remainder of the Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale Park property has never been surveyed by a professional archaeologist. Therefore, prior to any development on either of the two properties, a cultural resource assessment should be conducted by an archaeologist. The archaeologist's report should be submitted to the Alabama Historical Commission for our review and concurrence.

We look forward to working with the National Park Service in the future on this project. Please contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



F. Lawrence Oaks
State Historic Preservation Officer

FLO/BMB/jhg



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

JACKSON MALL OFFICE CENTER

500 WOODROW WILSON AVENUE, SUITE 3185

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39213

May 12, 1982

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Log no. 4-3-82-087

Mr. Jay Bright
Coordinator, SE/SW Planning Team
National Park Service
Denver Service Center
755 Parfet Street
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

Dear Mr. Bright:

This is in response to your letter of April 8, 1982, requesting information on threatened and endangered species that may be affected by the proposed Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale Park Project in Colbert County, Alabama.

As you pointed out, Georgetown Cave is located within the Colbert Ferry area. This was formally a significant gray bat maternity cave. Currently it is considered important potential habitat in our efforts toward recovering the species.

Bald eagles are known to occasionally winter on Pickwick Lake. Also the endangered mussels, Plethobasis cicatricosus, Plethobasis cooperianus, and Lamosilis orbiculata orbiculata, have been found below Wilson dam. However, unless you anticipate activity that may result in impacts to the Tennessee River in that area, these mussel species should not be affected by the proposed project.

Since you have determined this project to be a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment (i.e., one requiring an environmental impact statement), Section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act, as amended, requires that you prepare a biological assessment to determine the effects of the project on listed and proposed species. The biological assessment shall be completed within 180 days after the date on which initiated and before any physical modification of the environment is begun. If the biological assessment is not begun within 90 days, you should verify the species list informally (via phone) prior to initiation of your assessment. When conducting a biological assessment, you shall, at a minimum:

1. conduct a scientifically sound on-site inspection of the area affected by the action, which must include a detailed survey of the area to determine if listed or proposed species are present or occur seasonally and whether suitable habitat exists within the area for either expanding the existing population or potential reintroduction of populations;

B: BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

SURVEYS CONDUCTED STUDY METHODS

Data collected included consultation with appropriate agencies and recognized experts and review of publications. Individuals contacted included:

Mr. John Brady--wildlife biologists for the U.S. Corps of Engineers and team leader for the Fish and Wildlife Service Gray Bat Recovery Plan

Dr. Merlin Tuttle--curator of mammals for the Milwaukee Public Museum

Dr. Alan Rabinowitz--formerly with the Department of Forestry and Wildlife Management at the University of Tennessee

Mr. Fred Bagley--endangered species specialists for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mr. Thomas Murphy--with the South Carolina Division of Game and Fresh Water Fisheries and team leader for the Fish and Wildlife Service Bald Eagle Recovery Plan

Mr. Billy Isom--program manager, Aquatic Environmental Research, Division of Water Resources for the Tennessee Valley Authority

RESULTS OF SURVEYS

Gray Bat

In responding to the NPS request for listed species, the FWS reported that the Georgetown Cave is currently considered important potential habitat for the gray bat.

Today, the gray bat does not inhabit the Georgetown Cave, however, the species is present in other caves in the area and it is considered feasible they will return. The reason for their leaving is believed to be the result of people entering the cave.

Bald Eagle

The bald eagle occasionally winters on Pickwick Lake. However, eagle roosts are not known to be located within or immediately adjacent to the boundaries of Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale.

Mussels

Three endangered mussels (white warty-back pearly, orange-footed pimpleback, and pink mucket) pearly have been found below Wilson Dam which could place them in Pickwick Lake. However, Colbert and Colbert Creek Bays are within the Pickwick Lake reservoir pool which does not provide suitable habitat for these species.

