



Fort Smith National Historic Site

Long-Range Interpretive Plan



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National Historic Site

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Harpers Ferry Center
and
Fort Smith National Historic Site

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INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING BACKGROUND

Introduction

Fort Smith National Historic Site contains 75 acres of federal and non-federal land located at the junction of the Arkansas and Poteau Rivers in downtown Fort Smith, Arkansas. The site was authorized as a unit of the National Park Service (NPS) in 1961 with subsequent boundary changes in 1976. Fort Smith was one of the first U.S. military posts in the Louisiana Territory and served as a base of operations for enforcing federal Indian policy from 1817 to 1896. Fort Smith also marks the terminus of the Trail of Tears where thousands of Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Muscogee Creek, and Seminole people, forcibly removed from their eastern homelands, entered the federally established Indian Territory in the 1830s.

The park contains the remains of two frontier military forts, a federal courthouse, Trail of Tears overlook, and the historic Frisco Station railroad depot (see map-to be added at final draft). The Fort Smith National Historic Site visitor center and support facilities are located on-site in the restored barracks-courthouse-jail building. Walking paths lead visitors to the key resources and along the river.

Planning Background

Fort Smith National Historic Site does not have a long-range interpretive plan (LRIP). The last parkwide interpretive planning effort was an interpretive prospectus prepared in 1981. A general management plan (GMP) was completed in 1978, revised in 1981, amended in 1985, and finally approved in 1996. These earlier planning documents contain a number of recommendations for improving the park's interpretive media and facilities, and many have

been implemented. In addition, the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, a separate unit of the NPS, developed an interpretive plan in 2004. This plan provides trailwide perspectives and recommendations that have some contextual applications for Fort Smith.

Since the development of these earlier plans, a number of changes have occurred in park facilities, resources, visitor use, resource knowledge, interpretive media, programs, and management issues. The recent acquisition of the 7,000 square-foot Frisco Station railroad depot and anticipated transfer of the Forge Craft site have potential for new interpretive program opportunities.

Many of the wayside exhibits are old and do not comply with current NPS graphic identity standards. Also, some of the park's interpretive media does not interpret multiple perspectives, current scholarship, and the compelling meanings associated with the park's resources.

The park also desires to improve and expand education and outreach opportunities, continue and/or expand existing partnerships, and create a stronger identity with visitors and area residents.

This LRIP will be a component of the park's comprehensive interpretive plan (CIP) as directed by National Park Service Director's Orders-6. This plan will provide long-term direction and focus for the interpretive program for Fort Smith National Historic Site. Together with the park-produced annual interpretive plan and the interpretive database, it will form a complete CIP. The LRIP will describe the park's primary interpretive themes and visitor

experiences, and recommend ways to facilitate those experiences through facility design, interpretive/informational media, personal services programs, and partnership endeavors.

A workshop was held in February 2007 to develop new interpretive themes for the park. This workshop, facilitated by Arlene Jackson and James Hill, produced seven themes which have been included in this plan.



Barracks, Courthouse, Jail

Park Mission

Mission and purpose statements describe the reasons for which a park area was established. These statements are based on an area's enabling legislation and legislative history.

The Mission of Fort Smith National Historic Site is preserve and protect the cultural and natural resources at the site of two western frontier military forts and the Federal Court for the Western District of Arkansas; through education, instill awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the resources and historical and cultural diversity, primarily as it relates to Federal Indian Policy; and to provide a clean, safe, and accessible park to all visitors.

Park Purpose

The purpose of Fort Smith National Historic Site is to preserve, protect, and interpret the sites of two western frontier military forts and the Federal Court for the Western District of Arkansas in accordance with National Park Service policies, rules, and regulations.

Park Significance

Significance is summarized in statements that capture the essence of a site's importance to our natural and cultural heritage. Significance statements are not the same as an inventory of significant resources. While a resource inventory can be the basis, significance statements describe the importance or distinctiveness of the aggregate resources. Knowing a site's significance helps set resource protection priorities, identify primary interpretive themes, and develop desirable visitor experiences.

Fort Smith National Historic Site preserves the sites of two frontier forts on the boundary of Indian Territory and the Federal Court for the Western District of Arkansas. The site represents over 80 years of activity by the United States to attempt to administer justice for Native Americans and control the nature of westward expansion and settlement through both the U.S. Army and the Federal Court system. It is the only National Park Service site that interprets the Federal Court system, crime and punishment in the 19th century West, the U.S. Marshal's history on the frontier, as well as the settlement of Indian Territory and how the nature of Federal Indian Policy throughout the entire 19th century affected that process. It specifically addresses the forced removal of Indians from East to West through its designation as a unit of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail.

Park Primary Interpretive Themes

Primary interpretive themes are those ideas/concepts that are critical for achieving visitor understanding and appreciation of the significance of Fort Smith National Historic Site. Primary themes do not include everything that may be interpreted, but they do provide the foundation from which programs and media are developed. All interpretive efforts, through both personal and non-personal services, should relate to one or more of the primary themes. Effective interpretation results when visitors are able to connect concepts (intangibles) with resources (tangibles) and derive something meaningful from the experience.

The following interpretive themes are critical to visitor understanding

and appreciation of the park's importance.



First Fort Smith Ruins

First Fort Smith

Since the earliest of times Belle Point, at the confluence of the Arkansas and Poteau Rivers, was a place of strategic importance. As a result of the cultural conflict (Osage, Cherokee, & white settlers) brought on by the administration of Federal Indian Policy, the military post of Fort Smith was established to keep peace and order in a wilderness of hardship, isolation, and vulnerability. Even after the westward movement of the military, the frontier settlement continued to grow.

Second Fort Smith

For nearly four decades, the second Fort Smith served as a vital link in the U.S. westward expansion by providing equipment and supplies to military outposts west of Arkansas during times of peace and war, distributing funds and supplies necessary for survival to Southeast Indians forced from their ancestral homes into Indian Territory, and protecting businesses outfitting individuals headed west in search of new lives.



Courtroom

Civil War

Fort Smith was a strategic crossroads during the Civil War, changing hands between both sides, maintaining its status as a safe haven for war ravaged refugees: red, white, and black, and served as a strategic staging point for major regional campaigns.

Natural Resources

The physical location and abundant natural resources of Belle Point at the confluence of the Arkansas and Poteau rivers, made it ideal for development; however, this

development altered and in some cases destroyed the resources and landscape that made permanent settlement possible.

Federal Court

The unique nature of the Federal Court at Fort Smith, precipitated by federal Indian policy and the limited jurisdiction of tribal courts, allows for reflection on the positive and negative impacts of the federal government. The large number of capital crimes heard by the Federal Court at Fort Smith occasionally led to controversial executions, which at the time drew national attention.

The diverse, colorful, and unique individuals associated with the Federal Court, on both sides of the law, help to yield a better understanding of the complexities of the law and conditions in Indian Territory.

Transportation

The roads, rivers, and rails of Fort Smith provided the possibility for westward expansion and the development of the American frontier. Communication provided by the military roads and Butterfield Overland Mail, and commerce from riverboats and railroads brought both positive benefits and negative consequences.

Trail of Tears

The federal government, after passing the Indian Removal Act of 1830, forcibly removed the Choctaw, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole from their ancestral homelands in the Southeast to Indian Territory, a journey now known as the Trail of Tears. All five tribes traveled through Fort Smith where they received supplies. Despite the deaths of

tens of thousands of men, women, and children and the loss of their eastern homelands, the tribes have maintained their cultural identities and sovereign tribal governments.

Trail Of Tears Trailwide Themes

In addition to the park-specific themes, the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail developed an Interpretive Plan for the entire trail in 2004. Since interpretation at Fort Smith National Historic Site should include the broader contexts of the trailwide themes, they are included here for use and reference.

- The history of the Trail of Tears warns how a nation founded on the principles of equality and guaranteed protection under the law fell prey to greed, racism, and disregard for human rights to serve special interests – and cautions us to be eternally vigilant to prevent this happening again.
- The history of the Trail of Tears includes a range of precedent-setting legal actions and policy decisions between tribal governments and federal and state governments that continue to have power and importance today in the on-going efforts of American Indian nations to maintain and exercise sovereignty.
- The terrible suffering of the many groups of the five tribes who traversed the punishing routes of the Trail of Tears speaks of the agony of being forcefully torn from a homeland and cast into the unknown.
- The triumph of the five tribes in surviving the Trail of Tears and rebuilding their homes and institutions in a new land is a tribute to their spiritual strength – and a testament to the human

drive to protect and perpetuate self, family, and society.

Visitor Experience Goals

Few visitors come to parks just to learn. While interpretive themes can be viewed as cognitive goals (things people should learn), visitor experience goals describe what other physical, intellectual, sensory, and emotional experiences should be available. It is what visitors do, feel, think, and learn which affects their knowledge, attitudes, behavior, and values. The overall visitor experience is affected by events prior to the visit and affects behavior after the visit.



Bookstore

Visitors come to parks seeking something of personal value and relevance. Since interpretive themes address the cognitive elements, visitor experience goals outline other available opportunities that visitors should be aware of as they interact with park and area resources, staff, and other visitors.

Local residents of the city of Fort Smith and visitors to Fort Smith National Historic Site will have opportunities to:

- Learn something about each of the interpretive themes.
- View the scenic/historic panorama.
- Experience some of the things that our forefathers did.
- Get a sense of the physical scale of the two forts and surroundings.
- Discover different cultural and historical perspectives.
- Understand and appreciate the diversity of people associated with the site's history.
- Enjoy a sense of discovery.
- Find time for personal reflection.
- Purchase interpretive/educational materials.
- Have a safe visit.
- Interact with NPS staff and volunteers.

- Experience a variety of interpretive programs, exhibits, displays, and waysides.
- Plan their visit to meet personal interests, abilities, and time constraints.
- Learn about other theme related resources in the area and beyond.
- Easily find the park and other places where they may want to go.
- Practice personal and cultural traditions based on the park's interpretive themes.
- Become aware of resource management issues and ways they can get involved.
- Develop a sense of stewardship.
- Find and use accessible resources, media, and programs.
- Identify important features in the park landscape.
- Discover something relevant for people of different backgrounds and perspectives.

Visitation and Visitor Use

The following information regarding park visitors and visitor use is derived from data maintained by the NPS Socio-Economic Services Division (WASO) in Denver, the GMP, the Servicewide Interpretive Report, and discussions with park staff and partners.

