

PART THREE: THE PLAN

SCOPE

The Acadia National Park *General Management Plan* includes interrelated strategies for protection and management of resources, cooperation with local interests, access for disabled visitors, interpretation, and visitor use as well as guidelines for Native American activities, carrying capacities, and park operations. In addition, the plan indicates the general location, size, capacity, and function of physical developments.

This plan is the lead planning document for the park. Studies and implementation proposals that support this document and that must be consistent with it include the following:

- archaeological resources management plan
- archaeological surveys
- collections management plan
- concession management plan
- comprehensive sign plan
- comprehensive trail management plan
- cultural landscape studies
- development concept plans
- ethnographic studies
- fire management plan
- integrated pest management plan
- interpretive prospectus
- land protection plan
- resource management plan
- transportation plan
- water resource management plan

MANAGEMENT GOALS

Acadia National Park Mission

The National Park Service at Acadia National Park protects and preserves outstanding scenic, natural, scientific, and cultural values for present and future generations through programs, facilities, and services. It also provides programs and opportunities for nonconsumptive, resource-based recreation and education for an increasingly urban population.

Resource Management Goals

The Park Service's primary resource management goal is to perpetuate the natural, cultural, and scenic resources of Acadia National Park. This goal will be achieved through the following objectives:

1. Protect and manage the park's natural resources, giving priority to those that are exceptionally fragile or significant.
2. Improve the natural and cultural resource information base through expanded inventory, monitoring, research, and improved data base management and GIS systems.
3. Maintain or improve air and water quality through monitoring programs, proactive involvement in permitting, and other processes.

4. Protect, preserve, and restore, as appropriate, the cultural heritage of Acadia National Park, including archeological, historic, curatorial, and cultural landscape resources, through expanded cultural resource programs.
5. Improve visitors' understanding of their impact on park resources. Develop carrying-capacity objectives and measures for the park or parts of the park.

Visitor Services Goals

The Park Service's primary visitor services goal is to foster public understanding, appreciation, and protection of Acadia National Park's resources and values while ensuring visitor safety. This goal will be achieved through the following objectives:

1. Provide for a variety of high-quality, resource-related visitor experiences while ensuring a safe and positive social environment.
2. Continue the park's outstanding interpretive programs, building upon the tradition of stewardship, and expand environmental and cultural education programs.
3. Manage, maintain, and develop services and facilities to adapt to changing visitor patterns and needs, to serve special populations, and to minimize resource impacts.
4. Preserve the opportunities for recreational activities that range from high density to low density and solitude.
5. Preserve the relatively undeveloped quality of the park on the west side of Mount Desert Island and on Schoodic Peninsula and the islands.

Regional Goals

The Park Service's primary goal vis-à-vis the region is to work toward mutual objectives with neighboring communities and regional agencies, recognizing the important role of the area's cultural milieu in creating Acadia National Park and the need to cooperate with entities outside the park in order to effectively manage the park. This goal will be achieved through the following objectives:

1. Encourage cooperative partnerships with individuals, agencies, and organizations that benefit the park, and allow individuals to participate in park programs and management.
2. Cooperate with surrounding jurisdictions, other public agencies, and private individuals and organizations to manage resources not fully protected by the park boundary.

PLANNING ISSUES

Issues of concern to park management during the planning process are detailed in the *Draft General Management Plan/Environmental Assessment* (see "Part One: Background" and "Part Three: Environmental Description and Analysis"). The major issues are listed below.

Character of the Visitor Experience

- Densities and overall level of use
- Management of visitor use to protect park resources
- Concession services
- Abbe Museum

Scope of the Resource Management Program

- Protecting the aesthetic values of the Park Loop Road
- Restoring and maintaining the carriage roads
- Restoring and maintaining the historic hiking trail system
- Evaluating and treating historic structures
- Cataloging and treating park collections
- Surveying, monitoring, and stabilizing archaeological resources
- Managing water resources
- Taking inventory of and managing species and habitats
- Cooperating with the state of Maine to manage tidal and estuarian resources
- Managing fires
- Protecting boundaries
- Responding to threats from private use and development

New Development

- Amount of new development needed or desirable in the park

PLAN OVERVIEW

Management will focus on retaining and enhancing the unique qualities and resources of Acadia National Park, consistent with the park's mission and management goals. A comprehensive, proactive resource management program will emphasize systematic data gathering, interagency assessment of needs, and a coordinated response to internal and external threats to the park's natural and cultural resources.

Protecting and perpetuating the natural resource base upon which the park was established, and which is the primary management focus, will be a major programmatic emphasis. A strong inventory and monitoring program will result in a comprehensive resource data base and institutionalized programs for detecting potentially deleterious change as early as possible. Research and resource data management will be targeted toward improved

understanding and control of both the park's natural resource systems and the impacts that result from public use.

