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**JEAN LAFITTE
NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
AND PRESERVE**

STATEMENT FOR MANAGEMENT

AUGUST 1994

Prepared by
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

With assistance from
Southwest Regional Office
Santa Fe, New Mexico



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INTRODUCTION

DOCUMENT PURPOSE

The major purpose of this Statement for Management is to identify concerns and issues relating to the management of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. The statement describes and evaluates existing conditions, provides a useful overview of the park, and presents management objectives that must be achieved in order to realize the park's purpose. The statement for management serves as a basis for future planning and research, but does not prescribe changes in management and use. The document is updated every 2 years.

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

The lower Mississippi Delta Region comprises the largest and most productive estuarine and wetland system on the North American continent: barrier islands, natural levees, hardwood forests, bottomlands, swamps, marshes, beaches, mudflats, lakes, rivers, bayous, and coastal bays. Subtropical warmth, abundant rainfall, and rich soils have created an environment that supports a rich assemblage of wildlife resources and biotic communities. Reptiles and amphibians thrive including the American alligator that has rebounded from the brink of extinction. Birdlife flourishes, from huge colonies of nesting seabirds on barrier islands, vast rookeries of waders, unparalleled concentrations of wintering waterfowl, and the semi-annual trans-gulf flights by neotropical migrant birds.

Soon after the region was created by deltaic processes, its rich natural resources were exploited by migrating American Indians. During the colonial period, its strategic importance was recognized by the European powers. France, Spain, and Great Britain each vied for hegemony, but ultimately, because of Thomas Jefferson's vision, the fledgling United States won control and consolidated its hold at the Battle of New Orleans. This level of control provided the opportunity for U.S. expansion into the former Louisiana Territory and beyond, to the Rio Grande and the Pacific.

The region evolved an indigenous culture that is unique and apart. Its antecedents included American Indians; colonial settlers of many nationalities from the French and Spanish periods; French-speaking African slaves and free-persons-of-color; former slaves from the Caribbean and the defeated Confederacy; Acadians driven from their homes in Nova Scotia; Americans of many ethnic backgrounds who arrived with the trade generated from the region; and immigrants who poured into the port from every part of the globe.

The real significance of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve lies not in any single natural or cultural resource. Rather, the park's importance is in preserving, interpreting, and celebrating the totality of the region's diverse character. The combined forces of the Gulf Coast climate, bountiful resources, geography, and the mixing of many diverse peoples forged a regional character reflected in the food, music, architecture, customs

and life-ways that make the Mississippi Delta Region a distinctive component of the United States.

BACKGROUND

LEGISLATION

The establishment of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve was authorized by an act of the 95th Congress (P.L. 95-625), on November 10, 1978 for the following purposes:

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 the 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.

Ten years after establishment, Public Law 100-250 amended the enabling legislation to include:

... folk life centers to be established in the Acadian region;...

Today the establishing legislation provides the basis and direction for Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve's four management units: Acadian, Barataria, Chalmette, and New Orleans.

Section 905 of the legislation permits hunting, fishing (including commercial fishing), and trapping within the core area of the Barataria Unit in accordance with Federal and State laws. It further states that the Secretary may designate zones where and establish periods when no hunting, fishing, or trapping shall be permitted for reasons of public safety.

Section 907 of the legislation establishes the Delta Region Preservation Commission. This commission is made up of 16 members nominated and/or appointed by the Governor of the State of Louisiana, various local parish councils, the mayor of the city of New Orleans and the Secretary of Interior. The function of the commission is 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.

LOCATION

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve is comprised of four management units located throughout the Mississippi Delta Region. Three of these units are located in the New Orleans metropolitan area: Chalmette Unit - located six miles down river, Barataria Preserve Unit - located twelve miles south, and the New Orleans Unit located in the French Quarter of the city. The fourth of these management units, the Acadian Unit, is located west of New Orleans and includes cultural centers in the towns of Lafayette, Thibodaux, and Eunice.

LAND ACQUISITION

The park's establishing legislation provides authority for the secretary of the interior to acquire lands at the Barataria and New Orleans (formerly French Quarter) Units by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange. Oil and gas rights will remain in private ownership unless acquired with owner consent. While not specifically stated in the establishing legislation, the Field Solicitor concluded that this same language applies to acquisition for the Chalmette Unit. The addition of the Acadian folk life centers allows acquisition of lands or interests in lands not to exceed approximately 20 acres in Acadian villages and towns, of which 10 acres have been acquired to date.

The Barataria Preserve Unit is the only area of the park with a substantial land base. It is managed primarily as a natural area and includes an 8,318-acre Core area and a Park Protection Zone of approximately 10,000 acres. Legislation provided for federal land acquisition within the Park Protection Zone if state/local governments failed to develop preservation and protection guidelines applicable to the use and development of properties within the zone. The latter case prevailed, and the National Park Service, to date, has acquired 1,309 acres within the Park Protection Zone.