Table 1 shows the total number of recreation visits to Fort Smith National Historic Site over the last 10 years. This table clearly shows a slight decline in visitation since 2001, but it has been fairly consistent since then. However, in the 1980s and early 1990s total annual visitation often exceeded 100,000. The courthouse/barracks building was closed due to the 1996 tornado and subsequent reconstruction until reopening in June 2000

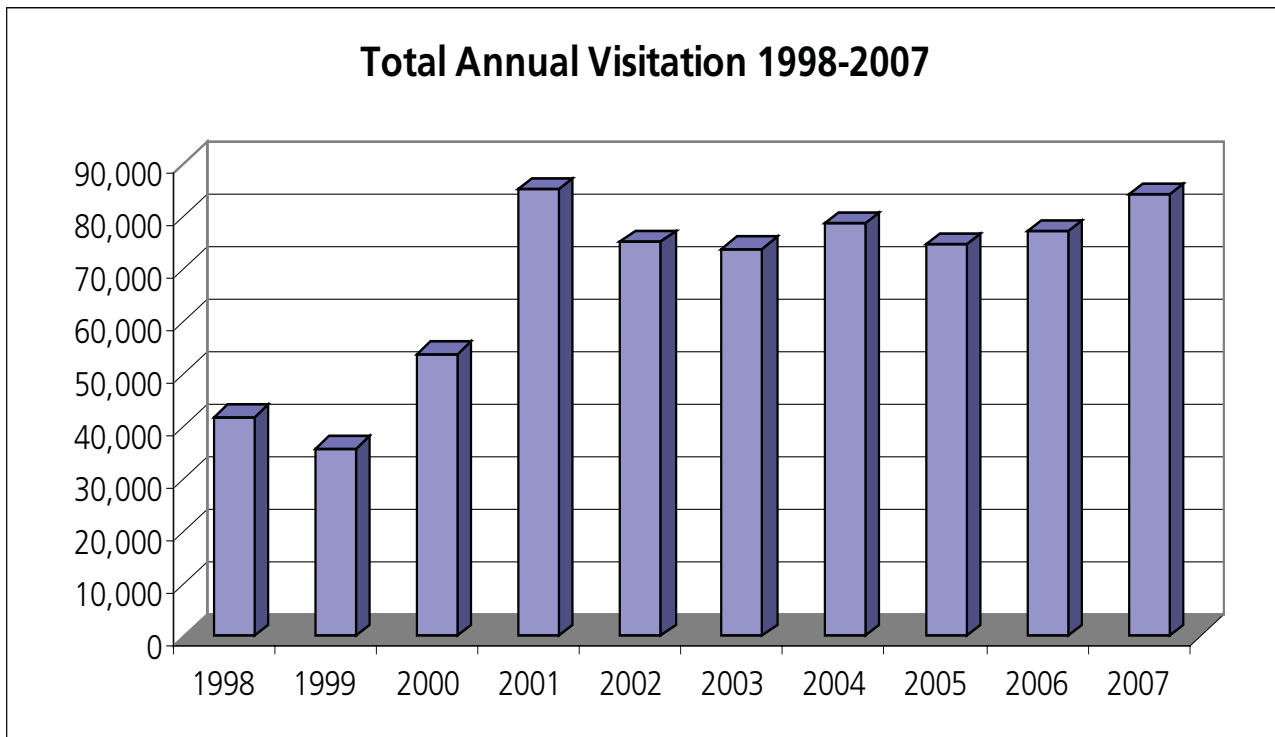


Table 1

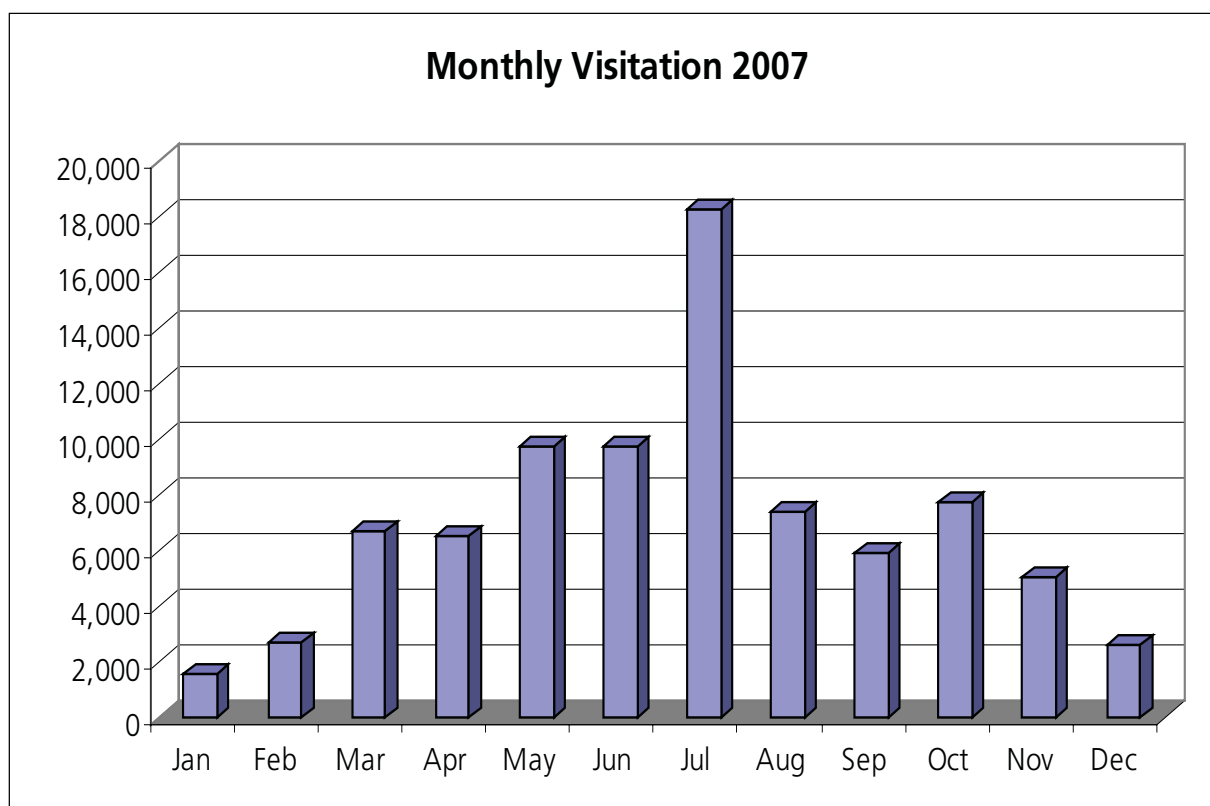


Table 2

Table 2 illustrates the total monthly recreation visits for 2006. August heat results in a drop in late summer visitation, but it is followed by a second peak in September.

Other cumulative data for 2007 from the park's Monthly Public Service Report states that:

- 19,543 Visitors viewed the park movie.
- 534 Guided tours were given.
- 3,614 Roving contacts were made.
- 468 Bus tour visitors.
- 77 School groups.

The park's submission to the 2007 Servicewide Interpretive Report shows that:

- 75,695 visitors were contacted at the visitor center.
- 3,216 people were reached through informal interpretation.
- 13,995 visitors attended a total of 503 formal interpretive activities.

- 713 visitors attended a total of twenty interpretive demonstrations or performing arts programs.
- 852 people participated in the Junior Ranger Program.
- 10,458 people attended a total of fourteen special events at the park.
- 603 students participated in a park education program.

Although the information is several decades old, the GMP made the following observations regarding the average length of time visitors spent in various venues at the park:

Walking about the grounds, using rest rooms (17-20 min.)

Visiting orientation facility (2-5 min.)

Visiting gallows (5-10 min.)

Visiting lobby/publication sales/contact station (2-10 min.)

Viewing exhibits (20-25 min.)

Viewing AV program (10-20 min.)

Visiting exhibits in court offices (2-4 min.)

Visiting Parker's courtroom (9-10 min.)

Visiting first jail (3-5 min.)

Visiting commissary (9-10 min.)

Viewing cistern (1-2 min.)

Viewing initial Point Marker (1-3 min.)

Visiting First Fort Site (10-15 min.)

Total = 91-139 min.

Discussions with park staff and partners revealed that:

- Currently, the average stay in the visitor center is 45-50 minutes.
- Most visitors see the AV program in the theater first.
- Due to new testing requirements, other field trip options, and declining budgets for trips, the trend appears to be that fewer school groups are visiting the park.
- By state, the fourth highest visitor group is from California; many are descendants of people who left the area during the "dust bowl."
- A significant number of people of Vietnamese and Cuban descent visit the area. Many formerly spent time at Fort Chaffee – their Ellis Island.
- Other visitors are descendants of U.S. Marshals and soldiers once stationed at Fort Smith.
- Thirty percent of visitors come from the local area.
- On the park web site, most users visit the "Plan Your Visit" pages; fewer utilize the "In-Depth" pages.

Existing Conditions

Assessment

The following is a brief and generalized description of visitor experiences, issues, and interpretive media and programs as they existed at the onset of this long-range interpretive planning process.

Emphasis purposely is placed on deficiencies, issues, and concerns that will be addressed in the plan's recommendations, rather than on things that are working well or that are beyond the scope of a LRIP.

The purpose of this section is to provide a baseline assessment that can help to justify some of the plan's proposed actions.

Information and Orientation

Improvements are needed in providing information to on-line visitors both before and during their visit to the park, as well as for people who may never be able to visit in person.

Improvements are needed in the types and methods of providing on-arrival information/orientation to visitors. This applies to people traveling area highways, visiting other area attractions, or just arriving in the parking lot.

Improvements are needed in providing consolidated information regarding area visitor attractions, especially those with strong interpretive links to the park.

Visitor Center

Most of the interpretive media in the visitor center is fairly new and will not be addressed in this LRIP. However, there are some deficiencies and needs that have not been met and the key items are listed below:

- The main park film is confusing and needs to do a better job of

showing how things looked at Fort Smith in the past.

- The AV projection equipment and sound system in the theater need upgrading.
- The stereoscope display in the exhibit area represents a failed attempt at interactivity. There is no way to focus the slide, and people often bump their heads on the case trying to view the image.
- There is an axe in the gun display with no interpretation.
- Many of the exhibits are static and offer almost no interactivity for children.
- The numerous audio units in the exhibit areas create some “spillover,” that is distracting to some visitors and staff.
- Having only one speaker in the courtroom does not achieve the audio potential of this exhibit.
- There is little room for temporary or traveling exhibits.

and styles that have been installed over several decades. As a result, they do not always speak with one voice in terms of colors, designs, and materials, and they do not conform to the new sign standards in all respects. More importantly, many of the waysides do not attract and hold the interest of 21st century visitors.