The National Park Service will increase efforts to manage and interpret the park's wealth of cultural resources. Interpretive displays will address cultural as well as natural resources. An expanded cultural resource management capability will be developed to manage the park's collections, archives, historic structures and sites, and cultural landscapes. From studies of the park's many cultural landscapes, specific management plans and guidelines will be developed to direct operational decisions and practices to ensure perpetuation of those landscapes. Facilities to properly store, preserve, and work on collections and archives will be constructed.

Major emphasis will be placed on rehabilitating the carriage road and hiking trail systems. Resources will be increased to maintain the rehabilitated roads and trails.

The park will continue to develop and share its geographic information system and other inventories, manpower, tools, and training to help local towns develop strategies to recognize and protect park resources.

Based on a recent visitor survey and resident use survey, a substantial number of people are concerned about crowding in the park. Perceived crowding and congestion are primarily the result of too many parked automobiles. Therefore, existing parking capacities will be enforced and alternative means of access will be developed, including bikeways and walkways from the surrounding communities into the park. The Park Service will intensively study transportation issues in and around the park with the goal of implementing a transportation system as an alternative to or replacement for private automobile access.

The perception of crowding is substantially higher among people who participate in activities enhanced by privacy and solitude, such as hiking. While many visitors enjoy high-density social interaction, such as a visit to Thunder Hole, the expectations of those seeking low-density recreation are often not satisfied during the peak use season. The Park Service will manage use to provide a variety of appropriate resource-related, low-density to high-density visitor experiences and to protect sensitive resource areas. Because opportunities for low-density recreation can be readily displaced by incremental change and unplanned development, the Park Service will identify and protect low-density opportunities in some parts of the park while allowing quality high-density recreation in other parts. Development will be strictly limited. High-density recreation will be supported in specific areas on the east side of Mount Desert Island, but the present character elsewhere on the island, on Schoodic Peninsula, and on the offshore islands will be retained. No new high-density recreation areas will be developed. To ensure visitor satisfaction, considerable emphasis will be placed on educating visitors about the kinds of recreational activities available and on providing more opportunities for visitors to understand and appreciate the natural and cultural resources of Acadia. Construction of a new entrance station and visitor center will play a critical role in orienting and informing visitors about opportunities.

Visitor use and resource protection objectives will be defined for different areas of the park. This information and other collected baseline data will provide the basis for establishing and refining social carrying capacities and strategies for managing visitor use.

RESOURCE PRESERVATION

Resource management operations will be conducted in accordance with a comprehensive resource management plan outlining needs and actions for management and preservation of the park's natural and cultural resources.

Improve Air and Water Quality

Monitor Air Quality and Work to Eliminate and Prevent Problems. Air quality research and management will continue to be emphasized. The National Park Service will continue monitoring programs and cooperative efforts with the Environmental Protection Agency, the Maine Bureau of Air Quality Control, and other states to develop emission control strategies to diminish existing and prevent future resource impairment at Acadia.

Participate in Regional Air Quality Regulatory Programs. As part of an effort to reduce potential threats to park resources and human health, the National Park Service will participate in permit reviews, rule making, and planning related to air quality in Maine and other states.

Report Findings Clearly to the Public. When pollution episodes occur that exceed state or federal health standards, visitors will be advised of the risks to their health so they can make informed decisions.

Develop and Implement a Comprehensive Water Resource Management Plan. In consultation with federal, state, and local agencies, the National Park Service will compile results of past water quality research in the area, identify needs for additional baseline data, collect necessary information, identify potential threats to water quality, and develop a long-term interagency monitoring and research strategy. New research will identify the extent of water pollution as well as present and potential pollution sources, including the possible effects of additional development. This research will examine the effects of pollution on public health and park resources and will suggest strategies to mitigate the problems. Water quality monitoring, particularly of significant or threatened resources, will be expanded.

Cooperatively Protect Species and Habitats of Value to the Park

Coordinate Collaborative Efforts to Understand and Manage Resources of Value to the Park. The National Park Service will identify and rank research, inventory, monitoring, and resource management needs and undertake the projects of highest priority as funding allows. The Park Service will take the lead with other public and private agencies, colleges, and universities to direct additional cooperative baseline inventories and monitoring. Data will be gathered on terrestrial and aquatic plants, reptiles, amphibians, birds, mammals, freshwater fish, and invertebrates; special emphasis will be placed on endangered, threatened, rare, or exotic species. The development of a long-term inventory and monitoring program to assess the health of park resources will be a high priority.

Protect and Enhance Habitats for Species of Special Concern. All proposed development sites will be reviewed for the presence of threatened and endangered species as well as other

species of special concern. Buffer areas will be established to prevent development and use of areas around the nesting sites of bald eagles, peregrine falcons, and any other federally or state-listed species. Park staff will assess the feasibility of active management to increase the populations of species of special concern whose presence in the park is jeopardized by their limited distribution or limited numbers.