Three of the sites excavated during the Pickwick Basin work are of particular relevance to development in Colbert Park. These sites are: Georgetown Cave (1-CT-42), Georgetown Landing Site (1-CT-37), and the Colbert Creek Mound (1-LU-54). Together these sites demonstrate the Colbert-Lauderdale Park area was heavily utilized by prehistoric people for over 7000 years and that a variety of environmental zones (i.e. cave, terrace, and floodplain) were occupied. Valuable as this information is, it is limited by the rudimentary state of archeological techniques at the time of excavation (1936-38), and by the understandable emphasis on sites on the floodplain and lower terraces of the river which were to be flooded. The upland areas adjacent to the rich prehistoric deposit below received no archeological attention at the time.

In addition to the three excavated sites, there are three other potentially significant sites (1-LU-56, 1-LU-55, and 1-LU-48) above the present day lake in Lauderdale Park, seven submerged archeological sites in shallow water just off the Lauderdale property, and an additional 11 submerged sites off the Colbert property. Other, as yet undiscovered, sites may exist in the upland area as is indicated by recent archeological surveys in the Yellow Creek-Tennessee River confluence to the northwest.

The Reconnaissance

The archeological reconnaissance of Colbert Park proposed development area was conducted on foot on August 10, 11, and 12 of 1982. The weather conditions were favorable with mild temperatures in the 85° - 90° range prevailing. All three days were partly cloudy with scattered showers.

Two environmental zones are in question: 1) the bluffs along Pickwick Lake and, 2) rolling upland, mostly old fields behind the bluffs.

The bluffs are located east of the existing parkway and, consists of rough stony land with a mature second growth of hardwood. There is relatively little understory save for occasional grapes or small patches of poison ivy. Leaf litter is heavy over the entire area examined and the surface of the ground is not visible. The soils in this area consist of silty clay loam of a light brown color containing angular limestone fragments and some rounded river pebble probably of the Tuscaloosa Formation. The white or gray cherts of the Fort Payne Formation were not noticed here. Six small test pits (circa 30 cm diameter) were excavated but not screened along the bluff line. No artifacts were observed. The soil is friable and relatively easy to excavate. Facilities planned for this area are the Activity Center, the Lodge and Parking Area and the Lodge Cabin Complex.

The second environmental zone proposed for development consists of well drained rolling uplands behind the Tennessee River bluff. These are fertile areas of Dewey Loam and Dewey Cherty Loam soils known as the "redlands." The terrain is relatively open and appears to be former fields. Pines, cedars, and small hardwoods predominate, and there is much

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Richard Alesch, Planner/Environmental Specialist, DSC

grass or honeysuckle in the more open area. The ground surface is only visible in occasional washed out areas. The soils are friable red silty loam and not difficult to excavate. Four small unscreened testpits (circa 30 cm in diameter) were excavated; two in the proposed sewage treatment plant area, one in the proposed campsite area and another east of the parkway on the headwaters of a small stream draining the proposed golf course. The proposed developments include a large golf course located both east and west of the parkway, an information center, a sewage treatment area, and a large campsite with an open play area.

Summary and Recommendations

While a great deal of attention has been devoted to the prehistoric site potential of the area, the possibility for locating historic sites is also high. George Colbert, a Chickasaw-American mixed blood, operated a stand and ferry crossing on the Colbert property during the early 1800's. The location of his house is known and protected, but other historic building locations of family members, other Chickasaws, or slaves may exist in the vicinity. Archival research is indicated before any further fieldwork.

The fieldwork reported in this paper should be considered strictly preliminary. No systematic attempt to locate all of the National Register sites of this 728 acre tract was made. In addition, the surface of the ground is not visible, and the small number of tests excavated is an extremely small sample of the area as a whole.

For this reason, it is recommended that an intensive systematic archeological survey of all development areas be performed. The survey should include as much subsurface exploration as possible because of the heavy ground cover. The research design for the recommended survey should incorporate: 1) the results of the archival research, 2) all available data from the Pickwick Basin report, and 3) recently published papers concerning archeological survey in the upland of the Yellow Creek-Tennessee River area (Johnson 1982). A copy of the survey report should be submitted to the Alabama SHPO as requested in his letter of 6/9/82.