Commissary

The commissary is the oldest building in the city and only other major historic structure in the park. It is basically unchanged from the historic period and partially furnished as a commissary. The supply wagon is part of the furnishings and the interpretive opportunities in this building have never been fully utilized. It is cooler in the summer and visitors enjoy getting out of the heat. In previous years park interpreters have



Trail of Tears Exhibits

- The park library, located on the third floor is quickly filling to capacity.

Wayside Exhibits

The existing wayside exhibits represent about four different types

presented living history programs for the visitors. Due to secure locking over night and the use of surveillance cameras it also has the opportunity to use video in addition to the audio currently used.

Gallows

The gallows is the main attraction for park visitors. Due to the nature of its use care must be given in the presentation of the ropes, the interpretation of the executions both by the staff and volunteers and the audio and waysides. Being secured at night, it also offers the opportunity to have a video presentation.

Guard House

The partially restored guard house provides shade for the visitors and two wayside panels. It may serve as an interpretive structure at an entrance, since it is already there and historically served that purpose for the military.

Officers' Quarters

The outline of the officers' quarters was installed to show the size, location and scope of the buildings that were once here. It was hoped that the visitor would better understand the parade ground, the cistern and even the flag pole by adding the outlines of the officer' quarters.

Memorial Gate

The memorial gate is a significant structure on the grounds as is the smaller memorials installed at the same time. They cannot be removed, so they need to be interpreted, although a good job is done with the one wayside and the others are self explanatory with historic plaques.

Visitor Center Plaza

The plaza in front of the visitor center was designed to mirror the outline of the fort walls. The thought was that the visitors could better understand the layout of the walls, the reason for the angles and defenses the military engineered into the walls. Some improvements to the interpretation here are needed.

Outdoor Furnishings

Each of the various cannons and existing or proposed wagons represent different time periods. No interpretive media lets the public differentiate or understand the reasons they are placed where they are.

Initial Point Marker

The initial point has accessibility problems but it is a very popular place for visitors to go.

First Fort Smith Site

The site of the first Fort Smith is partially delineated and interpreted with wayside exhibits, but additional connections and methods need to be explored to help visitors see the extent of this fort, its strategic and political importance, and that people once lived and worked here.

Frisco Station

Recent acquisition of the Frisco Station presents significant opportunities to expand the park's interpretation and education programs. However, the park has leased part of the first floor to the US Marshal's Service funding committee. The rest of the building is used for public use and/or interpretive media. For the last three years the park issued a Special Use Permit to the Arkansas and Missouri Railroad to use the building for railroad passengers to purchase tickets for railroad excursion tours. Through a Fort Motor Company/ NPFF grant, the park was able to put a transportation interpreter on the train, providing an opportunity to explore the possibilities of future partnerships with the railroad.

The Frisco Station offers an opportunity to interpret the role of the railroads in the development (or ruination) of Indian Territory and the impact it had on crime and the court; the impact of the railroads on



Visitor Center Entrance

the fort during the historic period, i.e. the fort wall was taken down and relocated to the bank of the railroad cut; and finally the ongoing use of the modern railroad in their day to day activities through the park. The park interprets the role of the steamboat, river traffic and the roads leading out of the area, but the story of the railroad has not been told until now. A segment of the American public loves railroads and the park should take advantage of an opportunity to help the visitor connect with the history of railroad.

Forge Craft Site

This site will possibly be transferred to the park in the next few years, and

NPS Butterfield Trail which is being studied in 2008.

Trail of Tears Overlook

This recently constructed overlook contains a series of wayside exhibits, a stone wall, and seating. The site is very attractive; people seated on the bench can rest and contemplate what happened here on the Trail of Tears; however, they cannot view the Arkansas River.

Currently it is difficult to speak to large groups of visitors in this area. Something is needed (possibly a small amphitheater in the side of the hill facing the overlook) that could solve both issues. This also could be an area for tribal storytellers to present cultural demonstrations, etc.



it too offers several possibilities for enhancing the interpretation and education programs. While most of the structures will be removed from the site, the historic mule barn is to remain. A segment of the Butterfield Stage line ran through a portion of this site, and the park may in the future be designated as a unit of the

Publications

The park bookstore is managed by the Eastern National cooperating association. While the store is stocked with a wide variety of theme-relates items, a number of specific needs have been identified.

A good selection of single topic site bulletins has been developed

Trail of Tears Overlook

by park staff; however, a means of displaying them needs to be developed so that visitors can know what is available.

Personal Services

The park's living history interpretive program relies heavily on a large cadre of volunteers who perform a wide variety of services. There is a need to maintain and even expand this program, develop specific guidelines, clearly define individual roles, provide adequate training, and conduct regular evaluations.

Education Program

The park desires to expand its current education program and better engage area educators in program development. Located in a populated area and encompassing

two states, there is much potential to go beyond the present program of providing guided tours to school groups, to connect with many more area students, and to reach multiple audiences, through podcasts and/or distance learning.

Web Cam

The park is installing a web camera at Belle Point, overlooking the confluence of the Arkansas and Poteau Rivers.



Visitor Center Lobby

The following is a description of program and media recommendations designed to further define, support, and communicate the park's mission, purpose, significance, interpretive themes, and visitor experience goals. Implementation of these recommendations will help ensure that visitors are well prepared and informed, and that they will be able to develop meaningful connections with tangible and intangible resources.

The discussion of each program or media proposal identifies its purpose, special considerations, and sometimes suggests specific means of presentation. It is important to remember that the latter are only suggestions and should not in any way limit the creativity essential during the media and program planning and design processes. On the other hand, proposals will be specific enough to provide meaningful guidance, develop Class C cost estimates, prepare or update PMIS submissions, and define the parameters within which these creative energies can flow.

Consultation with Native American Indian tribes is required by a number of federal laws and regulations. At least one of the primary interpretive themes makes direct reference to Native American Indians and their associations with the land now in the park. It is essential that the park maintain a dialogue and active participation with tribal leaders during the planning, design, and production of theme-related media and programs.

Information and Orientation

The park will continue to provide information and orientation

through traditional means such as answering phone, mail, and email requests. Responses will continue to be tailored to specific inquiries, and pre-developed packets of material will continue to be used in handling more common requests. All printed information will contain appropriate phone numbers and addresses, including email addresses, and the park web site url. Information packets should contain a detailed map showing how to get to the visitor center from different directions.

The official park brochure should be reviewed to determine if the map would function best to direct visitors to the park or whether it should help visitors navigate around the park once they arrive. The first option is dependent on visitors getting the brochure before they come. Either way, the current map should be evaluated and recommendations be developed for improvement. It also is recommended that the brochure cover graphic be replaced with a collage that better represents the key park resources and themes.

In addition to reviewing the official park brochure, the park-produced site bulletins will be regularly evaluated to determine which items are used most, and which may be obsolete or unnecessary. It is recommended that some or all of the site bulletins be placed on-line so that visitors can download or print them at home or at the park. Likewise, a changeable display of available site bulletins should be located near the information desk so that visitors know what is available. Interpretive staff should write more site specific bulletins to include a wide and diverse mixture of topics within the scope of the park story.

All materials, including those produced by outside travel entities and park partners, will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that information about the park remains accurate, appropriate, and current. The park staff will work with area partners to encourage coverage of events and programs. Also, local tourism publishers will be encouraged to include tribal offices in their mailings.

Since many vehicles now have GPS navigation systems, the park should work with these system providers to ensure that they give accurate and the most direct instructions for reaching the park.

The park will continue to enhance its web site, especially the in-depth material and links to related and partner sites, in order to reach larger and more diverse audiences. Additional links or references to other, sites, museums, and programs that deal with theme-related elements should be explored and developed. Another link should be established with the NPS National Trail System Office (NTSF) in Santa Fe. Various types of downloadable information should be developed so the people can place material on their iPods, MP3s, CDs, or other devices for use at home, on the road, or when they get to the park.

The park, along with appropriate city, state and federal highway departments, will evaluate the directional sign system and initiate a sign plan request. Regional Office signing officials and Harpers Ferry Center may also be consulted during this process. Directional and entrance signing should utilize the NPS graphic identity standards. Special attention should be given to efficient directional signing to get to the park, and signing in the main parking lot to encourage better utilization.

At key park entry points visitors should easily find an informational wayside exhibit that provides orientation to the park as well as information on key resources, interpretive programs, activities, regulations, safety, etc. These exhibits may take the form of a shelter or similar structure to provide shade for visitors and protection for graphic panels. In designing and locating the exhibits it will be important to preserve the viewscape of the historic site. A portion of each exhibit may incorporate a bulletin case devoted to changeable information. One of the main goals here is to lay out the variety of opportunities available in the park. The exhibits would be available at all hours, as well as for visitors who choose not to go inside the visitor center.

Recommendations regarding information and orientation inside the visitor center will be discussed in the following section.

Visitor Center

Approach and Exterior

Informational wayside exhibits will be part of the entry experience at several key locations. These exhibits will be further developed in a parkwide wayside exhibit proposal that will be described in a later section of this LRIP. The waysides would be designed and situated so as not to adversely impact the historic scene, but they would be easily found by visitors entering the park at different locations. These exhibits would provide a welcome and introduction to the park, give visitors a sense of place, display relevant safety and resource protection messages, and display changeable information regarding such things as hours of operation, current activities, rules & regulations, etc. They will be available to visitors 24-

hours a day, including times when other park facilities are closed.

Lobby/Information Desk Area

Information and orientation will continue to be an important function inside the visitor center. Few changes are proposed for the lobby and information desk area. A changeable display of available site bulletins is recommended to be located near the information desk so visitors know what is available. Visitors can simply ask for items that interest them.

There is no room in the lobby area for much in the way of other changeable exhibits. In the last redesign of media in the building, the intent was that the education room could double as a place for temporary or temporary exhibits.

While this may work some of the time, if the park education program grows (as is proposed) the dual use of this room will become problematic. Consequently, changeable exhibits, if desirable, will need to be small and possibly allocated to the informational wayside exhibits (described in the previous section and in the wayside exhibits section of this LRIP). Another option is to relocate the education program function to a different facility (see recommendations for the Frisco Station and Forgecraft sites).

Exhibits

The visitor center exhibits are relatively new, in good condition, and most function well. The following are some minor rehab-type recommendations.



Visitor Center
Information Desk

The second floor exhibit area needs an exhibit lighting plan. The current lighting is stage lighting and does not adequately light the exhibit area and it is very costly to replace stage light bulbs.