Implement the Park's Integrated Pest Management Plan. Problems with native or exotic pests will be addressed with environmentally sensitive solutions that protect important resources.

Work to Protect Resources Under State Jurisdiction. Mutual goals for protecting lands and waters in and adjacent to the park will be developed with state agencies. Research will be conducted to analyze the impact of consumptive uses, such as hunting, trapping, and fishing, and the stocking of exotic fish species. Based on the research, park staff will play an active role in interagency management programs. These programs might include reintroducing extirpated species, managing fisheries, regulating hunting, and regulating visitor use and collecting in fragile areas such as the intertidal zone. Coordination with local rod and gun clubs, trapping clubs, and other special user groups will be required.

Communicate Research Data to the Public. Increases in resource management staff will allow scientific research data on species and habitats to be made readily available to park interpreters. Interpreters will include relevant scientific research information in their public presentations to help protect park resources and achieve management objectives. Other interested agencies will be kept informed of research findings.

Manage Fire. The National Park Service will prepare and implement a park fire management plan. The purposes of the plan will be to protect human life and property and to research and then restore or simulate the natural role of fire in the development and perpetuation of park habitats. The National Park Service will work with the state of Maine and local communities to ensure preparedness for fire suppression. As part of that preparedness preemptive or "presuppression" programs might be implemented to reduce fuel levels and control potential fire behavior at tactical locations. Specific management actions, such as clearly articulated vegetation and fuel management objectives, will be detailed and their impacts analyzed as part of the fire management plan.

Work with Adjacent Landowners and Communities to Enhance Park Values

Reduce the Threat of Fire. The National Park Service will work with local communities to reduce the threat of fire from sources external to the park by encouraging adoption of zoning codes, building codes, public education, and fuel management policies that will discourage potential fire damage.

Monitor Development in Cooperation with Local Governments. The National Park Service will work closely with local governments to monitor proposed development activities on adjacent lands and will participate in appropriate forums to minimize the impact on park values and resources.

Offer Technical Planning Assistance to Towns. Park staff will offer technical assistance to towns by sharing the park's GIS data base and the inventories of important scenic, natural, and cultural resources. The park will participate in islandwide forums to coordinate planning on Mount Desert Island, using both formal and informal arrangements. Funding for technical planning assistance will be sought jointly by the park and surrounding communities to address shared issues of concern.

Protect the Aesthetic and Historic Values of the Park Loop Road and Other Auto Roads

Protect and Enhance the Original Design Intent of the Historic Park Loop Road. The Park Loop Road corridor is an important cultural landscape and will be nominated for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Guidelines will be developed and implemented for the management of the road and its landscape corridor to protect the overall design and such character-defining features as vistas, road width, roadside mowing, granite coping-stones, retaining walls, and gutters. New construction will be minimized and will use materials harmonious with those originally used. Existing additions or alterations to the system will be evaluated for compatibility and possible removal. With the exception of expanded parking at Wildwood Stables, no new parking will be added to the Park Loop Road.

Minimize Impacts of Nonpark Roads within the Park. The National Park Service will consult and coordinate with the state of Maine, local communities, and interested citizens to analyze the environmental, aesthetic, and safety impacts on park resources of roadside parking and proposed road and utility improvements on state highways and other nonpark roads that traverse the park.

Rehabilitate and Maintain the Carriage Road and Hiking Trail Systems

Rehabilitate the Carriage Roads. A major carriage road rehabilitation program will be undertaken, followed by a comprehensive maintenance program. The rehabilitation effort will be directed by cultural landscape studies that build on earlier studies by Rieley and Associates (Rieley and Brouse 1989, Rieley and Associates 1989). The program will include investigation of road construction techniques, analysis of the road surfaces and bridge integrity, management of vistas, and development of rehabilitation specifications. Maintenance guidelines will be formulated to direct the long-term preservation of the carriage road system.

Upgrade Trail System. A comprehensive trail management plan will be developed and implemented that provides a systematic approach to maintaining trails, restoring abandoned trails, and constructing new trails. Erosion and safety problems will be alleviated by upgrading routine and cyclical trail maintenance. Understanding the trail system at Acadia is critical to understanding the history of the park and its importance as a scenic reservation. The historic significance of trails on Mount Desert Island will be evaluated. To avoid adverse impacts on currently undisturbed species and habitats, developing new or abandoned trails will be limited to alignments that create loops in heavily used areas or routes that offer access from park campgrounds, towns, and villages. Development will be limited to existing trail-head parking.

Preserve Historic Properties

Evaluate, Treat, and Maintain Historic Structures. Reports on historic structures will be prepared to evaluate and recommend prioritized treatments for the more than 70 structures listed or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. A cyclical maintenance plan will be established to monitor, stabilize, and preserve historic structures. Treatments recommended in the historic structure reports will be implemented with specialized personnel, as appropriate. A high priority will be placed on evaluating and treating the carriage road bridges and gate lodges as part of the effort to rehabilitate the carriage road system.