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

Congress provided legislative authority to enter into cooperative agreements with owners of properties of natural, historical, and cultural significance for purposes of preservation and interpretation. The legislation provides broad latitude as to the extent of the park's involvement in these agreements. Involvement may range from installment of a wayside exhibit to technical program assistance. The park has varying levels of affiliation with a variety of cooperators for purposes related to the establishment of the park. A listing of current cooperative agreements is appended.

LAW ENFORCEMENT JURISDICTION

The park exercises concurrent (state and federal) law enforcement jurisdiction within the boundaries of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve as described in Cooperative Agreement 7530-82-002, dated January 26, 1982, without termination, between the National Park Service and the State of Louisiana.

PARK DESCRIPTION

RESOURCES

The primary resources of the four management units of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve are as follows:

Acadian Unit

Louisiana's Acadian people are descendants of some of the first French colonists to settle Canada in 1604. They were forcibly dispersed from Nova Scotia in 1755 by the British to ports across the old and new worlds. After 1763, the Spanish Colonial government encouraged many to emigrate to Louisiana. They settled in various areas of the state, and adapted to conditions as they found them. This adaptability resulted in distinctive folkways that are reflected in both traditional and contemporary language, music, food, and crafts.

The Acadian Unit, established to interpret the prairie and wetlands Acadian cultures, consists of three geographically separate sites in the towns of Lafayette, Eunice, and Thibodaux, Louisiana. The Lafayette site serves as headquarters for the Acadian Unit, as well as a cultural center that interprets all of Acadiana.

Situated in Eunice, the Prairie Acadian Culture Center interprets the history and culture of those Acadians who settled the prairie region of southwestern Louisiana and focuses on agricultural activities such as cattle ranching and rice growing.

The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center interprets the history and culture of those Acadians who settled the delta region of bayous, swamps, and marshes. Located in Thibodaux, the Center focuses upon regional influences of the Bayou Lafourche area: fishing, hunting, and trapping. The Thibodaux site is bordered on the north by historic Bayou Lafourche, an important navigable waterway until the early 1900s.

Assistance is provided through cooperative agreements for two sites administered by this unit. The Chitimacha Cultural Center, located in Charenton, interprets the cultural heritage of the Chitimacha Indian Tribe of Louisiana. The Tunica-Biloxi Indian Tribe operates the Tunica-Biloxi Regional Indian Center and Museum in Marksville and features one of the largest and finest collections of European era trade goods yet discovered.

Barataria Preserve Unit

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

The natural communities of the preserve fall into three broad types, reflecting the underlying geological structure: hardwood forest, swamp, and marsh. The backbone of the preserve is an abandoned distributary channel of the Mississippi River and its flanking natural levees. Ribbons of firm alluvial soils support the only ground above sea level, on which grows a hardwood forest of ridge and bottomland species. On the backslopes of these natural levees, where the soils are inundated much of the year, grows a baldcypress-water tupelo swamp forest. Portions of both the ridge and swamp forests are nearing maturity and both contain a number of ancient specimens. The preserve's forest is the finest examples remaining in the modern delta of this original forest ecosystem. Marshes occur beyond the swamps, where alluvial soils have subsided well below sea level. Above this sunken surface, generations of marsh plants laid down a layer of peat, often many feet thick. The peat supports a unique floating marsh, known as *flotant*. The Preserve anchors the eastern end of one of the largest regions of floating marsh in the world, stretching westward in a broad band to the Atchafalaya basin. In places the flotant is so thick that it supports a unique floating community of shrubs and small trees.

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

This fertile estuarine system has provided a rich matrix for human beings throughout its short geologic existence. Within the Barataria Preserve Unit are prehistoric sites representing a nearly complete chronology of habitation within the Mississippi Delta, including major midden complexes, a ditch system excavated by trappers (trennasses), and 20th century oil and gas exploration roads and canals. Historic sites, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, date back to the late 18th century and include colonial and plantation era agricultural remains, and a turn-of-the-century commercial swamp-logging canal system. The preserve's trail system uses this historic overlay of roads, levees, and canals to provide access to its natural

communities.

Chalmette Unit

Originally administered by the War Department, the site came into the national park system in 1939 as Chalmette National Historical Park, and was merged into and redesignated as the Chalmette Unit by the park's establishing legislation. The unit's primary resource is the Battlefield at which the January 8, 1815 Battle of New Orleans was fought. One hundred feet high, the Chalmette Monument was built between 1855 and 1908 to honor those who fell in the New Orleans Campaign. Lying just east of the Battlefield, the 17-acre Chalmette National Cemetery holds the remains of 15,000 United States servicepersons and their dependents, and includes four War of 1812 soldiers; and soldiers, sailors, and marines from the Civil War, Spanish American War, World War I, and World War II; and 25 veterans of the Vietnam War. The 1833 Beauregard House, located within the unit, is an excellent example of typical antebellum-period Lower Mississippi Delta houses. Interior exhibits interpret the house and life in the Mississippi Delta Region from the 1700s to the present.