The stereo view card display needs to be redesigned. As stated in the Existing Conditions section, visitors cannot focus the viewer and many people bump their heads trying to look through it. One solution might be to replace the current display with a reproduction viewer and repro cards that visitors could actually use. This would provide an interactive element which is generally lacking in the exhibit area, and people could individually adjust and focus the viewer. Although this would be a hands-on design, the items would be secured to prevent damage or theft.

The jail cell displays on the second floor do allow for some interactivity. People can walk into one of the cells and experience the size and starkness of the space. This activity should definitely continue.

The park staff will explore options for creating interactive exhibits that will appeal to children and communicate elements of the primary interpretive themes in each of the major exhibit areas. Minor redesign of one of the exhibit rooms could allow adequate space for things like a touch table, chest/toy box, reproduction period clothing, etc. Other possibilities could challenge children to build a fort and test its strength/vulnerability, or an activity could be developed using repro objects related to a commissary. Various ideas could be inexpensively tested with visiting

Stereo View Card
Exhibit



children or school groups and later developed by a professional exhibit designer.

AV Programs

The AV theater will continue to be one of the first stops for visitors after they leave the information desk/lobby area. A new film for Fort Smith National Historic Site is recommended. The new program will set the tone for the entire visit, and will help people visualize the fort's history and changes over time. It will build out the continuum of history at the site, provide a chronological context, and do a better job of showing how things looked in the past. While the new film will target a general audience, it also will appeal to children and make the historical events easy to understand.

It is recommended that a 28-30 minute film be produced, but it would be edited to a 12-15 minute version for showing in the theater. The park would have all duplication rights, and the longer film would be available as a sales item in the bookstore, a pre-visit program for school classes, and for television broadcast. In addition, a 2-3 minute version could be produced for internet web streaming. Perhaps as a component of the park's education program, the film could be made available to school groups and commercial bus tour groups so they can view it prior to their visit. This would allow a little more time for these groups to interact directly with park resources and other interpretive activities when they arrive.

The film will make heavy use of Fort Smith-related personal accounts and original historic documents. It will consider using live action to depict emotions, and the wide variety and large volume of people connected to the site. The film producer also

should look into the potential of partnering with organizations like educational television and/or the Trail of Tears Association which is currently producing a film on the trail using cgi animation.

AV equipment in the theater will be upgraded to ensure the best projection for the film, and a quality surround-sound system with captioning, and audio description.

In the courtroom, the quality of the sound system will be improved. The use of multiple speakers would add dimension by having voices come from different locations in the room.

Improvements to AV elements in the exhibit areas are recommended to minimize the "sound spill" competition that currently exists. Consideration also should be given to providing some seating, but without impeding visitor flow. The park should continue the use of audio description wands that are available for the park visitor as a self-guiding audio tour as well as for accessibility purposes for the impaired. Also, park staff should explore the potential of using cell phone or podcast technology for conveying the interpretive messages and sound effects. Care should be taken so that the electronic equipment is not visible and does not interfere with the trial re-enactments in the courtroom.

Since the actual technology is evolving so rapidly, any specific media recommendations made here will almost certainly be obsolete in a few years. However, the concept would be that visitors could use their own cell phones or iPods, Mp3 players, or other devices to call or download the messages, and then use them in any order they choose. Information could be downloaded from the park web site from people's homes, or at a designated download station in the visitor center.

For people who do not have a cell phone, programs exist (such as the Pioneers of America) where used phones can be reprogrammed to call only a specific number, which in this case would be the park number containing the AV tour messages. These phones can be acquired very inexpensively and could be loaned to visitors who need them.

All of these message devices can be offered in multiple languages and easily changed. They also can be used to provide audio description for visitors with sight impairments. And, the park can even keep track of the number of times a specific site is called, how long people listen, etc.

Other AV recommendations for the visitor center include:

- Converting the various AV station programs to DVD and having them available for school groups. These could be developed as an element of a traveling exhibit - part of the park's curriculum-based education program.
- A short video of the Trail of Tears Overlook that could be used as part of the programmatic accessibility interpretive package for people unable to walk to the site, and for use in the summer when the heat makes the walk oppressive.
- Selling (or showing) AV programs produced by entities such as the History Channel, Discovery Channel, PBS, and others that depict Fort Smith. It may be possible to include an analysis of these programs, describing elements of accuracy and inaccuracy.

Finally, the park should use its film permits to obtain rights to show anything produced at the site.

Publications

The cooperating association needs to conduct a scope of sales study.

This process evaluates each sales item with regard to price, intended audiences, and interpretive theme(s) addressed. The study will identify areas of strength as well as areas that could be the focus of a publications program. One specific need identified in the development of this LRIP was having more scholarly publications relating to park themes. Another recommendation was to consider selling the parkwide Wayside Exhibit Plan when completed. This plan will contain the text and color images of all of the park's wayside exhibits and it could serve as a virtual tour publication.

The official park brochure should be reviewed to determine if the map would function best to direct visitors to the park or whether it should help visitors navigate around the park once they arrive. The first option is dependent on visitors getting the brochure before they come. Either way, the current map should be evaluated and recommendations be developed for improvement. It also is recommended that the brochure cover graphic be replaced with a collage that better represents the key park resources and themes.

In addition to reviewing the official park brochure, the park-produced site bulletins would be regularly evaluated to determine which items are used most, and which may be obsolete or unnecessary. It is recommended that some or all of the site bulletins be placed on-line so that visitors can download or print them at home. Likewise, a changeable display of available site bulletins should be located near the information desk so visitors know what is available.

Library and Research Resources

The library, microfilm collection, photo collection, historic research

files and the maps located on the third floor are excellent resources for staff and researchers. The park staff should continue efforts to catalog and make these resources easier to use.

More shelves (which are adjustable) are needed for the park library. Park staff should continue researching options for adjustable shelving.

A new computer system is needed to run the Voyager program and allow networking with the NPS library system.

Storage for digital copies of original archival materials is needed.

Framed photo collections of the Civil War, Native Americans, settlers, outlaws and lawmen are available for public loan. The framing of some of the photos needs to be upgraded. Park staff should continue to make these collections available to the public.

Explore the potential of moving the children's books to a separate area.

Explore ways to provide links with various theme/resource-related databases. For example the park has a database of people who worked for the Federal Court in Fort Smith. The U.S. Marshals Service Museum will have a more general database that covers a greater time span. Each database should include a reference to others that may prove helpful to researchers.

Since the park receives at least one research request per day (most related to genealogy), the park should consider offering a genealogy workshop for local/area residents, or providing genealogy research tips on the park web site.

Wayside Exhibits

Wayside exhibits tell the park story on location. They "caption the

landscape" and help visitors make a direct connection with resources they see before them. With the use of good graphics, waysides also show how a site looked like historically and bring the story of another era to life. The park is fortunate to have a photo/graphic collection that includes many site-specific images.

A parkwide wayside exhibit proposal is recommended for Fort Smith National Historic Site to guide the park toward a complete, high quality, uniform system with NPS identity. This proposal would assess all existing and proposed wayside exhibits and identify which key park stories would link strongly with a particular view or place in the landscape. The resulting document would become the foundation for creating all informational and interpretive wayside exhibits in a logical and orderly way. The proposal also would point out places or stories that do not fit well with the capabilities and capacities of wayside interpretation and set priorities to guide wayside development in phases as funding allows.

In a general context there are a few new ideas that the park wayside exhibit proposal would address. These include:

- the idea that Fort Smith was a place full of people who were more culturally diverse than has typically been shown in today's "frontier art" or Hollywood movies about the frontier era.
- the idea that Fort Smith was a busy bustling 19th century Army post with constant military activity, pomp and ceremony, men drilling, mules hauling wagons of supplies, and civilians watching.
- the growth of the city outside the fort walls, the diversity of the population in the region, and their contributions to the park story.



Park Entrance
River Trail

- the fact that this was a military complex with numerous buildings that evolved over time and was eventually surrounded by an impressive stone wall.
- the idea that Fort Smith was an important component of a vital transportation hub (i.e. how busy the riverfront around Belle Point would have been, and the significance of the Frisco Station).

It is likely that a wayside exhibit proposal would recommend retaining the porcelain enamel waysides at the gallows site. This area is walled and locked at night which greatly reduces the threat of vandalism. The porcelain also provides a stark dignity to the list of men executed. Likewise, the series of six Trail of Tears exhibits at the overlook are attractively designed and convey informative and compelling messages. The concept of grouping waysides in open shade shelters is an important consideration for visitor comfort and for holding visitor attention in the summer heat.

Informational/orientation upright wayside exhibits are recommended for entry locations. These are places where some percentage of visitors will regularly be coming into the historic site for the first time. One of the most important functions of these exhibits will be to answer the questions, “What is this place?” and “What can I do here?” Until the need for basic orientation is met, people will skip over any deeper subject matter. The recommended locations include:

- River Trail, north
parkwide orientation, part-of-the NPS, trail orientation, safety messages
- Frisco Station
parkwide orientation & site orientation
- 2nd Street entrance
parkwide orientation
- Rogers Avenue entrance
parkwide orientation, part-of-the NPS
- Parker Avenue entrance
parkwide orientation
- Main parking entrance

parkwide orientation, part-of-the NPS

Maps—that match the view— are essential for orientation waysides. Audience testing shows that maps have to match the orientation of the trailhead, rather than follow the convention that north always be on the top of the image, or they confuse arriving visitors. There will need to be a unique map created to match the view at each of the Fort Smith NHS entry points.

As proposed in the Visitor Center section of this LRIP, the potential of using cell phone or podcast technology for conveying the interpretive messages and sound effects should be explored. These technologies have potential for use both indoors and outdoors as a self-guiding audio tour where they can add considerable depth to the interpretation. The park should continue the use of audio description wands that are available for the general public as a self-guiding audio tour as well as for accessibility purposes for the hearing impaired.

Since the actual technology is evolving so rapidly, any specific media recommendations made here will almost certainly be obsolete in a few years. However, the concept would be that visitors could use their own cell phones or iPods, Mp3 players, or other devices to call or download the messages, and then use them in any order they choose. Information could be downloaded from the park web site from people's homes, or at a designated download station in the visitor center.

Today over 54 million Americans have impaired vision, impaired hearing or mobility problems — roughly one person in five. Of that number, 10 million potential visitors to NPS sites are “legally blind” and

7.7 million see so poorly as to have difficulty reading a newspaper. The National Park Service is therefore now obligated to look for ways that the messages and services we used to deliver only by visual media, like waysides, can be offered to visitors who see poorly or not at all.