Evaluate, Treat, and Maintain Cultural Landscapes. In addition to the carriage road system and the Park Loop Road landscapes, the environs of other key historic properties in the park will be evaluated for management as cultural landscapes in conjunction with their nomination to the national register.

Complete the Parkwide Thematic Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Historic contexts identified in the preliminary nomination are (1) early settlement/1761-1865, (2) the summer colonies/1865-1930, (3) establishment and work of the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations/1901-1918, and (4) development of Acadia National Park/1919-present. Several properties that will be included in the thematic nominations have been nominated individually in the past. Others, such as the Park Loop Road, have not been nominated to the register. Still others are listed but will be renominated to include features not considered in the original nomination — such as the designed vistas in the case of the carriage road system. The key historic properties listed in this *General Management Plan* and described in the *Draft General Management Plan/Environmental Assessment*, along with other properties as warranted, will be evaluated in cooperation with the Maine state historic preservation officer.

Improve Management of Artifact Collections

Catalog and Treat the Park Collections. Park artifacts that have not been documented — more than half of the collection — will be accessioned and cataloged. Their storage will be consolidated into a single facility at park headquarters with adequate environmental controls and security. An addition will be constructed at the Islesford Historical Museum to provide proper storage for that museum's collections. The new storage facilities will be designed to prevent deterioration, provide security, and make artifacts readily retrievable for conservation and appropriate research and interpretive uses.

The staff will conduct preservation, collection, and maintenance work and document the locations, scope, and sizes of Acadia's natural history and archaeological collections currently distributed among repositories nationwide. These collections will be retrieved by the National Park Service; then where appropriate, they will be returned to the various repositories.

Protect Archaeological and Ethnographic Resources

Survey, Assess, Monitor, and Stabilize Archaeological Resources. A comprehensive archaeological survey will be conducted to document, assess, and describe sites and to study their potential for degradation from rising sea level, vandalism, or other causes. Based on information from these surveys, an archaeological resources management plan will be prepared to protect these resources.

Conduct a Park Ethnographic Study. An ethnographic overview and assessment study will be conducted to obtain information on park-related ethnic groups — specifically Native Americans — regarding their cultural use of and value assigned to park resources. The resulting materials will contribute to interpretive programs and make park managers more aware of Native American concerns at Acadia.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The following actions will provide a spectrum of high-density to low-density recreational opportunities, reduce perceptions of crowding, and address current problems while instituting a systematic process for reducing visitor impacts on park resources.

Manage Visitor Impacts

Mitigate Resource Impacts from Visitor Use. The National Park Service will manage use to protect Acadia's resources. Use of offshore islands that serve as important nesting and breeding sites will be prohibited during critical seasons. Other areas where access might be limited include the summits of Cadillac, Penobscot, Sargent, Champlain, and Pemetic mountains; Little Moose Island; and Big Heath. Parking for these areas will be confined to existing lots with no overflow and no right-lane parking on the Park Loop Road. Public restrooms will be provided at Thunder Hole, Eagle Lake, Acadia Mountain, Pretty Marsh picnic area, and Lake Wood. Large vehicles will be prohibited from Stanley Brook Road. Impacted areas will be rehabilitated; for instance, on Cadillac Mountain summit, stairways may be removed and dirt trails revegetated in conjunction with an interpretive effort on the fragility of the area.

Retain Opportunities for Low-Density Recreation on the West Side of Mount Desert Island and on Schoodic Peninsula and the Offshore Islands. Existing capacity of parking lots will be enforced on Mount Desert Island and Schoodic Peninsula, and offshore islands will be patrolled in order to retain the natural environment and solitude of these parts of the park. Schoodic Peninsula and the offshore islands will not be actively promoted nor will additional facilities be provided in these areas. The intent is to retain current use levels and the existing naturalness and solitude of these parts of the park.

Close Valley Cove Road to Motorized Vehicles. Hiking and biking will be permitted, but this road will be closed to motor vehicles from a point near Fernald Point Road. This action will minimize congestion at Valley Cove and enhance the remote character of the area. Pulloff parking will be provided on the short section of the road open to vehicles in place of parking at the Valley Cove end.

Encourage Public Transportation on Mount Desert Island and Establish a Park Transportation System. Visitor surveys and comments at public meetings indicated strong interest in a shuttle-bus system as a way of reducing congestion and avoiding construction of more roads or parking areas, thereby protecting environmental quality and improving the visitor experience. The Park Service will actively participate with municipalities and others on Mount Desert Island to offer tourists and residents an islandwide transportation system that includes loops through the park. The Park Service will study transportation issues in and around the park with the goal of implementing a transportation system as an alternative to or replacement for private automobile access.