The Isleño Cultural Center is an 1850s-era structure administered by the Chalmette Unit through a cooperative agreement with St. Bernard Parish. The center serves to conserve and interpret the unique lifestyle of the Isleños people (Canary Islanders), who settled the lower Mississippi Delta Region when Louisiana was under Spanish rule in 1778.

New Orleans Unit

The New Orleans Unit (formerly the French Quarter Unit) operates a visitor center within the French Quarter that provides park-wide orientation and highlights the development of cultural diversity in the Mississippi Delta region. In addition, the present visitor center facility is the point of embarkation for walking tours of two National Historic Landmarks, the Vieux Carré (French Quarter) and the New Orleans Garden District, and features programs focusing upon Mississippi Delta region history and culture.

The French Quarter itself (known as the Vieux Carré--"Old Square)--is the 66-block original city laid out by French engineers on the banks of the river in 1718. In one of the first such actions in the United States, the state made it a historic district in 1935. Declared a National Historic Landmark in 1962, it contains many structures on the National Register of Historic Places that have significance architecturally or in relation to historic events. Significant historic structures include the Cabildo, the Spanish Capitol, in which the Louisiana Purchase was signed, and the Presbytere, seat of the Roman Catholic Church in Louisiana, twin buildings that are excellent examples of late 18th century Spanish colonial architecture; St. Louis Cathedral, the oldest functioning cathedral in the United States; the Pontalba Buildings flanking Jackson Square; and the oldest building in the Mississippi Valley, the Ursuline Convent, which now houses the archives of the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Scores of other buildings dating from the antebellum period, decorated with distinctive wrought and cast iron

trimmed balconies, and enclosing courtyards lush with tropical plants, contribute to the special ambience of the French Quarter.

VISITOR USE

Visitation to the units of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve is directly attributable to tourism activity in the New Orleans area. National conventions, festivals, special events and gambling bring over 6.5 million visitors annually to the metropolitan area. A 1992 study by the New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation reveals some information about the typical New Orleans visitor. The average group size is 3 people and most generally arrive by automobile. Regional travelers from surrounding states make up 45 percent of visitors to the city. Fourteen percent of those polled indicated Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve as a popular place to visit while in the city.

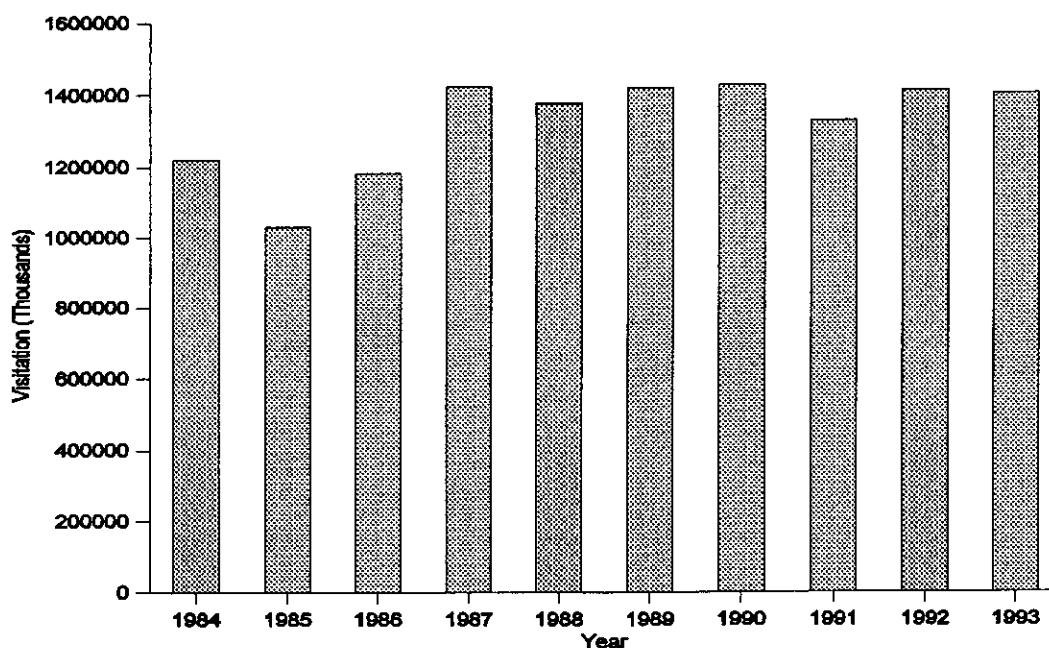


Figure 1: 10-Year Park Visitation

The 10-year statistics show a visitation that has remained fairly constant for the park. An average of 1.3 million persons visit the units of the park each year. Area tourism and a comfortable year-round climate are a few of the factors which contribute this steady visitation.