Unlike historic sites in more remote places, Fort Smith has excellent cellular phone coverage. Any visitor with a cell phone in hand could get the audio messages from a voice-mail server while looking at any Fort Smith wayside exhibit site. In 2006 Valley Forge NHP pioneered the way to use existing voicemail technology to provide audio interpretation free of charge to visitors with great success.

In the past, many NPS historic sites have used audio message repeaters with external speakers to add to the interpretive effectiveness of their waysides. The park should continue to use the 4 audio waysides: Belle Point, the Gallows, the Commissary and the Courtroom. These units function well with minimal maintenance and expense. However, these units are notorious for breaking down; many attract lightning strikes; and, they infringe on visitor sovereignty. When school groups are on a trail, the old-style audio speaker station will be triggered over and over. The quality of the visitor experience for those people present on the trail who are not part of the school group suffers, because the latter have no choice as to whether they want to hear the audio message or not.

For people who do not have a cell phone, programs exist (such as the Pioneers of America) where used phones can be reprogrammed to call only a specific number, which in this case would be the park number containing the AV tour messages. These phones can be acquired

very inexpensively and could be loaned to visitors who need them. All of these message devices can be offered in multiple languages and easily changed. They also can be used to provide audio description for visitors with sight impairments. And, the park can even keep track of the number of times a specific site is called, how long a people listen, etc.

Finally, in the Publications section of this document it is proposed that the Parkwide Wayside Exhibit Proposal and/or Plan be considered as a potential sales item. This plan will contain the text and color images of all of the park's wayside exhibits and, perhaps with some editing, it could serve as a virtual tour publication or be added to the DVD with the park video as a sales item in the bookstore.

First Fort Smith Site

The site of the first Fort Smith will continue to be interpreted with wayside exhibits, and the proposed audio tour recommendations described in the Wayside Exhibits and Visitor Center sections of this LRIP. In addition, consideration will be given to the development of a scale model of the first fort that could sit next to one of the wayside exhibits. This will add a tactile element to the interpretation of the site that will benefit all visitors. Another idea would be to reconstruct a small segment of the fort wall, perhaps next to the gazebo, to illustrate the construction techniques used and to provide a sense of scale. Consideration will be given to the construction of a blockhouse. A blockhouse will be used to demonstrate the defensive capabilities of the fort as well as the construction of a log structure from the foundation, walls, and roof. This structure will add several interpretive opportunities which will connect the First Fort, The Trail of Tears, and the Second Fort.

Together, these elements will help visitors see the extent of this fort, its main features, and understand that people once lived and worked here.

Frisco Station

While a decision has already been made to lease much of the space, a portion of this building could be designed for public use, education, and/or interpretive media. At a minimum, the building and associated structures will be included in the development of the parkwide wayside exhibit proposal.

Consideration also should be given to the potential of using a portion of the interior for the park's education program. This would include not only the K-12 program, but also the adult activities described in the Education Program section of this LRIP.

In addition, some small interpretive displays that would interpret the building's history and significance are suggested for any public spaces inside the station. Even if the building were not used for the education program, these exhibits would benefit others visiting or working in the structure.

Forge Craft Site

While most of the structures will soon be removed from the site, the historic mule barn is to remain. At a minimum, the building and overall site should be included in the development of the parkwide wayside exhibit proposal. Since a segment of the Butterfield Stage line ran through a portion of this site, and the fact the park may be designated as a unit of the proposed Butterfield Trail, visitors should receive an introduction to the trail - its extent and significance.

The site also has the advantage of being adjacent to the privately

owned Trolley Museum and the trolley tracks as well as the Fort Smith National Cemetery. The cemetery was started due to the nearby First Fort Smith where the burials may be on the Forge Craft property. This allows the park access to the cultural stories of the First Fort Smith and the National Cemetery story.

It is proposed that a portion of the shore at this site be planted and maintained with native vegetation to show visitors what the area looked like historically. The park plans to build an interpretive trail with wayside exhibits that would connect to the existing river trail.

Consideration also should be given to the potential of using a portion of the mule barn interior for the park's education program. This would include not only the K-12 program, but also the adult activities described in the Education Program section of this LRIP.

Depending on the future uses determined for the mule barn, if some additional interior space can be open to the public, interpretive exhibits are recommended to interpret the building's history and significance.

Trail of Tears Overlook

Although the current series of wayside exhibits are attractive and function well, they should be evaluated during the development of the parkwide wayside exhibit proposal. Consideration should be given to a minor redesign so that visitors seated on the bench can better view the river.

It has also been recommended that a short video of the site be developed for showing in the visitor center, especially during the summer. This would provide programmatic accessibility for people physically

unable to get to the site, but also for people who opt to not walk in the intense summer heat.

A small amphitheater built in the side of the hill facing the overlook would serve as an area for programs, and be an attractive seating area for visitor contemplation.

Education Program

Future growth of the park education program is primarily contingent on having an education specialist (see Staffing section). This would allow the park to:

- Develop and implement a park education plan.
- Develop and expand the number of curriculum-based programs to address additional grades and topics.
- Reach broader audiences, including those that may not be able to visit in person.
- Provide education materials online.
- Increase the number of visits to and from schools.
- Continue and/or expand teacher training workshops to enable schools to make the best use of park resources and pre and post-visit materials.
- Create better communication and coordination with other organizations that interpret similar resources and themes.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of individual activities and overall program.

With a strong program that ties directly to local, state, and national curriculum standards, more schools will see the value of using the park to help support their needs. This can be accomplished by involving educators directly in the development of both general and specific activities and curriculum guides.

Teacher training workshops can be structured to provide participants with the basics for getting involved with the park education program, but they can accomplish much more. Teachers can receive training for conducting most activities themselves, thus minimizing the time required by park staff. Workshops can be conducted with park partners and structured so that participants can receive in-service or academic credit. Still other workshops can utilize teacher expertise to develop curriculum-based materials that meet specific academic standards. And, even students can be involved in workshops to evaluate the effectiveness of current or proposed education activities.

Education materials developed for the in-park program may also have value for home-schooled students and groups that may never be able to visit in person. Many of these materials could be placed on the park web site. Some items could be offered as free downloads; other materials could be offered for sale on-site or on-line through the cooperating association, or offered free to those who participate in teacher workshops.

The park and park partner sites with theme-related resources should work together to explore how each can develop educational goals and programs to meet the needs of different educational groups. This will prevent duplication of effort and capitalize on each site's strengths. If marketed as a package to educators, it will make it easier for teachers to select programs and sites that best address different curriculum goals and standards.

Beyond education programs aimed at K-12 students, the park will continue to offer programs on using historic documents for research.

This will be of special interest for people conducting genealogy studies. The park also will explore options of strengthening ties with the Elder Hostel program and with relatively new intergenerational programs such as those that pair grandparents with their grandchildren.

As the education program continues to grow, the park will need to look into a better location for conducting indoor activities, workshops, etc. The current room in the visitor center was originally planned to house both the education program and temporary or changeable exhibits. With the additions of the Frisco Station and the mule barn at the Forgecraft site, a portion of either of these structures could be adapted for use by the park education program. While selection of a site is beyond the scope of the LRIP, these options should be included in any future education program facility planning.

Prior to the recommendations workshop for this LRIP, the park held separate meetings to develop some more specific recommendations for the Fort Smith National Historic Site education program. Those recommendations are:

- Assemble teachers and subject matter experts from the local community for a facilitated planning meeting. The goal of the meeting will be to gain input and strategize how best the education community can use the resources available at the park. Be sure to include teachers from Oklahoma as well.
- Prepare an Arkansas Humanities Council education mini-grant to support the efforts of the planning meeting.
- Expand the current guided tour of the visitor center to include

an experiential learning program that allows students to better understand the role of Fort Smith

and include items in the touch trunk that pioneers may have procured while stopping here.



Education & Temporary
Exhibit Room at
Visitor Center

as a federal court and jail facility. Students will learn about and experience life at Fort Smith from the perspective of a prisoner.

- Explore the possibility of preparing a map reading activity that will allow students hands-on opportunities to use a compass and contrast it with a GPS unit. This may provide insight into the work soldiers performed as scouts having to work independently and possess specific skills. It also will allow them an immersive experience using the grounds to locate landmarks or other items to discover additional aspects of the park.
- Fort Smith National Historic Site has many items available that might be used for more hands-on activities. Using the trunks as a platform for a touching feature within the museum will allow younger visitors the opportunity to explore reproduced items that would have been found among a soldier's possessions or within the barracks of Fort Smith. Another aspect to consider would be the role of Fort Smith as a "way station" for people traveling west,
- Along the same lines as the touch trunk is an activity that would engage students to decide what items they would need for their haversack if they were a soldier or a U.S. Marshal going out on patrol. The object would be to challenge the students to use their reasoning skills to consider what would be practical for them to carry. It could be called something like "What I Need – What I Want."
- Mathematics could be incorporated into many activities. An example might include working at the commissary to issue rations based on the pay the soldiers got. Weights and distances could be used when assembling a scouting party. How much would U.S. Marshals or a soldier need for a week long or a month long scouting expedition? How would these items be transported? The farming operation of the fort could also be used as a foundation to do mathematical problem solving.
- Consider other ways to explore and incorporate American Indian cultures using hands-on activities. For example, obtain various parts of a bison to show students how

American Indians would use each for practical purposes. It would be important for the park interpreter to be the key facilitator of this activity to fully achieve emotional and intellectual insights into the meanings and significance of the buffalo to American Indian culture.

- Develop programs that use evolving technology such as pod casts and distance learning that allow students to immerse themselves in park resources.
- Prepare either a Parks-As-Classroom project of Arkansas Humanities Council grant that provides transportation to the park to facilitate more on-site visits from schools.

Personal Services

A variety of personal services programs and activities will continue to be an essential component of the overall interpretive program for Fort Smith National Historic Site. These activities will have the unparalleled advantage of being inspiring, versatile, alive, and tailored to the needs of individuals and groups. An interpretive presence also helps with the protection of fragile resources. Interpreters, whether behind an information desk, roving, leading a program, giving a talk, or conducting a demonstration, are the best interactive tool in enabling visitors to experience, understand, appreciate, and make personal and intellectual connections with resources.

The park will continue offering living history programs, interpretive talks on theme-related topics, roving interpretation, and a variety of special events. Special events and the “Night Court” living history programs remain two of the park’s most popular programs and they should continue as part of the core interpretive program.