Limit Parking to the Capacity of Existing Lots. Parking will be eliminated from the right lane of the Park Loop Road wherever road geometry poses a safety hazard. Right-lane parking will be eliminated if an alternative transportation system is successfully established. This action will enhance scenic driving by removing the safety concerns, traffic flow restrictions, and visual impact of right-lane parking. Parking will be permitted only in designated spaces in established lots, and vehicle size will be restricted in lots where turning space is limited. The cooperation of the state and towns will be sought to eliminate overflow parking along state highways.

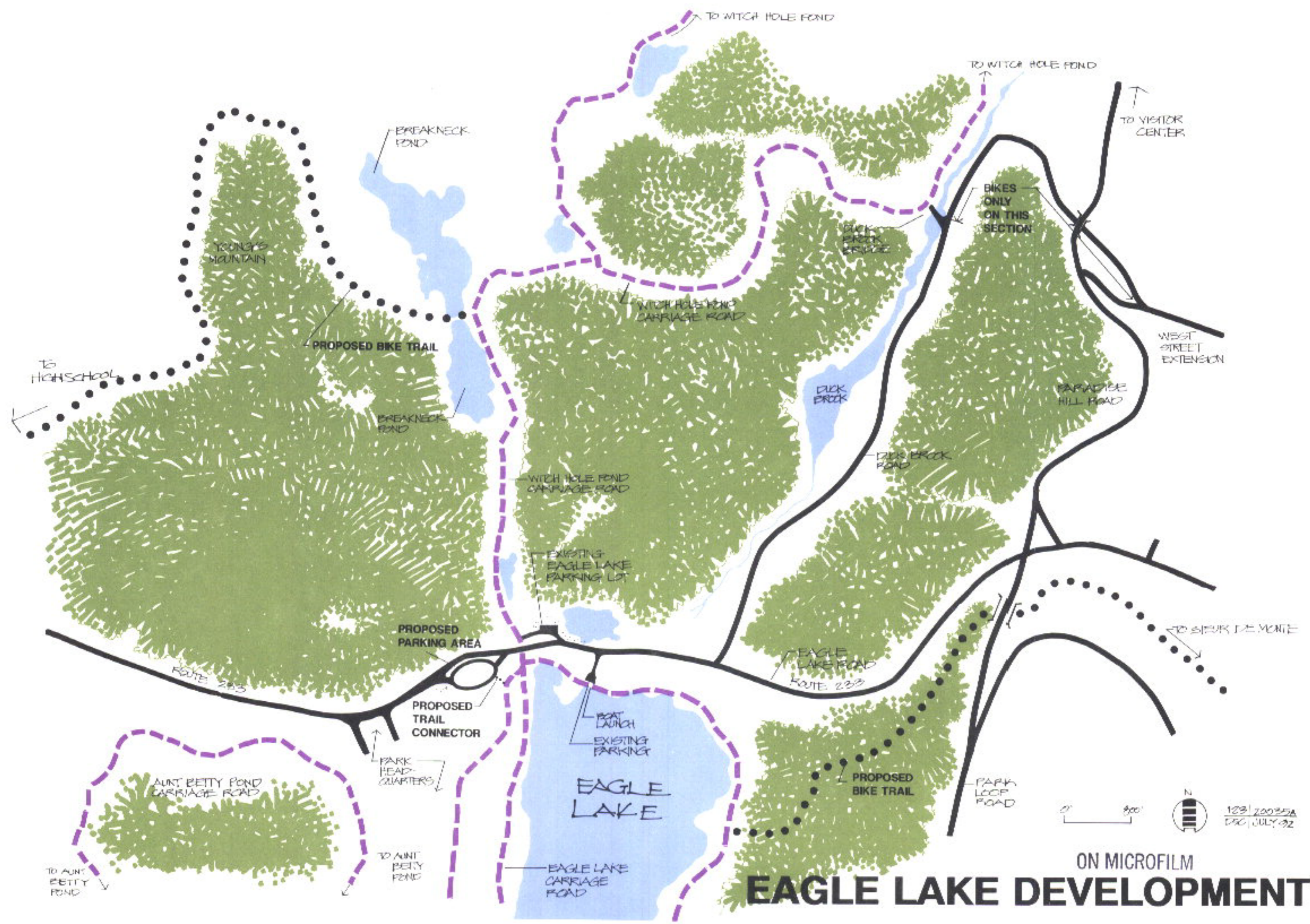
No new parking areas will be constructed along the Park Loop Road, and no existing parking areas will be expanded except at Wildwood Stables. Additional parking will be provided at Eagle Lake and at the head of Valley Cove Road (to replace existing parking at Valley Cove). Visitors will be encouraged to travel the Park Loop Road as a scenic drive-through and to use alternative access — including the alternative transportation system, trail links, carriage roads, and bicycle routes — for destination travel.