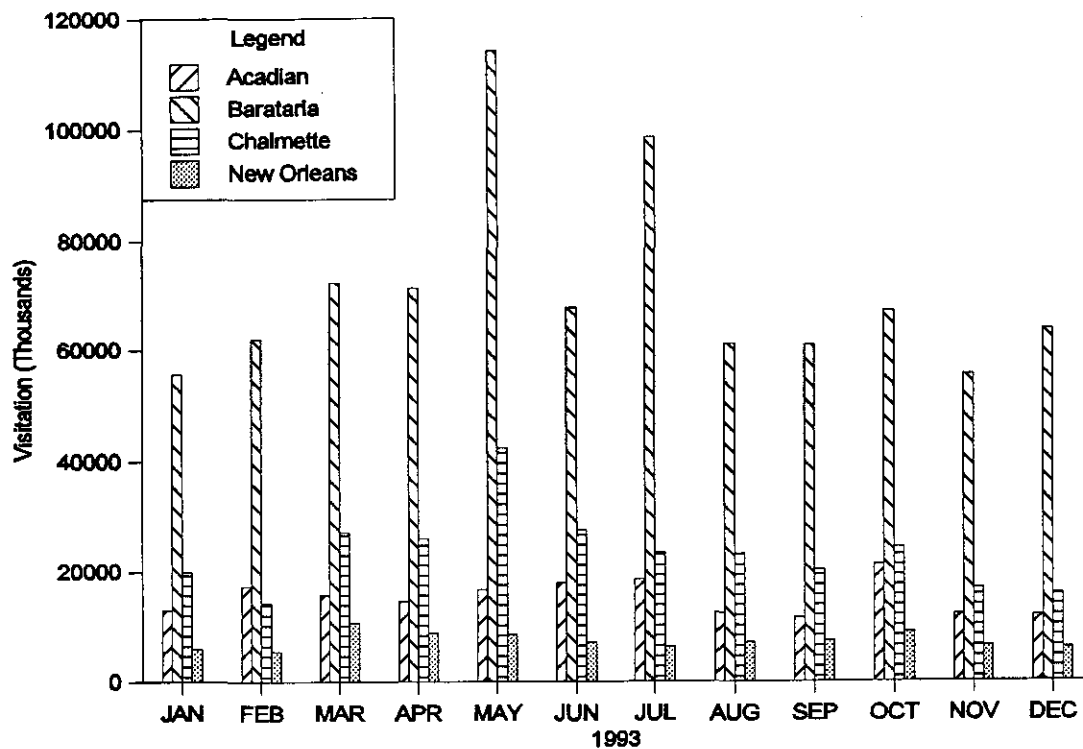


Figure 2: Unit Visitation - 1993

Unit visitation also remains fairly uniform throughout the course of a year, with slightly higher visitation during the spring months of the year. Although not established until 1988, the Acadian Unit visitation statistics include data from cooperative agreement sites for the years 1986 and 1987. While most visitors arrive by privately-owned conveyance, a commercially-operated and licensed riverboat and tour busses offer visitors mass transportation to several sites.

There are no concession operated facilities or overnight camping within any unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. No recreation or entrance fees are collected. Camping facilities are located near the Barataria Preserve Unit at Bayou Segnette State Park. All other units have adequate hotel and restaurant facilities located nearby. The park issues two commercial use licenses: one for a canoe rental operation within Barataria Preserve Unit and one for riverboat access to the Chalmette Unit via the Mississippi River.

A review during 1993 by the Socio-Economic Studies Division of WASO revealed the need to modify the park's public use assessment methodology. Installation of inductive loop counters, statistical sampling, and adjustments to multipliers will affect future visitation statistics.

LAND USES/TRENDS

Acadian Unit

Each of the Acadian Cultural Centers is located in an urban area with only a small area of National Park Service ownership, surrounded by mosaics of private and city properties.

Acadian Cultural Center - The center is situated on a 6.76 acre triangular tract on the outskirts of Lafayette. Adjacent and nearby properties include: the privately owned 15 acre Vermilionville, a historic recreation of an Acadian village featuring crafts, foods, demonstrations and displays catering to the tourist market; a city owned playground with ball fields and storage sheds; the Lafayette Regional Airport; and the Lafayette Parish School Board Administrative offices. Land uses are expected to remain fairly stable. However, there are proposals to widen Surrey Road, which forms the southwestern boundary, to four lanes. There is also a proposal to convert a portion of the city playground to a recreational vehicle park to serve tourists visiting Vermilionville.

Prairie Acadian Cultural Center - The center occupies about three-quarters of a 1 acre city block in downtown Eunice. The remainder of the block is occupied by the city-owned Liberty Theatre and one privately owned lot. The center faces a divided parkway, and the surrounding blocks are a mix of commercial establishments. Surrounding land uses are expected to remain stable.

Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center - The 5 acre site is an irregular parcel situated between Bayou Lafourche and historic Louisiana Highway 1 in Thibodaux. Neighbors include a mix of businesses and residences. Land use trends should remain fairly stable, though some development and turnover of businesses can be expected.

Barataria Preserve Unit

As the largest land unit, the Barataria Preserve is legislatively authorized to acquire 18,378 acres. To date 9,449 acres have been acquired, leaving a total of 8,928 acres slated for acquisition. Of this amount, 2,018 acres are held by other public agencies. The park is enjoined from purchasing these properties by legislation, and some of these public bodies will not or cannot donate them.