Volunteers will continue to be a large and critical part of

the interpretive staff, and it is recommended that the program be expanded. There is also a need for the permanent interpretive staff to develop clearly defined roles for the volunteers, and to provide regular training that includes an introduction to overall park operations. An archive of material used in the development of different roles also will be prepared and maintained. This will build a strong foundation for new and current volunteers and help insure that valuable intellectual history is retained.

The park will develop authenticity guidelines and standards for living history roles. The park will also continue to purchase and maintain many of the necessary living history props and period clothing for issue to volunteers. This will help reduce the need for volunteers to supply their own items, and it will help to insure a high level of historic accuracy.

The park has an NPS certified historic weapons supervisor on staff. Historic weapons demonstrations continue to be an asset to the park interpretive program. Historic weapons demonstrations should be scheduled on a regular basis during high visitation.

To increase authenticity, the rifle regiment shakos should be replaced with yeoman caps.

The 1216 Napoleon cannon needs a new carriage as the old one is no longer safe and is not allowed.

The iron 6-pound cannon carriage needs a new wheel to make it serviceable.

One of the 1816 Springfields needs a new stock.

The Historic Weapons Plan for the park is included in the Appendix.

Personal services interpretation of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail will be expanded beyond the current guided programs to possibly include costumed interpretation or living history. Some of the tribes have researched various roles and possess the necessary skills for conducting various demonstrations, etc. Other interpretive activities might present different perspectives on theme-related elements by utilizing interpreters from different cultural backgrounds. There also is the potential for developing a one-time, periodic, or annual special events involving all of the five tribes.

The park will plan and prepare a yearly schedule of interpretive events. This will provide sufficient time for individuals to prepare and if necessary, for the recruitment of new people. A yearly schedule also allows time for activities to be posted in local “Calendar of Events” type of promotional pieces for marketing purposes.

The potential of partnering with the City of Fort Smith to use adjacent Kelley Park for interpretive (i.e. evening) programs will be explored. The park is an active partner with the U.S. Marshals Service Museum and currently rents half of the first floor of the Frisco Station to the U.S. Marshals Service funding committee. The park partners on a regular basis with the FS City Library for book signing events and Descendant’s Day events.

Since personal services interpretive programs are relatively easy to change, the activities should be evaluated on a regular basis to discontinue those that are not effective, modify and improve those that require it, and validate those that are successful.

Partnership Opportunities

Continued and expanded partnerships with others in the community and throughout the region will remain a crucial and integral part of the overall interpretive program at Fort Smith National Historic Site. Specific partnership related recommendations for this LRIP are:

- Develop informational exhibits (with appropriate brochures) at partner sites to inform visitors of the existing theme-related network and to encourage them to visit other sites in the area. These exhibits also would let people know what primary themes and resources are represented at the various sites.
- Develop partnership with the University of Arkansas Fort Smith’s Historic Interpretation program. The program has potential benefits for the park interpretive program.
- Continue to maintain close relations with tribal offices, NPS National Trails Office, Trail of Tears Association, U.S. Marshals Museum, etc.
- Explore opportunities to develop a network of education programs that present easy to use format for teachers to select activities and sites that best meet their needs.
- Maintain connections with other area attractions and service providers to share information and ideas for continually improving the overall visitor experience, and to ensure that everyone has access to accurate and current information.
- Explore the potential of building a reproduction of a keelboat or skiff that would offer visitors a river experience. The boats themselves would have great interpretive potential, but having them in the water for seasonal or special events

would add a new dimension to the visitor experience at Fort Smith. The park may want to consider encouraging private enterprise to initiate the reproduction of a keelboat or skiff that would offer such an experience for the visitor. This activity may or may not need to occur on NPS property.

- Explore the potential of using adjacent Kelley Park for interpretive programs.

Accessibility

Provisions will be made to accommodate the needs of all visitors who visit Fort Smith National Historic Site. All visitors with sight, hearing, learning, and mobility impairments; visitors who do not speak English; and the elderly

and young children will be offered interpretive experiences.

Public Law 90-480, the Architectural Barriers Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 establish standards for physical access. Other regulations, laws, and standards include Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Director's Orders No. 42, and the Accessibility for Visitors with Disabilities in National Park Service Programs, Facilities, and Services. All newly constructed facilities, as a matter of course, will be designed for accessibility for physically challenged visitors and employees.

Every effort will be made to provide full access to interpretive media and programs to ensure that people with physical and mental challenges, as well as people who do not speak or understand English, have access to the same information necessary for a safe and meaningful visit to Fort Smith National Historic Site. All new interpretive media will follow the standards for accessibility as described in the NPS, October

2007 Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for National Park Service Interpretive Media. These guidelines can be found on the Harpers Ferry Center web site at: <http://www.nps.gov/hfc/pdf/accessibility/access-guide-oct2007.pdf>.

Informational and interpretive media in the redesigned visitor center will include some audio components which will appeal to broad learning styles, and will offer added accessibility for those with visual impairments. This will include audio description of the exhibit experience. Tactile elements should be used wherever they will enrich the experience for all visitors.

Staffing Needs

The table on page 29 shows the existing and anticipated staffing needs for fully implementing the recommendations in this plan.

Research Needs

Park interpretive staff needs to continue working closely with the curatorial technician to keep up to date on research activities and results. The curatorial technician and resource management specialists should be encouraged to present regular briefings on projects to the entire park staff, including interpreters. Agency and contracted researchers also should be encouraged or instructed to produce executive summaries and programs that translate research results into layman terms for park staff and the public. The park should expand the web site to illustrate the artifacts in the park curatorial storage. This may encourage virtual visitors to donate items to the park.

Since no formal visitor survey has been conducted for Fort Smith National Historic Site, this should be a high priority. The park needs to learn and to continue learning

about its visitors and visitation trends: Who visits? What are their motivations, expectations, and satisfaction levels? What can be done to increase the length of visits and interaction with park resources? Who doesn't visit and why? How do the answers to these and other questions vary from season to season? How do visitors and visitor experiences compare to other theme-related sites?

Research is also important in the development of specific media and programs and will be planned as part of all substantial media projects and specialized programming.

This should definitely be a part of the visitor center redesign project. Front-end evaluations would query potential visitors before products and activities are developed. This type of research is targeted so that practical use can be made of the results. Formative evaluations would be conducted during conceptual design, and would test inexpensive mock-ups of interpretive media and programs before fully investing in final products. Summative evaluations are valuable in helping to determine the effectiveness of final media, facilities, and programs – i.e. whether the intended themes are being communicated, if people actually make use of the information, or if visitor behavior is affected.

POSITION	GRADE	YR/SEAS	EXISTING	NEEDED	TOTAL
Chief of Interpretation and Resource Management	11	YR	1		1
Park Ranger Interpretation Education Coord.	9	YR	1		1
Park Ranger Interpretation Living History Coord.	9	YR	1		1
Historian	9	YR		1	
Museum Technician	7	YR	1		1
Park Ranger Interpretation	5	SEAS	1		1
Park Guide	4	SEAS	2		2

Summary of Products and Actions

The following is a summation of the action items and products proposed in this long-range interpretive plan. Each of these items is described in greater detail in the narrative sections of this document. This list is designed to help develop the implementation schedule, annual and long-term priorities, assignment of responsibilities, and cost estimates.

It must be emphasized that the following list deals specifically with actions and products for media and programs related directly to information, orientation, interpretation, and education. Although new and redesigned facilities are proposed or referenced, recommendations related to these projects will be developed through other planning and design efforts. Staffing requirements to implement and maintain the following actions are identified in the Staffing section.

Parkwide

- Develop & implement parkwide wayside exhibit proposal.
- Develop electronic messaging system for download to visitor-owned devices.

Information and Orientation

- Evaluate directional sign system
- Review/update information produced in-house & by external sources (ongoing).
- Enhance/expand park web site and links with park partners (ongoing).
- Evaluate official park brochure (ongoing).

Visitor Center

- Produce new primary AV program.
- Upgrade AV equipment in theater.
- Develop solutions for “sound spill” issues.

- Produce short video interpreting Trail of Tears overlook.
- Upgrade sound system in courtroom.
- Develop changeable display of park site bulletins.
- Establish changeable/temporary exhibit area.
- Rehab stereoscope exhibit.
- Develop new interactive exhibits elements for children.
- Conduct front-end, formative, and summative evaluations of media.
- Conduct cooperating association scope of sales study.
- Explore potential of adapting wayside exhibit proposal as a sales item.
- Improve space in park library.
- Upgrade computer system for library.

First Fort Smith Site

- Create scale model of fort for use outdoors near wayside exhibit.
- Explore potential of building a blockhouse or a full-size replica of a portion of fort wall.

Frisco Station

- Explore options for using some space for education and/or interpretation.

Forge Craft Site

- Explore options for using some space for education and/or interpretation.
- Explore potential of planting portion of site with native vegetation.

Trail of Tears Overlook

- Modify design so visitors seated on the bench can view the river.

Education Program

- Explore relocation options for education program space.
- Develop and expand the number of curriculum-based programs.

- Reproduce AV programs in DVD format for use in schools, etc.
- Provide education materials online.
- Increase the number of visits to schools.
- Expand adult education opportunities.
- Expand teacher training workshops.
- Explore opportunities with partners to share education program activities.
- Develop education plan.

Personal Services

- Expand number and variety of personal services activities & programs.
- Expand programs that demonstrate cultural diversity of site's history.
- Develop clearly defined roles and authenticity guidelines for living history.
- Develop archive or living history roles.
- Develop annual schedule of interpretive events (ongoing).
- Determine need for black powder certification.
- Provide regular training for interpretive staff (ongoing).
- Develop and maintain store of living history clothing and props.
- Evaluate effectiveness of all programs (ongoing).

Partnership Opportunities

- Develop networking informational exhibits at partner sites.
- Establish and maintain active web site links with key organizations.
- Maintain and strengthen relations with associated American Indian tribes and others (ongoing).
- Explore potential to develop education program network.
- Explore potential for development of keelboat/skiff for river interpretation.
- Explore potential of using Kelley Park for shared interpretive programs.

- UAFS interpretive program

Implementation Plan

Implementing some of the items from the extensive products and partnership recommendations lists will require independent planning efforts and other actions over the next 3-7 years. Other action items can be implemented in a very short time within existing funds and staff levels. In future years, the priority setting process will be reflected in the Annual Implementation Plan component of the park's Comprehensive Interpretive Plan.