Implement a Parkwide Visitor Management Strategy

Collect Baseline Data and Evaluate Visitor Impacts. The sociological and environmental impacts of visitor use will be researched and evaluated to establish carrying capacities and other visitor management strategies. These strategies will be targeted to specific subunits of the park. For example, segments of the Park Loop Road and the hiking trail and carriage road systems on Mount Desert Island or individual smaller islands may be identified for separate treatment. Research will define the physical, biological, and social conditions that the National Park Service seeks to create, restore, or maintain within each subunit.

Develop Management Objectives. Based on the mission and management goals for Acadia and National Park Service policy, the Park Service will establish management objectives for specific areas of the park. These objectives will describe, as precisely as possible, the experiences to be offered to visitors and the appropriate ecological and social conditions to accompany each type of experience, and will address the issue of crowding. The park cannot be all things to all people. The objectives will therefore support opportunities appropriate to the traditional uses of Acadia.

Select and Implement Management Techniques. There cannot be a single carrying capacity for all of Acadia National Park. It is therefore important to identify subunits of the park and define specific management objectives for these areas. Defining specific numbers of visitors to be accommodated in each use zone is neither the only nor often the best technique to



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ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

manage visitor impact. A variety of direct and indirect approaches may be implemented to deal with the causes of visitor impact. Management may, for example, prohibit use near nesting sites at certain times, separate incompatible uses at campgrounds, require reservations for programs, limit the size of personal vehicles allowed on Cadillac Summit Road, or promote high-density over low-density areas.

Monitor Visitor Impacts. Implementing management techniques will proceed with a standardized monitoring program. Key indicators identified for Acadia National Park will permit the social, physical, and biological impacts of visitors to be monitored and compared with standards adopted for specific areas of the park. Appropriate management techniques will be implemented following analysis.

Reduce Conflicts between User Groups

Manage Multiple Use of the Carriage Roads. Different users of the carriage roads (carriage riders, equestrians, bicyclists, and pedestrians) will be educated to abide by specific "rules of the road." As use of the system increases, additional management actions may be required to ensure safety and enjoyment of the carriage roads by all user groups.

Evaluate Both Campgrounds and Develop Management Strategies for Each. The intent of this comprehensive evaluation will be to protect resources and encourage use of tents and small recreational vehicles (RVs) (units less than 35 feet) by separating those uses, providing more walk-in sites, and developing management strategies to avoid overuse of sites. New sites will not be added and the current number of sites may be reduced.

Improve Access, Orientation, and Information

Provide a New Gateway and Visitor Center. A new gateway and visitor center will be developed near the park's primary entrance at Hulls Cove. The facilities' purpose will be to welcome visitors and provide adequate orientation and information. In addition to being more accessible, the visitor center will orient park users to the range of recreational and interpretive opportunities available and inform them of their transportation options.

Improve Accessibility for Disabled Persons. Every reasonable effort will be made to make the facilities and services of the National Park Service accessible to all, including those who are disabled. This policy is based on the commitment to provide access to the widest cross-section of the public and to ensure compliance with the 1968 Architectural Barriers Act (42 USC 4151 et seq.), the 1972 Rehabilitation Act (29 USC 701 et seq.), and National Park Service Special Directive 83-3. Special, separate, or alternative facilities, programs, or services will be provided only when existing ones cannot reasonably be made accessible. The determination of what is reasonable will be made after consultation with disabled persons and their representatives.

Improve Nonmotorized Access to the Park. Park access for bicyclers, joggers, walkers, cross-country skiers, and visitors using wheelchairs will be improved on Mount Desert Island. A portion of Duck Brook Road will be designated for bicycle use only to make the carriage road system more easily accessible to bicyclists. A new trail for hiking, bicycling, and skiing

will be constructed to link Bar Harbor and Sieur de Monts to the Eagle Lake carriage road if an environmentally acceptable route can be designed. Other new trail connectors will be studied and constructed if feasible. At Eagle Lake, an additional parking lot, more restrooms, and a connecting trail will provide adequate access to a convenient and popular portion of the carriage road system. (More spaces in the existing lot will be designated for handicapped parking.) The possibility of providing improved access to the park on Mount Desert Island by small boats will be evaluated.

Develop Cooperative Trail Management. The National Park Service will pursue cooperative relationships with local governments, village improvement societies and other organizations, and private landowners to develop comprehensive trail plans for Mount Desert Island. The Park Service will support existing connector trails and the development of new ones to provide public access to the park's hiking trail and carriage road systems from towns and villages on Mount Desert Island.