To the northeast, the Preserve's boundary follows a federally-funded hurricane protection levee, designed to protect developed areas from storm surges. To the west, the boundary follows the shoreline of lakes Cataouatche and Salvador and major tributary waterways. To the south is the Bayou Barataria reach of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, except where it excludes the communities of Crown Point and Isle Bonne.

Though the 1950s and 1960s saw considerable exploration for petroleum products with the accompanying infrastructure of roads, canals, and drilling operations, actual production was limited and short-lived. Today, no active wells exist within the preserve; however a total of

45 plugged wellheads remain. Of these, eight are in need of reclamation. Three active fields remain near the boundary, but no new wells are planned or anticipated, and these fields will be phased out as production falls off.

A variety of private holdings, facilities, residences, and recreational camps exist within the boundary. Two state highways, 45 and 301, traverse the park on a right-of-way, with accompanying power, phone, gas, cable, and waterline rights-of-way. There is a small, parish-owned waterline pumphouse on Highway 45. Three natural gas pipelines and two petroleum pipelines traverse the Preserve with one pipeline pumping facility. There are three major overhead powerline corridors, and a power substation on a 4 acre inholding, which is accessible by a road right-of-way. A microwave tower is located on a 7 acre lease at the end of Highway 301. Surface ownership for all of these rights-of-way, except where noted, is vested in the United States. Two residences are located on a three acre lease within the boundary. There are about 150 recreational camps located on leases. About 50 of these are on property owned or slated to be acquired in fee simple ownership by the park. The remainder are on properties owned by other public agencies. Some of these camps have electrical service, but all are without other public utilities, including water and sewerage.

Communities surrounding the Preserve have traditionally been involved in commercial seafood harvesting, petroleum and maritime related occupations. During the 1970s and 1980s, these communities saw rapid growth accompanied by wholesale land-use conversion and an overburdened infrastructure. Areas east and north of the Preserve were a battleground among competing interests, as landowners, developers, and some local officials sought to convert wetlands to subdivisions and environmentalists, sportsmen, and regulatory agencies sought to prevent development by opposing any location for a hurricane protection levee which enclosed wetlands. This situation changed during the 1990s. The levee is being built generally along the interface between tidal wetlands and developed or formerly-drained wetlands. In addition, the rapid population growth of previous decades has ended and developmental pressures have decreased.

Land-use trends in the vicinity of the Preserve are undergoing a gradual change. The petroleum industry, and related transportation and construction services are in decline. The seafood industry is, at best, stable. Traditional occupations such as trapping have become marginalized. Because of highway and levee improvements the suburban communities to the north of the preserve should continue to grow slowly, and to the south a gradual conversion from traditional bayou communities to bedroom communities will continue. There has been a gradual increase in recreational and tourist-oriented commerce, as restaurants, canoe rental, and boat tour operations have opened in the vicinity of the Preserve. This trend is expected to continue.

Chalmette Unit

The 143-acre Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery is bordered on the south by the Mississippi River. On the north the unit is bounded by a railroad and the St. Bernard Highway, beyond which is a residential subdivision and undeveloped pasture. Within the Unit is a 1.13 acre sewage treatment plant owned by St. Bernard Parish. Downstream is a 50-acre bauxite tailing landfill and oxidation pond owned and maintained by Kaiser Aluminum, and the 216-acre remainder of the Kaiser facility now owned by the St. Bernard Parish Port Authority which is redeveloping the site as an industrial park attached to the Chalmette Terminal. Upstream is the Chalmette Slip and a docking facility, the 100-acre Arabi Terminal, owned by the Port Authority, which contains a buffer of heretofore undeveloped forest along the unit property line.

There are plans to modernize the port facilities and attract shipping related businesses to both the areas upstream and downstream from the unit. In addition, a new roadway is planned to bisect the pasture area across the highway, linking the port facilities to the interstate highway, and possibly spurring further development in the former pasture. There are also proposals to extend a barge mooring facility in the river along the unit boundary.

New Orleans Unit

The unit has two facilities in the Vieux Carré Historic District (French Quarter). One is a visitor center located in a leased space within the French Market, a city-owned area of renovated historic buildings and open pedestrian malls with tourist oriented shops and restaurants. The second is the 419 Rue Decatur building, which is owned by the park and is undergoing renovation. It will house the park's main visitor center, the New Orleans Unit offices, and the park's central administrative headquarters. 419 Rue Decatur is five blocks from the visitor center in a former commercial area undergoing extensive renovation of historic buildings by tourist-oriented businesses.

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Park Headquarters

Park headquarters is located temporarily in GSA-leased space at 365 Canal Street in New Orleans. Plans for occupation of 419 Rue Decatur were delayed during 1993 when treatment for termites revealed the need for extensive structural rehabilitation of the building.