The following are recommendations for the steps that should be taken over the coming years. As funding is obtained for the major projects they may move forward or backward a step or two. The projects are not in any particular order within each step, as they are simultaneously occurring.

Step One (1-2 years)

- Allow space for changeable/temporary exhibits in the lobby of the visitor center.
- Design an exhibit lighting plan for exhibits on the second floor
- Produce a 2-3 minute film for internet web streaming. Made available to school groups and tour groups as pre-visit material.
- Improve the quality of the audio with multiple speakers. This will add dimension by having the voices come from different locations in the courtroom.
- Explore improvements to current 'audio spill' competition that currently exists in the exhibit area.
- Continue the use of audio description wands and explore the use of cell phone, Ipods, Mp3 players and/or podcast technology.

- Conduct a scope of sales study to evaluate each sales item with regard to price, intended audience and interpretive theme(s) addressed.
 - Offer more scholarly publications relating to park themes.
 - Develop a park Wayside Exhibit Proposal and when finalized consider selling the park Wayside Exhibit Plan.
 - The current map on the park's unigrid should be evaluated and the brochure cover graphic be replaced with a better representative of the park's themes.
 - Review the park's site bulletins regularly
 - Continue efforts to catalog books in the library, microfilm, photo collection, historic research files, maps and make these resources easier to use.
 - Research options for adjustable shelves needed in the park library.
 - A new CPU is needed in the library to run the Voyager program and allow networking with the NPS library system.
 - Research additional storage for digital copies of original archival material.
 - Make available the framed photo collections of Native Americans, Civil War, settlers, outlaws and lawmen.
 - Explore ways to provide links to the Federal Court Employee Database.
 - Consider sponsoring a genealogy workshop for local/area residents or provide genealogy research tips on the park web site.
 - Implement a park education plan
 - Develop and expand the number of curriculum-based programs.
 - Reach broader audiences including those not able to visit in person.
 - Increase the number of visits to and from schools
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of individual activities and overall programs
 - Develop a Teacher Ranger Teacher program.
 - In the clothing for living history, replace the rifle regiment shakos with yeoman caps.
 - Find a new carriage for the 12 lb. Napoleon.
 - Obtain a new wheel for the 6 lb. cannon carriage.
 - Purchase a new stock for one of the 1816 Springfields.
 - Plan and post a yearly calendar of events
 - Develop partnership with UAFS, Lake Fort Smith State Park, US Army Corps of Engineers, and US Marshals Museum.
 - Create handouts in other languages in addition to English.
- Step Two (3-5 Years)
- The stereo view card exhibit needs to be re-designed so as to provide an interactive element were visitors adjust and focus the viewer.
 - Design interactive exhibit that will appeal to children ie, a touch table, reproduction period clothing, chest toy box, etc.
 - Upgrade A/V equipment in the theater to the best projection for the film and a high quality surround-sound system with captioning and audio description.
 - Produce a new park interpretive film (28-30 minutes in length) where the park will have all duplication rights and be able to sell the

- film in the park bookstore.
 - Convert the various AV station programs to DVD and make available as an element of a traveling exhibit
 - Develop a short video of the Trail of Tears Overlook possibly used as part of the programmatic accessibility package for people unable to walk to the site or include on the park's website.
 - Park staff should consider developing a scale model of the First Fort Smith which will add a tactile element and benefit all park visitors.
 - Conduct a formal visitor survey in the park
 - Develop front-end evaluations to query potential visitors before high dollar exhibits are fully invested.
 - Develop summative to determine the effectiveness of final media, facilities, and programs.
- serve as a barn for a park horse and tack which would help tell the transportation story of FOSM. Also development of a horse program in the park.
 - Development of a small amphitheater built into the side of the hill facing the overlook would serve as an area for programs and an attractive seating area for visitors to contemplate.
 - Explore the potential of building a keelboat or a skiff that would interpret transportation on the river.
 - Develop a partnership with the FS Parks and Recreation which may allow NPS interpreters to use adjacent Kelly and River Park amphitheater for evening programs.

Planning Team and Consultants

Step Three (5-7 Years)

- Consider reconstruction of a small segment of the fort wall to illustrate the construction techniques used and to provide a sense of scale to the site. Also consider the construction of a blockhouse which would demonstrate the defensive capabilities of the fort.
- Park staff should consider the addition of small interpretive displays in the Frisco Station.
- Provide interpretation of the Butterfield Trail which ran through a portion of the Forge Craft Site.
- Construct an interpretive trail with wayside exhibits which would loop around and connect with the existing the trail.
- The old mule barn would

Fort Smith National Historic Site

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 Julie Northrip, Park Ranger, Interpretation
 Emily Lovick, Museum Technician
 Jeremy Lynch, Park Ranger, Interpretation
 Sam Trisler, Park Ranger, Interpretation
 Catherine Gray, Park Guide, Interpretation
 Kerry Vogelpohl, Transportation Interpreter
 Barbara Coleman, Volunteer
 Kenneth Coleman, Volunteer
 Susan Trisler, Volunteer
 Harold Trisler, Volunteer
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Park Partners and Consultants

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Pare Bowlegs, Historic Preservation Office, Seminole Nation

LaDonna Brown, Multimedia Department, Chickasaw Nation

Jack D. Baker, Cherokee Tribal Council & Trail of Tears Association

Jim Spears, Circuit Judge, Sebastian County, AR

David Turk, Historian, U.S. Marshals Service

Sandi Sanders, Director, U.S. Marshals Museum

Claude Legris, Director, Fort Smith Convention & Visitor Bureau

Tracy Winchell, City of Fort Smith, Office of Economic Development

Cathy Bain, Teacher, University of Arkansas at Fort Smith

Harpers Ferry Center

Mark Johnson, Wayside Exhibit Planner

Chuck Dunkerly, AV Producer

Paul Lee, Interpretive Planner



Supply Wagon in Front of
Commissary Storehouse

Introduction

The National Park Service makes every effort to provide access to the many exciting, fascinating and meaningful cultural and natural resources it is entrusted to maintain and preserve. Working in partnership with local and regional school districts, Fort Smith NHS will provide enrichment activities for school groups that will support the recently updated Arkansas Frameworks and include National Standards.

As school budgets tighten, teachers are continuing to be held accountable for student performance and higher standards are expected from students, teachers, and schools. The purpose of the Fort Smith NHS Education Plan is to assist teachers in helping them achieve their established goals as well as support park management initiatives within the Interpretation and Education Program.

Some of the key elements of the Fort Smith NHS Education Plan revolve around using current technology to provide access to the resources at the park as well as creating lesson plans and other activities that will serve to enrich the learning experiences of all students and traditional visitors that come to the park.

Teacher Advisory Board

- Assemble teachers and subject matter experts from the local community for a facilitated planning meeting. The goal of the meeting will be to gain input and strategize how best the education community can use the resources available at Fort Smith NHS. Teachers from Oklahoma will be included as well.

Lesson Plan and Curriculum Development

- Expand the current guided tour of the visitor center to include an experiential learning program that allows students to better understand the role of Fort Smith as a federal court and jail facility. Students will learn about and experience life at Fort Smith from the perspective of a prisoner.
- Explore the possibility of preparing a map reading activity that will allow students hands-on opportunities to use a compass and contrast it with using a GPS unit. This may provide insight into the work those soldiers performed as scouts having to work independently and possessing specific skills. It will also allow them an immersive experience using the grounds of Fort Smith NHS to locate landmarks or other items to discover other aspects about Fort Smith NHS.
- Fort Smith NHS currently has many items available that might be used for more hands-on activities. Using the trunks as a platform for a touching feature within the museum will allow younger visitors the opportunity to explore reproduced items that would've been found amongst a soldier's possessions or within the barracks of Fort Smith. Another aspect to consider would be the role of Fort Smith as a "way station" for people traveling west, and include items in the touch

trunk that pioneers may have procured while stopping at Fort Smith.

- Along the same lines as the “touch trunk” an activity that would engage students to decide what items they would need for their haversack if they were a soldier or a U.S. Marshal going out on patrol. The object would be to challenge the students to use their reasoning skills to consider what would be practical for them to carry. It could be called something like “What I Need – What I Want.”
- Mathematics could be incorporated into many activities at Fort Smith NHS. An example might include working at the commissary to issue rations based on the pay the soldiers get. Weights and distances could be used when assembling a scouting party. How much would U.S. Marshalls or a soldier need for a week long, or month long scouting expedition? How would these items be transported? The farming operation of the fort could also be used as a foundation to do mathematical problem solving.

Cultural Diversity Exposure

- Consider other ways to explore and incorporate American Indian culture using hands-on activities. For example, obtain various parts of a bison to show students how American Indians would use each part for practical purposes. It would be important for the interpretive ranger to be the key facilitator of this activity to fully achieve

emotional and intellectual opportunities to the meanings and significance of the buffalo to American Indian culture.

Current Technology

- Develop programs that use evolving technology such as pod casts and distance learning that allow students to immerse themselves in the resources of Fort Smith NHS.

Conclusion

Ultimately the goals of Fort Smith NHS are to make the lives of teachers easier by preparing activities and/or lesson plans that create learning opportunities that support meaningful learning results. Fort Smith NHS has already begun to incorporate current technology by obtaining distance learning to connect to students outside the commuting distance to the park. A webcam will be coming online to provide a view of Belle Pointe – an opportunity to discuss the history of the First Fort Smith, as well as how time and technology has changed the Arkansas River. Many opportunities exist to incorporate not only history and social studies activities but also science, language arts and other subject matters to activities or visits to Fort Smith NHS. The Fort Smith NHS Education Plan will guide the park in achieving a balanced program of educational opportunities.

Black Powder Safety Plan And Standard Operating Procedures 2008 Fort Smith National Historic Site

Certification

Certified Supervisor: Currently there is one certified Park Ranger in the National Park Service Historic Weapons Program.

Training: To participate with historic weapons the minimum age is 18 or older. Before being allowed to participate in historic weapons firing demonstrations; seasonal, volunteer, and permanent personnel will receive a minimum of four hours of training. Seasonal, volunteer, and permanent personnel must be proficient to the satisfaction of the black powder coordinator in the performance of the drill, safety procedures, misfire drill, and capable of giving the commands of drill in a professional military manner.

In addition, any seasonal, or permanent personnel who wish to supervise a small arms firing demonstrations (excluding outside groups) must receive an additional eight hours of training and pass a written examination with a minimum score of 90%. A certified supervisor must be present at all firing demonstrations involving outside groups or artillery demonstrations.