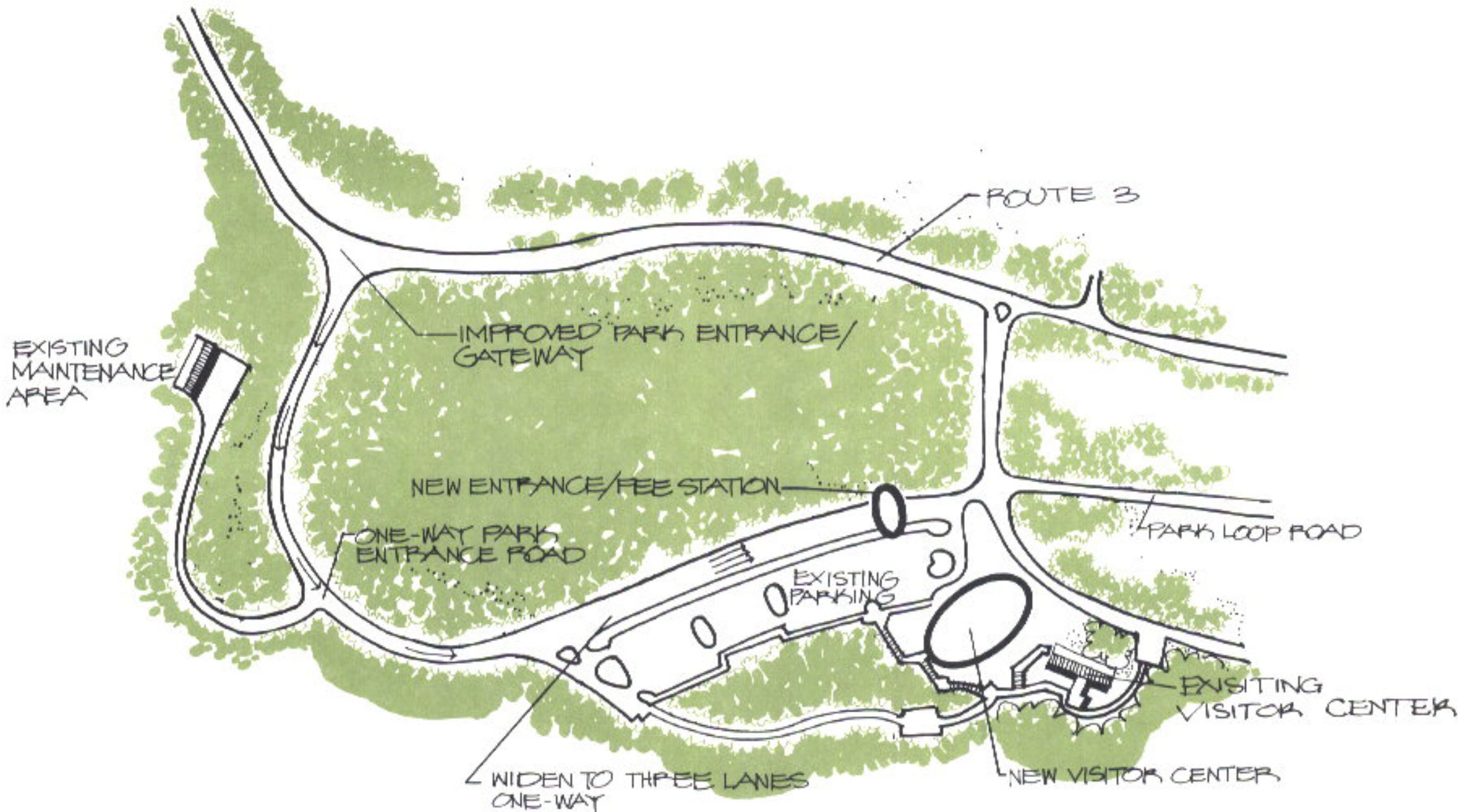
Revise and Implement the Interpretive Prospectus. A comprehensive interpretive prospectus will be completed for the park that will detail the scope of interpretive services to be provided in order to foster public understanding, appreciation, and protection of Acadia's resources. Current exhibits at Islesford Historical Museum and the nature center as well as wayside exhibits throughout the park will be upgraded, replaced, or expanded, as appropriate. Environmental education programs will continue to be emphasized.

Implement a Comprehensive Sign Program in Cooperation with Surrounding Communities. The park will cooperate with municipalities and the Maine Department of Transportation to design and implement a comprehensive road-sign plan for Mount Desert Island and Schoodic Peninsula. The plan will reduce the number of signs inside and outside the park (the park alone maintains 850 road signs), yet increase the signs' effectiveness to clearly and safely direct motorists, bikers, hikers, and other visitors to desired destinations. A complementary system of trail signs will be developed by the National Park Service.

Enhance the Staging Area for Winter Recreation at Hulls Cove. The new visitor center will remain open in the winter. Once access to the carriage roads is improved, the large parking area will provide a staging area for cross-country skiers. As demand and capability develop, larger sections of the Park Loop Road from the new visitor center to Otter Cliffs Road will be plowed in winter. These actions will provide a convenient winter entrance and improved park access for both motorists and skiers.