References

- Johnson, Jay K.
1982 Archaic Period Settlement Systems in Northeastern Mississippi.
Ms. on file, Department of Anthropology, University of Mississippi
University, Mississippi.
- National Park Service
1982 Alternatives for the Development of Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale,
Natchez Trace Parkway, Alabama. Denver Service Center, National
Park Service, Denver.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SOUTHEAST ARCHEOLOGICAL CENTER

P. O. Box 2416

Tallahassee, Florida 32304

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H2215(SER-0SE)

August 19, 1982

Memorandum

To: Chief, Southeast Archeological Center

From: Archeologist Martinez, Natchez Trace Parkway

Subject: Trip report of an archeological reconnaissance of Colbert Park, Colbert County, Alabama, NATR Parkway

Introduction

The National Park Service has formulated three preliminary alternatives for the development of Colbert Park on the east side of Tennessee River at Lauderdale Park on the west side of the river. The first proposal, essentially a no action alternative, would have no effect upon cultural resources in the park. However, alternatives two and three (NPS 1982: pp. 2, 3) contemplates substantial amounts of new construction and, therefore, have the potential of disturbing archeological or historical remains. The purpose of this report is to describe existing field conditions in proposed development areas within Colbert Park and to assess alternatives two and three from an archeological perspective. Possible project impact to cultural resources in Lauderdale Park will be addressed in a separate report.

The field inspection reported in this paper was conducted on August 10-12, 1982 by Carlos A. Martinez, a Southeast Archeological Center archeologist duty stationed at Tupelo.

Background

The Valley of the Tennessee River consists of a series of lowlands with many broad gentle rolling areas of good farm land. In prehistoric times, the Tennessee River provided man with a ready source of transportation and with fish and shellfish which were important dietary items during the Archaic (Circa 8000 to 1000 BC) and later periods. The federal government, sponsoring intensive archeological investigations along the Tennessee River during the TVA construction of Pickwick Lake, made possible a thorough archeological examination of prehistoric sites along the floodplains and first terraces of river. The results of these excavations are published in Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 129 entitled An Archeological Survey of Pickwick Basin in the Adjacent Portions of the States of Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee, (Webb and DeJarnette: 1942).



CONSIDERATIONS OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS ON ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT

There is no designated or proposed critical habitat for any species in the project area.

Gray Bat

The entrance to the Georgetown Cave has been fenced to prevent people from entering the cave but has been constructed in a manner which will not inhibit ingress and egress by bats. The fence will be maintained in good repair by the NPS.

As recommended by Dr. Tuttle, there will be an undisturbed zone of approximately 1,000 feet from the cave where no activity will be permitted. Construction will be monitored so as not to alter any existing nor increase surface drainage into the cave system. The cave will be anonymous to the public and visitation will be discouraged.

Bald Eagle

In order to avoid any disturbance, site clearing will not be done during the roosting period.

Mussels

The majority of the work will be confined to Colbert and Colbert Creek Bays and have little affect on the Tennessee River.

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN OBTAINING DATA AND COMPLETING STUDIES

No difficulties were encountered during the survey process, and the data obtained are considered adequate to assess impacts on endangered species.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE AGENCY

The National Park Service concludes there would be no effect on the endangered species by the development of the project.

BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES

PURPOSE

In March 1982, the National Park Service (NPS) determined it was necessary to review and revise if necessary, the 1970 development concept plans for Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale, two areas on the Natchez Trace Parkway.

This biological assessment is submitted to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. This document assesses potential impacts of federally protected species for the proposed development.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale are located in northwestern Alabama along the Natchez Trace Parkway, about 130 miles south of Nashville, Tennessee. Both border Pickwick Lake, an impoundment on the Tennessee River. Lauderdale (158 acres) is situated on the north shore and Colbert Ferry (728 acres) is on the south shore.

The terrain varies from flat to gently rolling to steep slopes with sheer rock outcrops rising over 100 feet above Pickwick Lake.

Portions of both areas were formerly cultivated with most now undergoing natural reforestation or have been planted with pine. The steeper areas were not cultivated and the existing cover consists of an oak-hickory overstory at Lauderdale and pine-mixed hardwoods at Colbert Ferry.

The proposed development consists of three major components which includes a campground with hookups, a 150-unit lodge/50 cabin complex and an 18-hole golf course at Colbert Ferry.

LISTED SPECIES

In April 1982, the National Park Service requested information from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concerning those endangered or threatened species that might be affected by the development project at Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale. The Fish and Wildlife Service responded to this request on May 12, 1982, advising that two endangered species, the gray bat, Myotis grisescens, formally utilized the Georgetown Cave located within the Colbert Ferry area and the bald eagle, Haliaeetus leucocephalus, occasionally winters at Pickwick Lake.

In addition several species of endangered mussels which includes the white warty-back pearly Plethobasis cicatricosus, the orange-footed pimpleback, Plethobasis cooperianus, and the pink mucket pearly, Lampsilis orbiculata orbiculata have been found below Wilson Dam on the Tennessee River which could place them in Pickwick Lake.

2. interview recognized experts on the species at issue, including those within the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, state conservation agencies, universities, and others who may have data not yet found in scientific literature;
3. review literature and other scientific data to determine the species distribution, habitat needs, and other biological requirements;
4. analyze the effects of the action on individuals and populations of each species and its habitat, including cumulative effects of the action;
5. analyze alternative actions that may provide conservation measures;
6. conduct any studies necessary to fulfill the requirements of (1) through (5) above;
7. review any other relevant information.

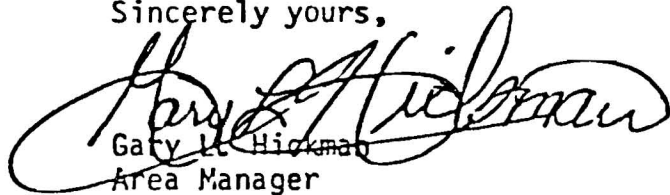
If you determine that the proposed action may affect any of the listed species or Critical Habitats or is likely to jeopardize the continued existence of proposed species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of any Critical Habitat proposed for such species, you must request in writing formal consultation pursuant to Section 7(a) from our office.

Section 7(d) of the Endangered Species Act, as amended, specifies that the Federal agency or the applicant shall not make any irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources to the project during the consultation process.

For additional information regarding your obligations under the Endangered Species Act, contact Fred Bagley, Endangered Species Specialist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Jackson Mall Office Suite 3185, 300 Woodrow Wilson Avenue, Jackson, Mississippi 39213, telephone FTS 490-4900 or commercial 601/960-4900.