Storage and Handling of Black Powder

Any black powder, percussion caps, and/or friction primer brought into Fort Smith National Historic Site will be placed under the immediate supervision of the Black Powder Coordinator, (BPC) or designee. All black powder in any form will be stored and secured in the park's black powder magazine until either used up or properly disposed. Only the park's black powder coordinator or designee shall have access to the powder magazine. Friction primers and/or percussion caps will be stored in a separate type 3 magazine box at least ten feet from the powder magazine. The actual location of the type 3 magazine is in a safe in a room somewhat separate from the rest of the maintenance building.

The park will utilize a Class II type powder magazine. The magazine will be stored in the maintenance building. The magazine is in a separate locked room adjoining the maintenance building. The magazine will be marked with "EXPLOSIVES KEEP FIRE AWAY" with three inch letters located at least 10' feet from the entrance to the building. The magazine shall be inspected every seven days while powder is stored for tampering or damage. A physical inventory will be conducted no later than every thirty days. It is recommended that the inventory be done every 15 days. The inventory will be complete, up to date, and account for all powder usage.

The transportation of black powder in bulk, primers, or percussion caps upon public conveyances will be avoided. Where possible, powder will be delivered to the park either through local vendors or through a package delivery service. If this is not possible, park personnel must follow those

procedures outlined in the National Park Service Historic Weapons Certifications and in NPS-6, Appendix C.

Removal of black powder from the magazine will be done through the use of a wooden pass box by the BPC or designee. No powder will be removed unless in the form of a cartridge or in an approved shipping package. From the pass box, ammunition will be loaded into limbers or cartridge boxes as appropriate. Any unused ammunition will be immediately returned to the magazine via the pass box. All primers for percussion caps will be distributed in a similar fashion from a separate pass box. All unused cartridges as outlined for the day's demonstrations will be returned to the magazine at the end of the day and properly secured by the BPC. Any damaged cartridges will be destroyed by submerging in water and disposing of the water separate from the deposits. Small arms cartridges will not be stored for more than 60 days, artillery rounds no more than 5 days.

In cartridge preparation, the maintenance building will be locked and no other person permitted to enter until the process is completed. All small arms and artillery cartridges will be charged according to the table of maximum loads described in NPS-6 appendix C. Only sporting grade (potassium nitrate) powder will be stored or used for demonstrations. All cartridges will be made by historic weapons safety certified NPS personnel only. Paper and aluminum foil is the only material cartridges are to be made from.

Any cartridge preparer who empties a can of powder will give the can to the BPC who will assume the responsibility for the disposal of that can. Empty powder containers will be flushed with water utilizing an outside water source. After the can is thoroughly flushed it may be disposed of in any trash container used for metal or glass. Under no circumstances will an empty powder can be left lying unattended, or be disposed of without being flushed first. When completing the cartridge preparation process, care must be taken to insure that no loose powder remains in the magazine or on the floor nearby. A soft hand brush and broom will be kept nearby to assist in cleaning up spilled powder. Any loose powder may be swept out of the building into loose gravel. As a precaution, a bucket of water will be emptied onto the gravel to dissolve powder residue. If disposal of powder becomes necessary, it will be destroyed by dissolving in water and discarded into topsoil by the BPC.

Weapons and Inspections

All weapons which will be fired in black powder demonstrations will be inspected at the beginning of each season utilizing the checklists provided in NPS-6, Appendix C, and be subjected to the same inspection once a month throughout the summer. A final inspection will be completed before the weapon is stored away for the "Off Season". In addition, each weapon will be inspected visually before use in every demonstration. The discovery of any defect, at any time, will be brought to the attention for the BOSO for tagging, corrections, or removal/storage. A defective weapon will not be used until it has been fixed or determined safe for use by the BPC. Any unusual occurrences with the weapons should be brought to the attention of the BPC. The weapons will then be checked thoroughly against the checklist provided for in NPS-6, Appendix C.

All outside (non-park) weapons will undergo a visual inspection before the demonstrations day. This will occur once a day, and as necessary if there is reason to believe that the weapon is unsafe for demonstration use. If any outside weapon will not be permitted to fire until it has been inspected and cleared by the Black Powder Coordinator.

Visitors are allowed to handle and examine reproduction weapons, but the weapon must be unloaded, and the demonstrator must maintain control of the weapons at all times. This means that the demonstrator must keep one hand firmly on the weapon at all times. Visitors will not be allowed to handle a weapon that is loaded or with an edged weapon attached. Visitors are not allowed to handle any edged weapons, at any time. At no time will a weapon, loaded or unloaded, nor any edged weapon be pointed at a visitor. All weapons will be pointed in a safe direction at all time.

Firing Demonstrations

18th and 19th Century Small Arms

1. Daily Procedures

Ammunition will be drawn from the magazine prior to demonstrations and placed either in the pass box or directly into the cartridge box.

Park weapons will be assigned to the individual employee or volunteer. Only the weapons assigned to the individual employee or volunteers will be used in the demonstration. Exceptions will only be granted by the Black Powder Coordinator.

2. Firing Demonstration

- a. Prior to the day's demonstration, the Black Powder Coordinator or designee will see that the following tasks are performed:
 - the piece will be checked for function and that rammers are sprung
 - hearing protection is provided for EVERY employee/volunteer
 - a two-way radio(s) are present at the range
 - canteens or water supply are available for misfires 18th century
 - The pans are checked for cleanliness
 - all weapons are checked for a flash guard and hammer stall
 - every demonstrator will have a whisk and pick
- b. After the days demonstration, the employee/volunteer will see that the following tasks are performed:
 - the piece fired is cleaned with hot soapy water, dried, and wiped down with a light coat of oil
 - the piece is secured in its proper location in the arms safe

--extra blanks and caps are returned to the correct magazine
--that VIP service hours log and public use logs are completed

3. Misfire Procedure

The standard misfire procedures as defined in the NPS-6, Appendix C will be followed.

18th and 19th Century Artillery

1. Daily Operational Procedures

Ammunition is to be prepared the morning prior to the demonstration. The designated loading area is a loading table in the Maintenance storage building. The powder measure, form, and foil are kept here as well. This area will be kept scrupulously clean.

Record on the magazine inventory the powder removed and used.

Finished blank ammunition is to be placed in the pass box for transport out of the magazine.

Rinse and dispose of empty powder cans in the maintenance dumpster.

Friction primers are kept in a separate magazine and pass box marked for that purpose.

Water containers (drinking, safety, and sponge bucket) are to be filled and transported to the range.

2. Firing Demonstration

- a. Prior to the day's demonstration, the black powder coordinator will see that the following checks are performed:

--the piece is unlimbered and on the firing range

--the piece and limber are inspected for loose or missing parts

--pass boxes are transferred to the limber and placed in the compartment under the tray

--misfire kits are in the limber and functional

--the piece is searched with a worm and the vent cleared with priming wire

--the implements are inspected and put into place

--the gun crew is assigned and exercised at least once in their duties, including misfire drill

--each member of the gun crew has hearing protection

--a radio(s) is present at the range

- b. After each day's demonstration, the black powder coordinator will see that the following tasks are performed:

- that blank ammunition has been brought up to tray level
- No. 4 has minimum of four primers in the tube pouch

- c. After each day's demonstration, the black powder coordinator will see that the following tasks are performed:

- the piece is cleaned with soap and water, draining of all excess
- the vent is cleaned with a vent brush: priming wires cleaned of fouling
- the sponge head is cleaned with soap and water and excess spun off
- all implements are checked and in proper location
- the piece is limber (if applicable) and /or secure
- extra ammunition/primers are returned to the magazine
- the gun book is filled out, VIP hours recorded, and the public use logs updated

2. Misfire Procedure

The standard misfire procedures as defined in the NPS-6, Appendix C will be followed.

Range and Range Safety

There are currently two areas designated as firing ranges in the Historic Weapons Program at Fort Smith National Historic Site. Both will support artillery and small arms firing demonstrations:

1. Historic parade grounds-this range is most convenient to visitors. It is also the only range, which will easily accommodate handicap persons. The range is 200 yards long (west) and 100 yards wide (north/south). The historic walk path will serve as a physical barrier for small groups viewing the demonstration. In addition to the physical barrier provided by the walk path a rope barrier will be erected to aid in the control of the range. The availability of shade, water, and air-conditioning allow for reduction in the heat stress problem with living history talks and demonstration in removed locations. A water source is available for misfires.
2. Bell Point- this range is semi-convenient to visitors. It is best suited for artillery demonstrations. The range is 400 yards long (west) and 100 yard wide (north/south). Because it is situated in an open area unobstructed by building, it makes a good range to discuss long range artillery firing. This range also accommodates small arms demonstrations very easily. The availability of shade allows for reductions of heat stress, although there is no water. An insulated cooler on site will provide water. A rope barrier will be erected to provide a physical barrier to maintain control of the range for visitor's safety.

No one except the demonstrators may enter the range at anytime during the demonstration. The demonstration will stop immediately if anyone other than the demonstrator(s) enters the range, and will not proceed until the Black Powder Coordinator or designee clears the range. Every demonstrator has responsibility to watch for safety problems and bring them to the attention of the range supervisor at any time.

Firing demonstrations should always be preceded by a ten to fifteen minute interpretive talk. Firing the weapons itself is a means of preserving a group intact for the length of an interpretive talk, and serves only as a way to enhance the message. The primary goal is not to fire the weapon, but to use it as tangible means to explain intangible means to explain intangible concepts. **The primary issue every firing demonstration is SAFETY.**

Misfire Procedure and Plan

The standard misfire procedures as defined in the NPS-6, Appendix C will be followed.

Outside Groups

Any outside groups conducting historic weapons firing demonstrations will be provided with a copy NPS-6, Appendix C at least fourteen days prior to their arrival at the park. The park must receive a written agreement that the regulations will be complied within two days of that group's arrival. All outside groups will have their weapons inspected by the Black Powder Coordinator, and they must be able to demonstrate their proficiency in the drill that they use as adapted to NPS Safety Standards. Individuals having weapons in a generally debilitated condition, or weapons with broken parts will not be allowed to participate in firing demonstrations. No original weapons will be used in firing demonstrations. The black powder coordinator will personally observe every firing demonstration presented by an outside group.

Any group unwilling to agree to the black powder guidelines set forth in NPS-6 Appendix C or in this document will not be permitted to participate in the Historic Weapons Firing Program at Fort Smith National Historic Site. Any persons found in intentional violations of NPS-6 Appendix C or this document will expelled from the program and their volunteer agreement terminated by the black powder coordinator upon consultation with the FOSM Volunteer Coordinator.



Commissary
Storehouse