Cooperate with Abbe Museum to Improve Visitor Services and Protect Park Values

The Robert Abbe Museum of Stone Age Antiquities has complemented and supported the National Park Service mission at Acadia National Park since the museum's inception in 1927. The museum helps the park manage and preserve cultural resources, and helps interpret the early history of Mount Desert Island and its environs. The Abbe Museum at Sieur de Monts Spring will continue to operate as an independent, trailside museum. Any expansion of the museum will be limited to the 25 percent level allowed by the 1986 park boundary legislation. The National Park Service will work closely with the Abbe Museum board of directors to achieve a workable and mutually acceptable solution to the museum's storage, work, and program space needs.

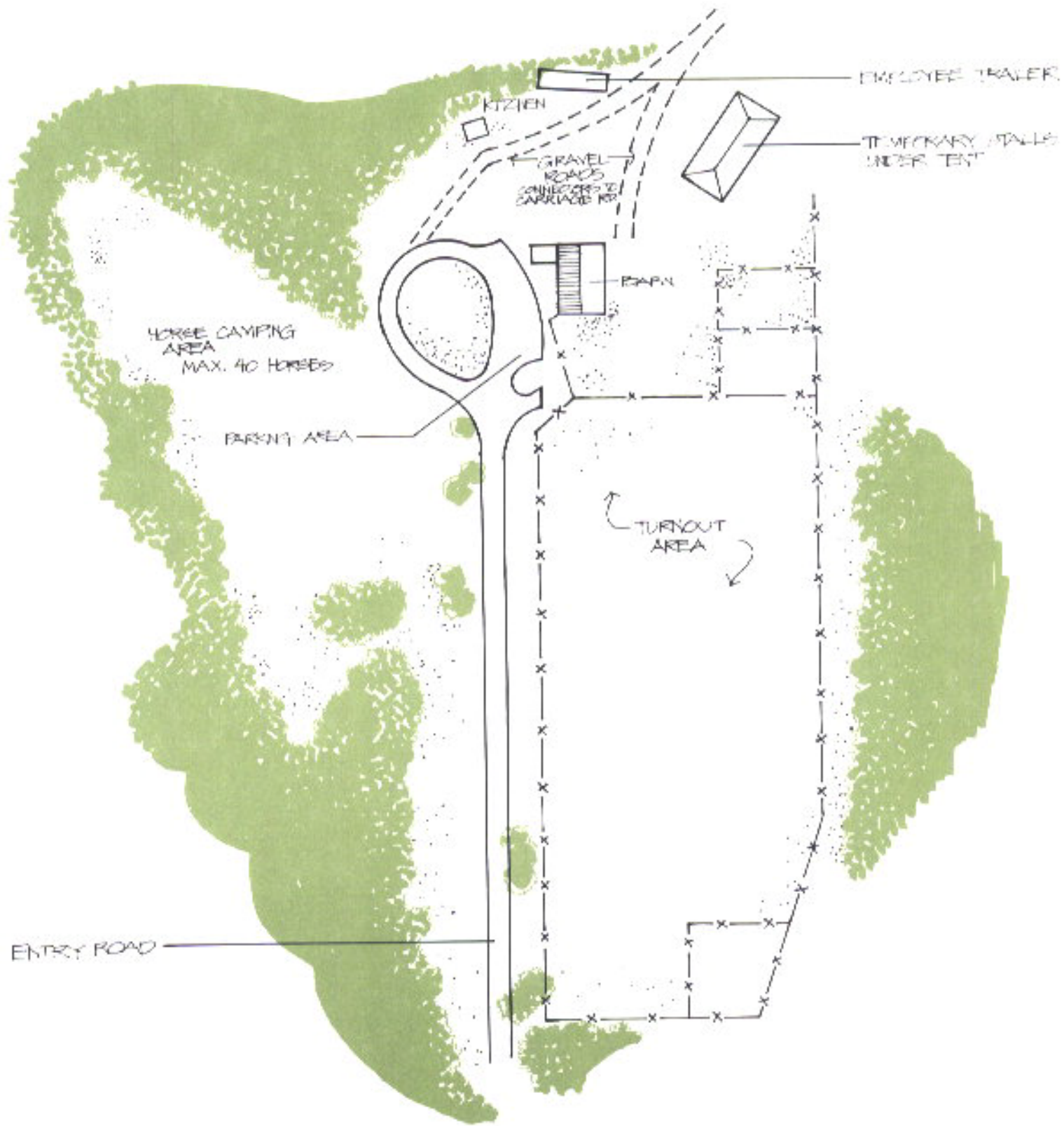


NOTE: PLAN IS CONCEPTUAL.
SITE PLAN TO BE PREPARED
PRIOR TO DEVELOPMENT.

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VISITOR CENTER DEVELOPMENT



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**EXISTING CONDITIONS
WILDWOOD STABLES**

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