Acadian Unit

The Acadian Cultural Center and headquarters for the Acadian sites is located at 501 Fisher Road in Lafayette, Louisiana. The 15,296 square-foot Center was opened for public use on March 29, 1994. The Center has a 6,000 square-foot museum and theater seating for 150

persons.

The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center is located at 314 St. Mary Street in Thibodaux and opened to the public on November 21, 1992. The facility has a 50-seat audio/visual theater and a 200-seat performance center that are utilized for programs related to the Wetland Acadian themes.

The Prairie Acadian Cultural Center is located at 250 W. Park Avenue in Eunice and was opened to the public on October 19, 1991. The Visitor Center contains a museum area with exhibits on the development of the Prairie Acadian culture. The facility contains a performance center that seats 100 people, used for audio-visual programs and music demonstrations, and a fully equipped demonstration kitchen.

Barataria Unit

The Barataria Preserve Visitor Center is located on Louisiana State Highway 45 and was opened to the public in April 1986. Additional facilities of the Barataria Preserve Unit include unit headquarters, maintenance building, four picnic areas, and three comfort stations.

The recently completed Barataria Environmental Education Center will greatly expand park educational and outreach capabilities. This 7,703 square-foot facility includes a multi-purpose classroom, laboratory, library, audiovisual space, and amphitheater for student groups.

Self-guiding trails - There are approximately eight miles of maintained trails in the Barataria Preserve Unit. These include the Bayou Coquille Trail, a combination hard-surface and boardwalk, 0.5 miles in length and handicapped accessible. Other hard-surfaced or boardwalked trails are the Marsh Overlook - 0.4 miles, Palmetto - 0.9 miles, Ring Levee - one kilometer (0.6 miles) and Wood Duck - 0.4 miles. Primitive trails include the Plantation - 3.2 miles, Old Barataria - 1.2 miles, and Twin Canals - 0.7 miles. Twelve miles of waterways are available for non-motorized craft such as canoes and pirogues, and another 20 miles are available for all types of craft.

Chalmette Unit

The Chalmette Visitor Center is located off Louisiana State Highway 46 and was opened in May, 1986. The center houses a small museum with uniforms and information about the military units that participated in the Battle of New Orleans. Other facilities include a picnic area and the following historic structures and sites:

The Chalmette Monument was started in 1840 and finished in 1908 under the direction of the United States Daughters of 1776 & 1812. The monument is 100 feet - 2 inches in height and was constructed to commemorate the American victory in 1815.

The Beauregard House, an antebellum home of French-Louisiana architectural style, was built 18 years after the Battle of New Orleans. The interior of the Beauregard House was restored during 1993 and long range plans include improving the exhibits that tell the story of life along the Mississippi River.

The Grand Army of the Republic Monument was constructed in 1874 to commemorate the Union dead by the Grand Army of the Republic.

The Chalmette National Cemetery was established in 1864 as a burial place for Union troops. Stewardship was transferred to the National Park Service in 1939.

A caretaker's house was constructed for the National Cemetery in 1929. This two story structure now serves as headquarters for the Unit.

Self-Guiding Facilities/Trails - There is a 1.5 mile tour road that links important locations of the battlefield.

New Orleans Unit

The Visitor Center and Folklife Center is located at 916 N. Peters Street, New Orleans, within the boundaries of the historic Vieux Carré (French Quarter). The facility occupies space leased from the French Market Corporation, a city-owned enterprise, and was opened to the public on November 19, 1986. The facility consists of an information desk, small exhibit area, a stage, a 50-person performance area, and a demonstration kitchen.

An outdoor stage and performance area administered by the French Market Corporation is located approximately 50 yards from the center and is periodically used for park sponsored musical presentations.

MANAGEMENT ZONING

Acadian Unit

All facilities and lands under the Acadian Unit are classified as a development zone, and management emphasis is on visitor use and services, landscaping, and administrative facilities.

Barataria Preserve Unit

The bulk of the Barataria Preserve Unit is managed as a natural zone, and includes most of the lands and waters of both the core area and park protection zone. The establishing legislation provided for the Park Protection Zone to serve as a buffer area north of the core area. Those areas managed as a development zone include the Visitor Center and administrative facilities, the Environmental Education Center, Kenta Canal canoe launch, sewage treatment facilities,

public and Park roads and the Bayou Segnette Waterway, a major water thoroughfare.

Chalmette Unit

The area managed as a cultural zone coincides with the boundary that delimits this National Register property. Emphasis throughout this unit is on the preservation, protection, and interpretation of the cultural resources and their settings. A commemorative area includes the Chalmette National Cemetery and the Chalmette Battlefield Monument, and are managed to create a commemorative setting rather than a particular historic setting. The development zone includes the maintenance area, administrative area, tour road waysides, unit roads and parking areas. Special use zones include lands owned by St. Bernard Parish, used for a sewage disposal plant, and a man-made levee that abuts the southern boundary adjacent to the Mississippi River; management is shared through agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Lake Borgne Levee District.

New Orleans Unit

All facilities under management of this Unit are classified under the development zone, and are managed for visitor use and services and administrative facilities.