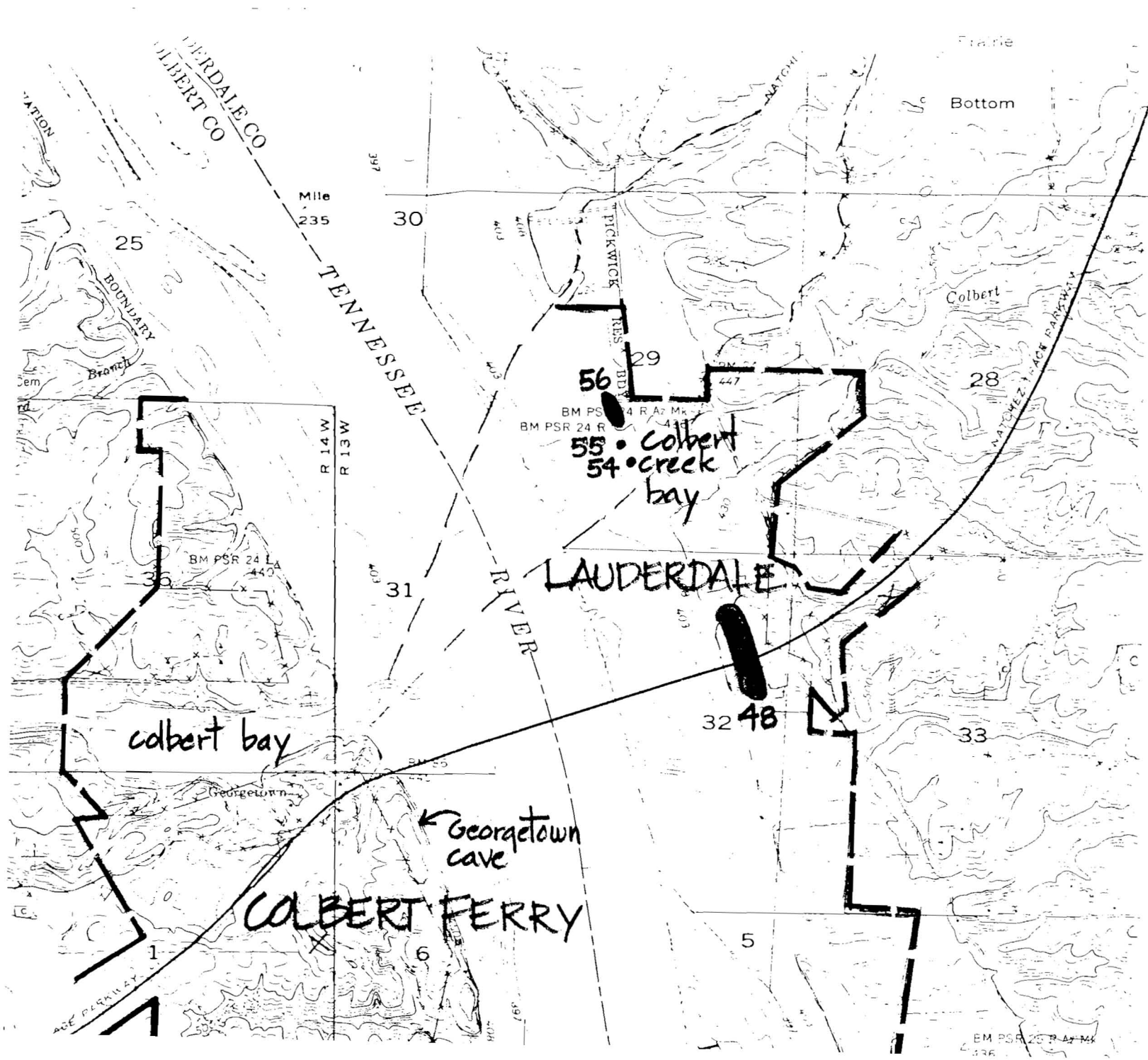
We appreciate your concern for endangered species.

Sincerely yours,



Gary L. Hickman
Area Manager

cc: D, FWS, Washington, D.C. (AFA/OES)
RD, FWS, Atlanta, GA (ARD-FA/SE)
ES, FWS, Decatur, AL
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Montgomery, AL





F. LAWRENCE GAYNOR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF ALABAMA
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
775 MONROE STREET
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36104-3898



TELEPHONE NUMBER
832-6621

June 9, 1982

Mr. John Murphy
Landscape Architect
Southeast/Southwest Team
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Denver Service Center
Post Office Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

Re: Natchez Trace Parkway
Colbert Ferry
Colbert County, Alabama

Lauderdale Park
Lauderdale County, Alabama

Dear Mr. Murphy:

Thank you for your letter of April 8, 1982 regarding the above referenced project. A review of our files indicates that eleven submerged archaeological sites are located in shallow water just off the shoreline of the Colbert Ferry property and two other submerged archaeological sites are located adjacent to the property. In addition, the old Colbert Ferry site is probably submerged although some evidence of it may still remain above the water level.

Seven submerged archaeological sites are located just off the shoreline of the Lauderdale Park property and four archaeological sites are located above the lake level on the park property. The four sites above the lake level are two Middle Woodland Copena mounds (1Lu54 and 55), a large village site (1Lu48), and a shell midden site (1Lu56). Attached is a map indicating the location of these four sites. All four are potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places according to the information obtained during the Pickwick Reservoir survey in 1937. However, due to the age of the information, all four sites should be re-evaluated according to the criteria of the National Register.

Below is a list of submerged archaeological sites adjacent to the two park properties. If park development plans included dredging, marinas, piers, etc., the protection of these submerged resources should be

APPENDIXES

- A: COMPLIANCE DOCUMENTS
- B: BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT
- C: PRELIMINARY ARCHEOLOGICAL REPORT

There would be no golf course under alternative 2 and thus associated impacts would be absent. Other natural resources impacts would be the same as for the proposal, but to a lesser degree.

Impacts on Cultural Resources, Socioeconomic Resources, and Visitors

In this alternative there would be no golf course. The lodge/cabin facility would be reduced from 200 units to 50 units, which would reduce the impacted area from 304 acres to 129 acres, thereby lessening the potential impact on currently unknown archeological resources.

The survey, treatment, and mitigation measures regarding these archeological resources would be the same as in the proposal.

Impacts on Cultural Resources

Whether the proposed development would affect cultural resources cannot be determined without an intensive archeological survey of the area affected by the proposal. This survey would determine if any archeological sites within the development area meet eligibility criteria for the National Register of Historic Places. If any of the sites are determined potentially eligible for the National Register, then mitigating measures would be undertaken to ensure their protection. These measures would be determined through a memorandum of agreement between the National Park Service, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the Alabama state historic preservation officer. NPS policy requires that the mitigation measures selected have the least impact on the resources. If the proposed development would adversely affect the archeological resources and no feasible alternative could be found, then the site would be recorded and salvaged following NPS standards.

In order to further protect resources within the development area, vegetation screening would be undertaken to reduce audio and visual impact and to protect the historic scene. In addition, all construction would be monitored by a qualified archeologist to ensure proper protection of archeological resources.

Socioeconomic Impacts

Probable use of local labor and materials for construction would have a short-term beneficial socioeconomic impact.

In the long term, there would be approximately 110 jobs and an annual payroll of \$1,100,000 created by the project. There is good potential for decreasing unemployment in the area because the jobs created by the project would most likely be filled by local residents. Utilizing the multiplier effect, the original payroll would add an annual estimated \$7,000,000 into the local economy once the complex is completed.

Impacts on Visitors

There would be some short-term disruption to visitors during construction; however, in the long term, visitor experiences would be enhanced because of the new recreational facilities and overnight accommodations that would be provided. The implementation of a fee system could result in some reduction in the use of the area by local visitors.

Although there would be intrusions on the existing scene, construction would be done as unobtrusively as possible. Existing views of the river would remain unobstructed or be enhanced.

Marina Sites Not Considered Viable

Four additional marina sites were explored on a preliminary basis and then eliminated from further study. Those sites, and the reasons they were discarded, are

a 200-boat marina in Colbert Bay--considered infeasible because it would encroach on cultural resources, would lead to heavy visitor concentrations and overuse of the resources, would mix too many uses in one place, would cause safety problems due to conflicts between swimmers and boaters, and could lead to greater destruction of wetlands than other alternatives

a 200-boat marina adjacent to Colbert Bay--considered infeasible because of the limited size of the site; because it would lead to heavy visitor concentrations, overuse of resources, and too many uses in one place; and because it would lead to safety problems due to conflicts between swimmers and boaters

a 200-boat marina upstream from Colbert Bay--considered infeasible due to 20 percent slopes and long walking distances; inaccessibility to the handicapped; and construction and maintenance difficulties

a 200-boat marina upstream of Colbert Creek Bay (Lauderdale side)--considered infeasible due to higher construction and maintenance costs

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROPOSAL

Impacts on Natural Resources

Approximately 60,000 cubic yards of material would be dredged to modify the existing boat basin at Colbert Bay. Dredging would increase turbidity, which would be short-term in nature. This would be reduced by the use of filter screens and/or bulkheading during the dredging process. Colbert Bay has received nutrient-rich silt from the surrounding farm areas. Although some of these nutrients would be released into Pickwick Lake, the initial impact would be minimal and of short duration.

Colbert Bay contains wetland habitat; however, development of the 15 boat slips would only minimally reduce waterfowl habitat (TVA 1981).

Dredged material would be deposited and diked on existing National Park Service lands within Colbert Ferry.

Water-based facilities in the floodplain would be subject to flooding. This would be minimized by floodproofing those facilities.

Approximately 131 acres of mixed hardwood and pine and 173 acres of former farmland would be removed or modified for site preparation for the campgrounds, lodge/cabin complex, activity center, information station, golf course, and hiking and bicycle trails. Similarly, this development

The demand for water-based recreation is greater than the available supply. This is illustrated at Pickwick Landing and Joe Wheeler state parks, both of which have over a year's waiting list for boat slips. In addition, more resort facilities are needed to meet the demands of the peak season. This demand will increase with parkway completion.

EXISTING FACILITIES

The existing facilities at Colbert Ferry consist of a visitor information center/ranger office, a boat ramp, most of the circulatory road system, a swimming area, a picnic area/comfort station, and interpretive sites for the historic Colbert house and ferry crossing (see Existing Conditions map). Lauderdale has six picnic tables, a parking lot, and two pit toilets. These facilities are used to capacity during the summer. The majority of the 76,000 visitors are local residents.

Current staffing for the Cherokee subdistrict, which includes Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale, is 16 people. This includes a subdistrict ranger, a maintenance foreman, equipment operators, technicians, maintenance workers, laborers, and lifeguards in season. The total current annual operating cost is just over \$45,000 per year for the Colbert and Lauderdale areas.



Haying Adjacent to Natchez Trace Parkway



Picnicking at Colbert Bay



Natchez Trace Parkway

Some prime farmland is located within the formerly cultivated areas. Neither unique farmlands nor threatened or endangered species of plants are known to occur in either Lauderdale or Colbert Ferry (USDA soil conservation map of Lauderdale and Colbert counties, January 1980, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, appendix A).

Wildlife

There is a variety of animals in the area, including deer, squirrels, cottontails, woodchucks, raccoons, and opossums. Birds such as woodpeckers, warblers, mourning doves, flycatchers, and sparrows are present. There are a few poisonous snakes in the area. Pickwick Lake is used as a resting and feeding area by migrating waterfowl. Pickwick Lake contains bass, crappie, catfish, walleye, sauger, and brim.

Five federally listed endangered animal species could occur in the area. The gray bat formerly inhabited the Georgetown Cave, which is within the boundary of Colbert Ferry. Although the cave is not presently being used by the gray bat, it is considered important potential habitat in efforts toward species recovery. Another endangered specie is the bald eagle, which occasionally winters on Pickwick Lake. Three endangered species of mussels are known to occur in Pickwick Lake: white warty back pearly, orange-footed pimpleback, and pink mucket pearly (appendix B). These species are not found in the Colbert Ferry/Lauderdale area.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Located within each area are remnants of the historic Natchez Trace, a vital 19th-century link between the Mississippi Territory and the fledgling United States. The trace was developed by utilizing a series of Indian trails. It was first used by flatboat crews returning to their homes in the Ohio river basin via Nashville, Tennessee, from trading expeditions to New Orleans and Natchez. The trace is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

From 1800 to 1820, as Mississippi was settled, the Natchez Trace was the most heavily utilized road in the old Southwest and became the major link with Nashville and the Ohio River Valley. In 1814 Andrew Jackson led his troops down the trace toward New Orleans. With the advent of the Mississippi steamboat, the trace gradually fell into disuse, though portions of the historic road have survived as part of local road networks.

George Colbert, a prominent Chickasaw chief, operated a ferry (referred to as Colbert Ferry) to take trace users north across the Tennessee River. The original ferry site, now under the waters of Pickwick Lake, is interpreted by an audiovisual exhibit on an adjacent bluff. The site of the George Colbert home is located in the Colbert Ferry unit adjacent to the historic trace. The frame house was destroyed by fire in the late 1930s, but there is an interpretive marker depicting the location of the house site and the historic trace. The site is being recommended for

COMPLIANCE

Dredging, filling, breakwater, and dock construction at Colbert Bay would comply with the requirements of section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. Turbidity during construction would be limited by silt screens or other methods. There will be only temporary localized siltation.

The National Park Service has consulted with the Tennessee Valley Authority's Department of Natural Resources and has determined that the proposal would be consistent with TVA's natural resource management program. No actions would directly or indirectly support occupation or significant modification of wetlands in compliance with Executive Order 11990.

Strict conformance to water safety rules and regulations would be enforced.

Because there is no practical alternative to locating water-oriented recreation and resource management facilities, portions of the areas lie within the 100-year floodplain. In compliance with Executive Order 11988, mitigating measures would be taken to floodproof existing and new structures to minimize potential flood damage and visitor safety would be ensured by maintaining preparedness for emergency evacuation in the event of flooding. The 100-year and 500-year floodplain elevations are shown on the Existing Conditions map.

In accordance with the Endangered Species Act, endangered and threatened species would continue to be protected within all areas under NPS jurisdiction. All actions are designed to avoid adverse impacts on listed species and to maintain their habitats within the area. Therefore there would be no effect on the current status of any listed species or critical habitat (see appendix A).

Accessibility for handicapped visitors to visitor facilities would be ensured in accordance with the Architectural Barriers Act of August 12, 1968, as amended and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

All cultural resources would be preserved onsite if possible. Any that would be affected by construction or human use would be inventoried (as defined by section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act), and least-impact management would be developed from that information. The review requirements in section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act as amended would be accomplished under the terms of the programmatic memorandum of agreement among the National Park Service, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (September 11, 1981).

All undertakings included in this plan have been and would continue to be developed in consultation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Alabama historic preservation officer and in full compliance with applicable laws, executive orders, and policies. Upon implementation, all undertakings which could affect cultural resources would be considered in advance by NPS regional cultural resource

proposed Natchez Trace Scenic Trail, which will ultimately run the entire length of the Natchez Trace Parkway.

Picnicking, fishing, boating, golfing, camping, and swimming would be the main recreational activities in the area. The primary interpretive theme would continue to concentrate on the historic Natchez Trace. The existing segment within Colbert Ferry would provide the visitor an opportunity to walk the original trace. The George Colbert homesite and the Colbert ferry site would continue to be interpreted and serve as the primary cultural attractions in the area.

Interpretive material on Colbert Ferry and Lauderdale, as well as the entire parkway, would be available at an unstaffed facility located at the proposed service station. Materials describing activities such as fishing, bicycling, camping, swimming, golfing, boating, would also be distributed. Area information would also be available at other units on the parkway and at selected areas outside the parkway.

Exhibits within the lodge complex would provide information on the Natchez Trace, other aspects of local and regional history, and nearby points of interest. All interpretive efforts will be done in consultation with the Denver Service Center and Harpers Ferry Center.

COSTS AND PHASING SEQUENCE

Development

Due to its high estimated cost, economic considerations would probably dictate phasing of the development. The following sequence is envisioned; however, it could be substantially modified according to the investment requirements of the concessioner. For example, the concessioner may wish to develop phases I and II concurrently to enhance the viability of the overall project.

Phase I: The 200-site campground would be built, including primitive and group campsites designed to accommodate hikers and bicyclists. A camp store and fee collection station would be constructed near the campground. Boat slips would be constructed in Colbert Bay for campers and day users. The existing National Park Service information/orientation building would be maintained until the new information/service station is built. The information building would then be used as a subdistrict ranger office.

Phase II: The main facilities developed under this most intensive phase would be the 150-room lodge, restaurant, and 50 cabin complex. Improved parkway access would be constructed by the National Park Service to provide access to the lodge/cabin complex.

Phase III: The 18-hole golf course (built to championship standards on 180 acres), the clubhouse, and the pro shop would be built.

Visitor Protection and Safety

- to provide a safe water use area at Colbert Ferry on the Tennessee River

Natural Resources

- to minimize the impact on natural resources where parkway land is essential for utility and transportation corridors and other development

Cultural Resources

- to determine, mark, and preserve all remains of the historic Trace within the boundaries of the parkway

Planning and Construction

- to complete the construction of the parkway motor road and associated developments

- to eliminate all at-grade crossings

- to provide the handicapped access to existing and proposed park facilities where the need has been demonstrated and in accordance with PL 90-480 and PL 93-112

- to construct additional trails within the Natchez Trace Parkway right-of-way, including the authorized Natchez Trace Trail

Public workshops were held in the Colbert Ferry/Lauderdale area in July 1982. Three alternatives, including the proposal, were presented. Most who commented supported some form of expanded development at the existing recreation area.

A meeting was held in Atlanta in October 1982 with potential concessioners to explore opportunities for increased concession involvement in this project and other NPS projects in the southeast. Several firms indicated possible interest.