PLANNING AND RELATED STUDIES

EXISTING PLANS/STUDIES			
Document Title	Status	Preparer	Date Prepared
General Management Plan/ Development Concept Plan	Final	Denver Service Center	1982
Amendment to the General Management Plan	Draft	Jean Lafitte Denver Service Center	1994
Boat Maintenance Plan	Final	Jean Lafitte	1994
Boat Operation Plan	Draft	Jean Lafitte	
Barataria Trail Plan	Draft	Jean Lafitte	1990
Collection Management Plan	Final	WASO, SWRO	1993
Historic Resource Study of the Barataria Unit	Final	Holmes	
Historic Resource Study of the Chalmette Unit	Final	Greene Denver Service Center	1985

EXISTING PLANS/STUDIES Document Title	Status	Preparer	Date Prepared
Land Protection Plan	Final	Denver Service Center	1984
Trapping Management Plan	Final	Jean Lafitte	1990
Integrated Pest Management	Final	Southwest Region Ireland	1990
Surface Water Management Plan		Jean Lafitte	1990
Interpretive Prospectus- French Quarter	Final	Jean Lafitte	1989
Emergency Operations Plan	Draft	Jean Lafitte	
Resource Management Plan	Draft	Jean Lafitte	1993
Interpretive Development Plan - 419 Rue Decatur	Draft	Jean Lafitte	1993

NEEDED PLANS/STUDIES Document Title	Preparer
Interpretive Development Plan - Acadian Unit	Jean Lafitte
Water Quality Management Plan	Jean Lafitte
Vegetation Management Plan	Jean Lafitte
Fire Management Plan	Jean Lafitte/SWR
Hunting Management Plan	Jean Lafitte
Nutria Reduction Plan	Jean Lafitte
Environmental Education Center - Curriculum	Jean Lafitte
Backcountry Management Plan	Jean Lafitte
Minerals Management Plan	Jean Lafitte

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

- ♪ Coordinate the efforts of the four management units and approved cooperators to ensure unified management in keeping with the establishing legislation for the park.
- ♪ Develop partnerships with schools, private organizations and local, state and federal agencies in order to promote the park's enabling legislation to preserve and interpret the natural and historical resources of the Mississippi Delta region.
- ♪ Coordinate with the Delta Region Preservation Commission regarding park activities so that they may advise the Secretary and inform interested members of the public and governmental agencies.
- ♪ Rehabilitate and maintain park facilities and landscapes that are essential for interpreting the history and cultural significance of the Mississippi Delta region while maintaining public health and safety.
- ♪ Provide partnership assistance through the utilization of cooperative agreements with the owners of properties of natural, historical, and cultural significance in order to preserve the natural and historical resources of the Mississippi Delta region and provide for their interpretation.
- ♪ Acquire such lands, servitudes, or interests in lands to protect the natural values of the Barataria Preserve Unit.
- ♪ Coordinate the development of parkwide interpretive programs in order to ensure unified themes and approaches to the unique combination of the park's natural and cultural resources.
- ♪ Provide protection to the resources and facilities of the park in order to provide a quality experience under safe conditions for all visitors and employees.

MAJOR ISSUES

1. Water Quality

In the Barataria Preserve Unit water resources are adversely affected by stormwater drainage, direct sewage input, and increasing salinity. Suburban communities on the boundary of the park pump stormwater over the levees directly into the park and into waterways that feed the park. This stormwater contains a wide variety of contaminants, including lawn chemicals, detergents, paints, oil, and other substances which bypass the sewage treatment system and are flushed directly into street drains.

Sources of direct sewage input include broken pipes which leak into the stormwater drainage system, inadequate septic systems from homes and camps in rural communities, and direct sewage dumping from boats, camps, and homes into waterways. Pollutants from drainage and sewage can not only harm human health, but can also affect water chemistry in ways detrimental to ecosystem functioning.

Increasing salinity has been a function of subsidence and erosion throughout the estuary, natural processes exacerbated by leveeing, channelizing, and canal dredging. Salinity changes affect water chemistry, benthic communities, plant vigor, and ultimately ecosystem composition.

2. Freshwater and Sediment Diversion

The most profound change in the preserve's hydrology resulted from the leveeing of the Mississippi River and the subsequent cessation of yearly freshwater and sediment inputs into the upper basin. The process of leveeing the river began in the early 18th century, and the ecosystem of the preserve and surrounding areas responded by transforming itself into an area dependent upon rain as the only source of freshwater, and upon the creation by plant growth and decomposition of organic soils to replace lost sediments.

Under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, several diversion projects are dedicated to diversion of freshwater from the Mississippi River to revitalize wetlands and waterways.

3. Erosion

The most acute problem consequent to changes in water chemistry and sediment input has been a greatly increased rate of erosion throughout the estuary and along the preserve's shoreline. Land loss rates along organic marsh shorelines have exceeded 30 feet per year in recent decades. Erosion is a natural process in inter-lobe deltaic areas, but the rate of loss which the preserve is now experiencing far exceeds those that would be expected under natural conditions. At the same time, absent sediments from the river, no new land is being created to offset subsidence and erosion.

4. Bank Stability

Erosion from boat wakes is a problem along waterways. This is especially serious along the Bayou Barataria reach of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and the Bayou Segnette Waterway, where large vessels and a high volume of traffic contribute to serious bank stability problems.

5. Marsh Management

Marsh management represents a much debated approach to curbing wetland change and erosion by impounding and controlling surface water flow and discharge either by mechanical means or introduction of new sediment sources.

6. Navigational Dredging

Dredging of waterways directly affects shallow estuarine water bottoms by increasing saltwater intrusion and accelerating erosion. The associated hydrologic changes affect both brackish and intermediate marshes in the Barataria Preserve Unit. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers retains a superior jurisdiction over matters of navigation in these waterways.

7. Overnight facilities at Environmental Education Center

The park's 1982 General Management Plan proposed tent platforms for overnight camping in addition to an environmental education center at the Barataria Preserve Unit. Although the center was recently completed, the overnight facilities were not included in the construction program. Comments received on the amendment to the general management plan focused on the completion of the overnight facilities.

8. Industrial Development at Chalmette

The St. Bernard Port, Harbor and Terminal District is undertaking an approximately \$25 million development project at the Arabi and Chalmette Terminals. These terminals are immediately adjacent to the Chalmette Battlefield on its east and west boundaries. Industrial development, particularly at the Arabi Terminal, could seriously impact the historic setting of the battlefield and cause visual and audio intrusion on the most visitor sensitive area of the park.

9. de La Ronde Ruins

The ruins of the Pierre Denis del La Ronde plantation house is the only surviving structure with a historical relationship to the Battle of New Orleans. The ruins are located in a traffic island of state highway 46, and an oak arbor, once located on the river-side of the house, is separated from the ruins by the highway and active railroad tracks. The ruins are inaccessible to the public and work on them by the local government has diminished their integrity. The local government would like the National Park Service to assume responsibility for the ruins.

10. Chalmette Sewage Treatment

A ca. 1961 sewage treatment facility is located on approximately one acre of ground on the Chalmette Battlefield. Although partially screened by vegetation, the facility is an intrusion on the historic setting of the park.

11. Wisner Tract Resource Protection

Lands within the Barataria Preserve Unit known as "the Wisner Tract" are held in trust for the Wisner Foundation by the City of New Orleans. Consisting of 1,960 acres, these lands are unavailable for any form of conveyance until the year 2014. Well over 100 recreational camps exist on this tract and activities occurring there adversely affect water quality and resource protection within the preserve boundary.

12. NPS role in New Orleans Riverfront

A high level of development activity is occurring along the Mississippi riverfront including the expansion of the Aquarium of the Americas, a proposed insectarium, and the world's largest gambling casino. The nature and extent of involvement of National Park Service presence along the Mississippi River waterfront and adjacent lands in New Orleans needs to be determined.

13. Placement of Spoil for Beneficial Use

The Preserve is located at the nexus of two major Corps of Engineers maintained inland navigational corridors: the east-west Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) and the north-south Bayou Segnette-Bayou Barataria Waterways. Maintenance of these waterways will require periodic dredging. The Preserve should work in conjunction with the COE and the state to insure that spoil from this dredging is used in the most beneficial manner possible for shoreline stabilization and marsh substrate enhancement.

14. Navigational Concerns

The presence of major navigation corridors through and on the boundary of the Preserve poses special concerns that fall into four categories:

Jurisdiction--in some cases the Corps and Coast Guard retain a superior jurisdiction that may prevent NPS from exercising full authority over these waterways.

Navigational Hazards--Sunken watercraft, pilings, and other obstructions exist in these waterways which pose a safety threat to park visitors.

Viewshed Impairment--The very existence of linear canals flanked by spoil banks

detract from the visitor experience. In addition, marine detritus such as pilings and sunken watercraft impair the scenic values of this wetland environment.

Toxic and Harmful Substances--The GIWW is a major corridor for transport of petroleum products and the potential for accidental spills is real. In addition, illegal disposal of oil and other substances by active or derelict watercraft is a problem.

15. Exotic Species

Nutria--This exotic rodent poses a major threat to the integrity of marsh substrates. Once held in check by commercial trappers, a collapsing world fur market has led to rebounding populations. As yet, no consensus has emerged about the best method for dealing with this alien threat.

Exotic Aquatic Plants--Water Hyacinth, *Salvinia*, and Alligator Weed are aggressive exotic plants that choke waterways in the Preserve, necessitating large expenditures for removal. Removal efforts thus far have been only marginally successful within the Preserve because of a reluctance to spray herbicides. Means to achieve consistent suppression have yet to be determined.

Other Exotics--A number of other exotic plants plague the various units of the park, affecting landscaping costs in some areas and forest communities in Barataria. An effective IPM program is needed that does not rely upon wholesale chemical suppression.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A: LEGISLATION

APPENDIX B: LISTING OF COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS