

Louisiana State Parks Master Plan 1997-2012

Executive Summary



MURPHY J. FOSTER JR.
GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana

Attou Houge

January 24, 1997

Dear Fellow Citizens:

I am pleased to endorse the Office of State Parks Master Plan that will serve as a guide for future development of our parks through the year 2012.

This comprehensive planning document, the first in over a decade, includes national planning trends, extensive statistical analysis for land usage and its economic impact, and the visionary expertise of the staff within the Office of State Parks.

The plan's goals, which address an ambitious agenda, has at its heart additional recreation areas, commemorative and preservation areas, and the promotion and development of cultural and historical sites for all visitors to enjoy.

I commend the committed efforts and dedication of the 200 employees of the Office of State Parks. For it is through this mission of service that the state of Louisiana and her citizens become the proud beneficiaries of all that is vital in our state.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,

Murphy J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.
Governor



STATE OF LOUISIANA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

STATE OF LOUISIANA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

January 24, 1997

Dear Fellow Citizens,

In keeping with our directive to further enhance the quality of life for citizens and visitors in our wonderfully diverse state, the Office of State Parks has prepared the framework that will carry the park system into the next century.

Louisiana can take pride in those areas that have been preserved for recreational, historical and preservation purposes. The 1997-2012 State Parks Master Plan strives to develop new park holdings while improving existing sites through prudent fiscal and resource management. New objectives, established during a planning process begun in 1993, now have action plans charting the department's course for the next 15 years.

We accept the responsibility for oversight of these valuable public assets and appreciate the opportunity to serve in the public trust.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Babineaux Blanco
Lieutenant Governor

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The State Parks Master Plan 1997-2012 is a comprehensive planning document prepared for the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, Office of State Parks. The purpose of this plan is to guide the acquisition, development and management of Louisiana's State Parks System for the next fifteen years.

The first State Parks Master Plan 1975-1990 was prepared by the Gulf South Research Institute (GSRI). The GSRI plan set forth the goals and objectives for Louisiana's state parks. It created a classification system and criteria for selection, development and management of state parks, state commemorative areas, and state preservation areas that were consistent with the objectives of the Office of State Parks. This framework has been successful, and, therefore, it has been incorporated into the State Parks Master Plan 1997-2012.

Building upon the successful aspects of the GSRI plan, the 1997-2012 plan guides the future development of the Louisiana State Parks System. This plan contends that the Office of State Parks must continue to maintain the high standards of quality for which the Louisiana State Parks System is known, while increasing the number of sites, facilities, acres and programs to bring Louisiana's offerings in line with comparable park systems throughout the nation.

This State Parks Master Plan 1997-2012 is a product of a comprehensive, team-oriented study and assessment. This approach combines statistical analyses, examinations of national recreation planning trends, professional expertise, user input and the Office of State Parks staff judgments. The outcome is a recommended plan of action to improve the Louisiana State Parks System over the next fifteen years.

This executive summary is a synopsis of the complete State Parks Master Plan 1997-2012. The summary begins with an analysis of the Louisiana State Parks System as a valuable recreational, educational, natural and economic resource for Louisiana. It then

outlines the mission statement and objectives for the Office of State Parks. This is followed by a brief synopsis of the action plan which explains how to attain the objectives for the fulfillment of the Office of State Parks mission. Strategies have been set forth by region, and an estimated cost for each strategy has been provided. It is our desire that the State Parks Master Plan 1997-2012 help Louisiana's State Parks System realize its full potential. Louisiana has a great wealth of natural attributes, a wonderful mixture of cultural heritage and vast recreational resources available for her citizens and her visitors. The potential for economic development as a result of these resources through the Louisiana State Parks System is astonishing.

To date, the Office of State Parks has been well-run and has benefitted from an administrative staff committed to providing the best possible recreational and educational experiences that fit within the Office of State Parks' mission. Many of the existing state parks and commemorative areas are of a quality that rivals other states' parks and parks operated by the National Park Service. Others, however, have suffered due to a lack of consistent funding. Given the budgetary limitations, the Office of State Parks' staff should be commended for maintaining the Louisiana State Parks System at high quality levels over the years.

The quality of the Louisiana State Parks' facilities is high. However, the number of facilities and recreational opportunities provided is low when compared with other southern states. For example, when using overnight facilities (campsites and cabins) and park acreage per capita as indicators of a state's recreational demand/need, Louisiana ranks last, or almost last, when compared with other southern states. This is true of several other indicators as well. Louisiana has fallen behind due to the low funding levels over the past fifteen years that have impeded the Louisiana State Parks System's ability to expand its recreational, educational and economic opportunities.

THE VALUE OF THE

Unpredictable and unstable funding is also responsible for deficiencies in other facilities. During the first years under the GSRI plan, funding for state parks and commemorative areas was fairly high, and the Office of State Parks was able to develop many quality sites and facilities in accordance with the GSRI plan. From 1975 to 1985 many of the goals under the GSRI plan were met and the Louisiana State Parks System was developing on a timely basis. However, budget cuts from 1986 to 1995 stymied the development of the Louisiana State Parks System, and the period of expansion ended. During these difficult times, budget cuts forced the closure of some sites for a period of ten months. Other sites were transferred from the Office of State Parks, layoffs ensued and programs were cut. The Louisiana State Parks System has never completely recovered from these devastating budget cuts. While some effects of these cuts are still felt today, this plan will pave the way to a brighter future.



ings; 2) the economy of the other Louisiana parishes; and 3) the economy of the state of Louisiana.

According to data derived from three State Parks User Surveys, it is estimated that the annual expenditures made by visitors in 1994 was \$30,803,848. Of this amount, \$11,099,487 was spent by visitors in the parishes where the facilities are located, \$12,464,929 was spent by visitors in parishes en route to and from parks and \$7,239,433 was spent in the park visitors' home parishes in preparation for their visit. Expenditures by out-of-state visitors to Louisiana's state parks facilities constituted 44% of all expenditures or \$13,477,726.

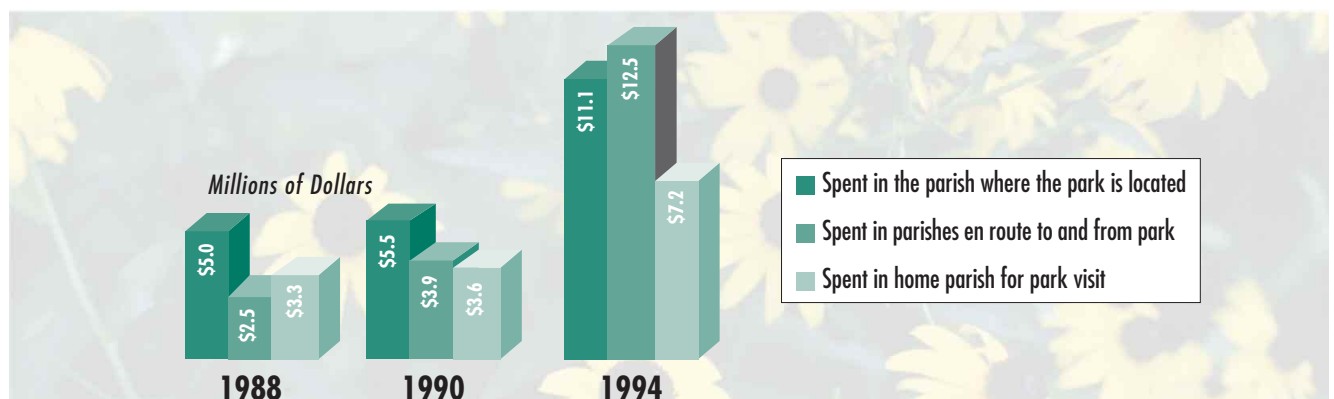
An examination of the studies (for 1988 and 1994) reveals that expenditures being made have increased since the first study was conducted in 1988.

The Value of Louisiana's State Parks System

LOCAL AND STATE ECONOMIES

A study of the economic impact of visit-related and Office of State Parks' expenditures indicates three affected economies: 1) the economy of the park parishes, or the parishes that contain the Office of State Parks' hold-

Exhibit I. Total Visit-Related Expenditures



STATE PARKS SYSTEM

Exhibit II. Economic Impact by Park Parish, Other Louisiana Parish and Louisiana Economies

Source: 1994 State Park Visitor Survey Analysis by ATRC.
Data available only for the years 1988, 1990, & 1994.

For each of the three economies studied, expenditures made by non-residents were used to determine the economic impact of additional money brought into the economy. The expenditures which were made by the Office of State Parks at facilities for operational and maintenance costs are new monies into the economies of the parishes where the facilities exist and are, therefore, calculated as part of the economic impact for those parishes.

Park Parish Economies - There was a total of \$11,099,487 in visit-related expenditures, and Office of State Parks operational expenditures yielding \$30,471,681 in economic impact on park parishes.

Other Louisiana Parish Economies - For the economy of the other parishes in Louisiana, a total of \$12,464,929 in expenditures was made by park visitors en route to and from the facility they were visiting. This yielded an economic impact of \$32,788,188.

Louisiana Economy - Expenditures made by out-of-state visitors to Louisiana's state parks' facilities were \$13,477,926 generating \$35,440,550 of total economic impact for Louisiana's economy.

Historical Economic Impact Trends - Economic survey data using the same economic model as in 1994 are also available for the year 1988. In comparing these sets of data, it is evident that increases in new money entering these economies has had a strong economic impact. The Office of State Parks spent \$5,424,103 operating and maintaining the state parks included in the economic impact analysis. **For every dollar spent, it fostered an economic impact of \$5.62 to the economies of the park parishes, \$6.04 to the economies of the other Louisiana parishes and \$6.53 to the economy of Louisiana.** State parks offer an economic boost to all three economies, not just to the parishes where the parks are located.

Exhibit III - Economic Benefits of the Louisiana State Parks System

Other Parish Economies

Louisiana Economy

Park Parish Economies

Office of State Parks



Millions of Dollars

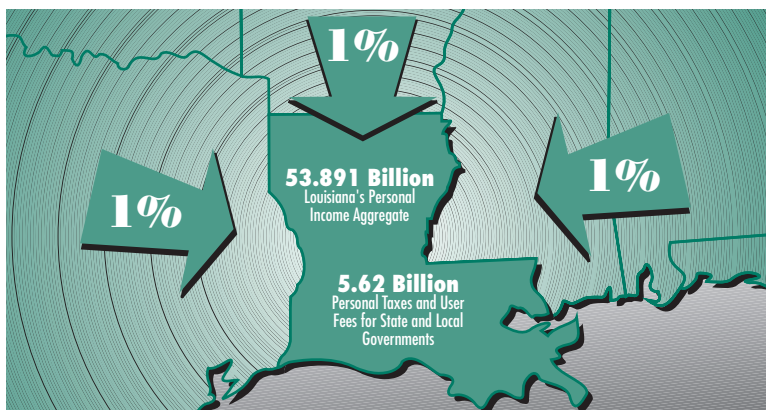
ESTABLISHMENT OF RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

This study examines the possible economic gains to be made by manufacturing and retirement/tourism industries and actions Louisiana can implement to enhance these economic opportunities. Findings suggest that the Louisiana State Parks System can make a major contribution in facilitating these gains.

By the year 2040 the age sixty-two plus component of America's population will more than double to a level of 87,434,000 persons. This age group will increase by 2.051 million persons from 1994 to 2000, by an additional 7.482 million from 2000 to 2010, by another 16.456 million from 2010 to 2020, by another 16.178 million from 2020 to 2030, and by an additional 5.785 million from the years 2030 to 2040. Those persons will have an aggregate yearly income of \$2.053 trillion and an estimated Medicare entitlement of \$266 billion. They will create more than ten times the economic stimulus of the manufacturing and mining bases of the sixteen southern states. Florida and Georgia had virtually equal 1992 manufacturing bases (between \$16 billion and \$17 billion in each state), while Louisiana had a \$9.5 billion combined manufacturing and mining base. But Florida's total economy (\$266 billion) more than doubled Georgia's (\$126 billion), and it more than quadrupled Louisiana's (\$68 billion). Florida had a retirement/tourism primer of \$110.4 billion (\$61.5 billion in dividends, interest, and rent, plus \$48.9 billion in transfer payments), whereas Georgia had a combined total of only \$36.3 billion, and Louisiana had a combined total of only \$23.6 billion.

Each retired couple's income (an average \$53,046 per year) will result in an additional \$69,879 to the trade and services sectors of the state in which the couple retires. When taxed at Louisiana's 1991 personal rates, that income will yield \$4,320 in state and local government user fees, \$1,543 in personal state income taxes, and \$6,957 in state and local sales taxes. **An inward migration of only 1 percent of the 87.4 million retirees will add \$53.891 billion to Louisiana's personal income aggregate by the year 2040. This will create \$5.62 billion in personal taxes and user fees for state and local governments in Louisiana. See Exhibit IV.**

Exhibit IV. - Values of Retirement Community





GROWTH IN THE RETIREMENT / TOURISM INDUSTRY

By virtue of its natural resources and cultural amenities, Louisiana has the potential for a significant amount of tourism development. The program established for retirement inducement will also enhance tourism, and tourism can greatly influence pro-Louisiana retirement location decisions.

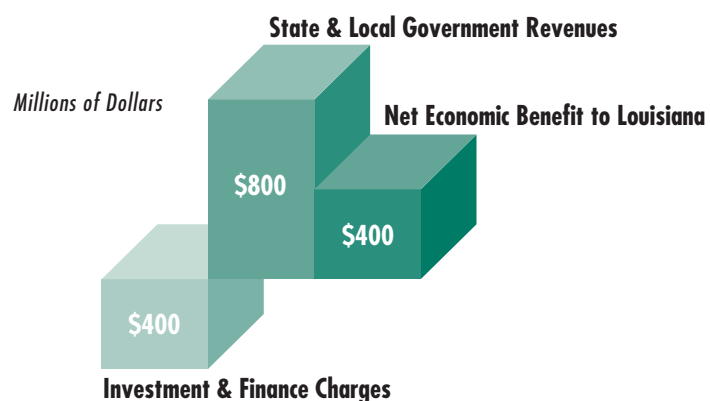
Potential retirees assign high location priorities to good health care facilities, a low cost of living, a pleasant climate, and abundant recreational facilities. The Office of State Parks can most effectively contribute to the efforts of attracting retirees by providing abundant and quality recreational facilities. These facilities are often the first impression retirees have when traveling through the state and may significantly impact their desire to settle in Louisiana.

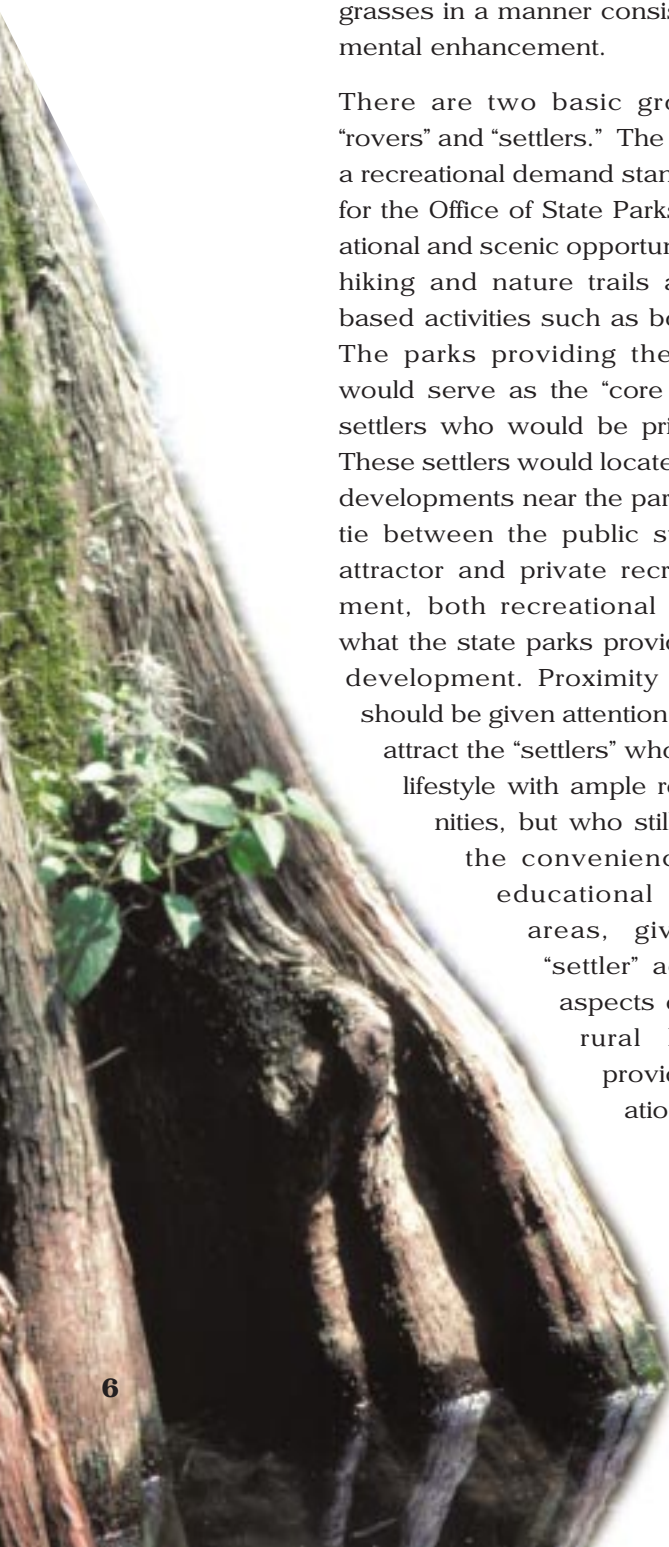
An individual state cannot control its climate, but a state with climactic advantages can improve its physical attractiveness, recreational potential and overall quality of life. Any viable Louisiana economic initiative based upon the retirement and tourism industries must include the following:

- **Recreational and cultural enhancements**
- **Natural habitat preservation and restoration**
- **Road (and other transportation) improvements**
- **Scenery enhancements:**
 - **Litter elimination**
 - **Roadside vegetation restoration and landscaping**
- **Gardens and nature trails**

Other southern states have a considerable lead—in some states as much as four decades—in positioning themselves to capitalize on their retirement industry potential. Their public and private sectors have developed massive recreational complexes—such as those at Pinehurst, Myrtle Beach, Hilton Head and Naples—plus comprehensive programs for other amenities. Louisiana cannot close the gap without a firm commitment and massive resource deployment (perhaps an eventual \$300 to \$400 million). **However, the returns will far exceed the outlay; sixty-four hundred retiree couples residing in Louisiana for a period of ten years will generate more than \$800 million in state and local government revenues**, more than enough to offset the \$400 million investment and financing charges.

Exhibit V. - Economic Return from Investment in Retirees





Louisiana's State Parks System can play a crucial role in upgrading the state's recreational facility inventory. There are acres of beautifully contoured land in Louisiana that could be converted into multipurpose recreation areas, including nature and hiking trails, at a relatively low cost. The state already owns some of the land. The Office of State Parks has the knowledge and skills for facility planning, as well as for planting and nurturing the appropriate trees, shrubbery, flowers and grasses in a manner consistent with environmental enhancement.

There are two basic groups of retirees, "rovers" and "settlers." The common link from a recreational demand standpoint is the need for the Office of State Parks to provide recreational and scenic opportunities in the form of hiking and nature trails and select water-based activities such as boating and fishing. The parks providing these opportunities would serve as the "core attractors" for the settlers who would be primarily day users. These settlers would locate and live in private developments near the parks. The key is the tie between the public state parks as the attractor and private recreational development, both recreational (supplemental to what the state parks provide) and residential development. Proximity to urban centers should be given attention, especially to help attract the "settlers" who may want a rural lifestyle with ample recreation opportunities, but who still desire access to the conveniences, cultural and educational assets of urban areas, giving a potential "settler" access to positive aspects of both urban and rural lifestyles, while providing ample recreational opportunities.

The state parks as "core attractors" would also attract the "rovers" who travel by automobile or RV and use the state parks for a period of time to enjoy the opportunities provided by both public and private entities. Both user groups are a viable, potential resource for economic development. Ease of access from major roadways, particularly Interstates 10, 12, 20 and 49, is important, as these "rovers" will be using the road system to travel across the country. To make a state park a true destination for this market, it must be easily accessed and actively promoted. Promotion could be accomplished by providing information at visitor centers, in-state tourism literature and with highway signage. The easier it is to stop, the more likely visitors will choose a state facility as the temporary landing place. Once they have stopped the benefit is multifaceted.

Another important factor is to develop and market the natural and cultural assets of our state. Many of the "rovers" travel the country to "experience her diversity." New Orleans, the Cajun culture — food, music and lifestyle — and historic plantation homes are extremely popular today. These are examples of the cultural amenities that should be promoted. The Atchafalaya Basin, the fishing and the wildlife of our state are examples of natural amenities that merit promotion. All of the assets of an area should be developed into a marketing plan that promotes not only what the Louisiana State Parks System provides, but also other opportunities that are available nearby. The marketing of an entire area surrounding a state park, state commemorative or state preservation area will attract the "rovers" who may otherwise continue through our state without stopping.



AN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE

The unique natural and historical features found throughout the state parks system hold great potential for visitors of all ages to learn about and appreciate Louisiana's unusual environment and rich cultural heritage. Interpretive programs at all sites bring these features to life for young schoolchildren, adventurous families and curious retirees alike. It is important to understand that state parks holdings are much more than areas where people can camp, hike, swim or fish. Programs at state parks, such as ranger talks, guided tours and interpretive displays, allow visitors to understand the value of our natural resources. The programs provided at state commemorative areas interpret our state's history and culture. Programs provided at state preservation areas present Louisiana's natural systems and habitats, and the importance of preserving these areas.

provides programming to educate the public, and preserves these areas for future generations. By utilizing proper management of these natural resources, Louisiana wins. Not only do Louisiana's state parks allow access to some of the state's most remarkable natural areas, they also provide programs and facilities which enhance the outdoor experience while protecting the areas for years to come. The value of our natural resources is immeasurable; so is the value of Louisiana State Parks System as a guardian of these resources.

A NATURAL RESOURCE

Part of the mission of the Office of State Parks is to preserve and protect the natural resources of our state. Louisiana has some of the most outstanding and important natural areas in the country. The vast estuaries of the coastal zone and the bottomland hardwoods of the Atchafalaya Basin are examples of precious resources in danger of being lost. The Office of State Parks, through acquisition, proper development and management, provides opportunities for visitors to access these areas for recreational opportunities,



GUIDING THE FUTURE

This plan is designed to provide the Office of State Parks strategies to deal with the foreseeable benefits and obstacles of the development of its holdings. However, as history has demonstrated, there are many unforeseeable elements that may arise to complicate even the most well-laid plans. To deal with the unforeseen, it is important to clearly define the mission of Louisiana State Parks. It is also valuable to determine why and how this mission is to be accomplished from a general perspective. This section outlines the mission statement of the Office of State Parks, provides the philosophy statement, and reviews the classification system for facilities. These three areas provide the backbone for the entire State Parks Master Plan 1997-2012 and guide the future operation of the Office of State Parks.

Mission Statement

The mission statement is based upon statutory authorization for the establishment of the Office of State Parks and was made a part of the GSRI plan. It has stood the test of time and has been carried forward into this master plan.

It is the mission of the Office of State Parks to serve the people of Louisiana and their visitors by:

- *Preserving and protecting natural areas of unique or exceptional scenic value for the inspiration and benefit of not only the present generation, but also for generations to come.*
- *Establishing and operating parks that provide recreational use of natural resources and outdoor recreation in natural surroundings.*
- *Preserving, protecting and portraying historic and scientific sites of statewide importance.*
- *Portraying and interpreting plant and animal life, geology, and all other natural features and processes included in the various state parks.*

To fully meet these goals the Office of State Parks must properly maintain and operate its existing facilities, develop new areas and improve the existing areas in the Louisiana State Parks System, provide programming opportunities and personnel at all Office of State Parks' holdings and develop and maintain natural areas for uses sensitive to its mission.



Fairview Riverside State Park

OF STATE PARKS

Philosophy Statement

The philosophy statement consists of the guiding ideals of the Office of State Parks and should be inherent in all decision-making processes, operations and management of the Louisiana State Parks System.

The Office of State Parks understands its role to be proactive in the development of programs, promotion, and facilitation of use of areas under its direction. It enthusiastically accepts its responsibilities for preservation of natural areas, provision of recreation in natural settings, and presentation of culturally significant places. Interpretation, education and recreation are viewed as keys to providing better understanding and appreciation of the state's resources by its citizens and its visitors. Activities of

the Office of State Parks are guided by plans of action that include specific objectives and the adherence to the criteria established in the Office of State Parks land holdings classification system. Such observances are essential to the successful development and management of the Louisiana State Parks System. The Office of State Parks strives for: coordination between agencies, allied interests, and user groups; professional training and competence of its personnel; exemplary planning, design, construction and maintenance of its facilities; active development and use of interpretation and recreation programs; creation of public awareness of Office of State Parks programs; and development of a stable funding base to provide for maintaining continuity of facility, program, and personnel quality.



Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Commemorative Area

Criteria for State Parks Facilities

The GSRI plan established criteria for each type of holding: state parks, state commemorative areas and state preservation areas. This classification system has been brought forward. Each type of site plays a different role within the Louisiana State Parks System. Collectively the different sites allow the Office of State Parks to fulfill its mission while creating economic benefit to the state.

CRITERIA FOR STATE PARKS

State parks are natural areas which, when evaluated on a statewide basis, possess outstanding potential for recreational usage. The natural area must possess outstanding scenic and natural qualities to ensure recreational opportunity of high quality in a natural setting.

The criteria for the selection of areas to be designated as state parks shall be:

(1) Size: A state park shall be of sufficient size to ensure efficient operation and maintenance of its recreation facilities and accommodations and to maintain sufficient buffer to preserve the natural integrity of the area.

All state parks, except those currently within the Louisiana State Parks System, must adhere to an absolute minimum standard of 250 acres and a preferred minimum size standard of 400 acres. The Office of State Parks will determine in each case the minimum standard that will be applicable.

(2) Location and Accessibility: A state park will be located in such a way as to take advantage of natural and man-made resources

offering opportunities for recreation and education in a natural setting and accessibility to nearby population centers. Furthermore, the Office of State Parks shall adopt policies governing the location of state parks in proximity to incorporated municipalities.

State parks are natural areas of statewide significance with excellent recreational potential. State parks fulfill two needs. First, they provide a variety of recreational opportunities and second, they preserve a portion of the natural area. Typical activities at a state park include: fishing, boating, cycling, hiking, picnicking, swimming; and tent, trailer and cabin camping.

CRITERIA FOR STATE COMMEMORATIVE AREAS

State commemorative areas are those areas which, when evaluated on a statewide basis, possess historical, cultural or memorial significance. The principal function of a state commemorative area shall be to preserve and interpret a specific historical, cultural or memorial theme.

The criteria for selection of an area to be designated a state commemorative area shall be:

(1) Size: A state commemorative area will be of sufficient size to encompass the area or feature being commemorated and of a sufficient size to adequately commemorate the event, feature or culture for which the area is established. Sufficient buffer will be provided to minimize any encroachments which may impair the values and inhibit public use and

appreciation of the area.

(2) Location and Accessibility: A state commemorative area will be located within the environment of the event, feature, culture or memorial which it represents.



State commemorative areas interpret specific historical themes or topics of Louisiana history and culture. These themes are composed of events, persons and ways of life that occurred in Louisiana's past. The historical or cultural value must be of statewide significance. Typical facilities provided at state commemorative areas are



museums, day use areas, trails and interpretive programs such as audio-visual displays, reenactments and craft displays. State commemorative areas are intended for day use and not for overnight stays, and there-

fore, do not include camping areas or cabins.

CRITERIA FOR STATE PRESERVATION AREAS

State preservation areas are those areas of exceptional scenic or ecological value which, because of their unique characteristics, should be preserved for current and future public enjoyment. Exceptional scenic or ecological value refers to rare, natural scenery and/or resources unlikely to be preserved if the property remains in the ownership of private citizens, and which is sufficiently distinctive to attract and interest people from all parts of the state.

The criteria for selection of areas to be designated state preservation areas shall be:

(1) Size: A state preservation area must be of sufficient size to allow preservation of major features of the park and the use of the features by the visitors. In either case, the inclusive area must be large enough to:

(a) Completely include the scenic natural or ecological features for which the area was established to protect.

(b) Provide sufficient buffer area against outside disturbances and encroachments.

(c) Provide an undisturbed habitat for native wildlife.

(d) Permit the development of public use areas, if these can be developed without impairing the scenic, natural or ecological features of the area.

All state preservation areas must adhere to an absolute minimum size standard of 500 acres and a preferred minimum standard of 1000 acres. The Office of State Parks shall determine in each case which minimum standard will be applicable.

(2) Location and Accessibility: A state preservation area will be selected exclusively on the basis of preservation desirability without principal regard to geographic distribution, proximity to population centers or accessibility.

State preservation areas are sites of exceptional scenic value and/or significant ecological or biological value. The function of a state preservation area is twofold. First, the site is preserved in its natural state to ensure that its ecological integrity and significance are protected, and secondly, the site should function to interpret the natural history and resources of the state as it pertains to the individual state preservation area. Development of these sites is limited essentially to the establishment of interpretive centers which focus on environmental education of the public. Since the preservation of the ecological integrity of the site is of primary importance in a state preservation area, development should be strictly limited to an interpretive center, minimal parking and additional paved surfaces, and trails for interpretation and hiking. Any development that does take place should be done in harmony with the natural setting of the site and not detract from the focus of the facility itself as a natural resource.

Objectives

As an extension of the above statements, the staff of the Office of State Parks has assisted in the formulation of specific objectives to fulfill the mission in a manner consistent with the philosophy statement.

These objectives, listed below, will be discussed in greater detail:

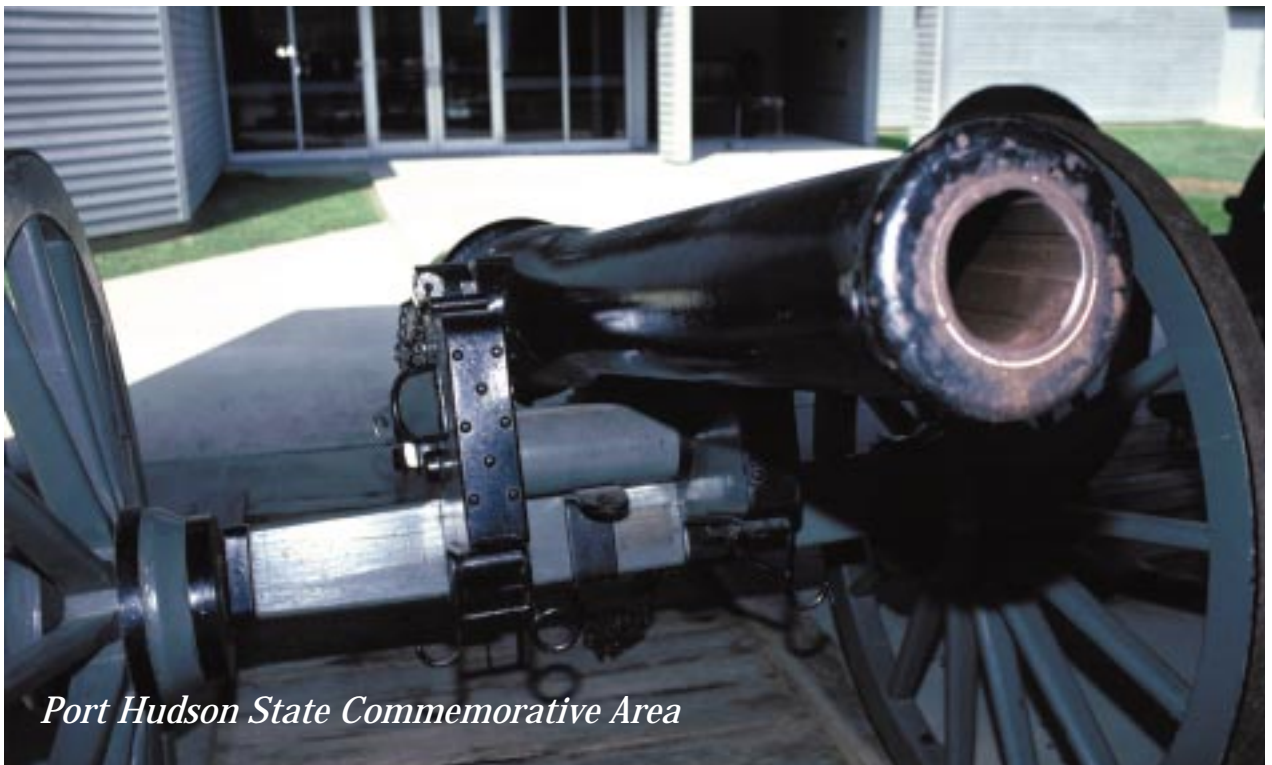
- *Establish and standardize criteria for selecting, developing and administering Office of State Parks' holdings.*
- *Provide a program for orderly acquisition, development and administration of Office of State Parks' holdings based on sound statewide planning objectives.*
- *Establish operational standards and management policies which will allow the optimum utilization of all holdings consistent with the purpose for which they exist. This includes, but is not limited to, preservation and conserva-*

tion of natural features and commemoration of historic and cultural events.

- *Promote a method by which the public can more readily comprehend the values of specific Office of State Parks holdings through the development of sound management, preservation and interpretive standards.*

These objectives have been reviewed by the Office of State Parks and are within the scope of present operations. One additional objective has been added:

- *Promote and market all aspects of the Louisiana State Parks System, the system's economic value to the state, and communicate this information to the public, the legislature and other user and support groups.*



Port Hudson State Commemorative Area

THE ACTION PLAN

The action plan makes recommendations for management, marketing, interrelating resources and development within the Louisiana State Parks System over the next fifteen years and is divided into six subsections: New Objectives, State Parks, State Commemorative Areas, State Preservation Areas, Interrelating State Resources and Regional Development Strategies.

Actions Relating to Objectives

The proposed actions suggest ways the Office of State Parks can work to achieve each objective. It is recognized that there are a number of ways to meet any one objective; thus the various proposed actions may help spark future decisions.

These new actions and their discussion are the result of a process that included visits to each site, interviews with state park managers, public and manager surveys, review of each site's master plan, and consultant conferences with the professional staff of the Office of State Parks.



OBJECTIVE : Establish and Standardize Criteria for Selecting, Developing and Administering the Office of State Parks' Holdings.

ACTION : Concentrate on facilities and programs not provided by the private sector.

Publicly owned and operated recreational and educational holdings are special places of value to the residents of the state. The Office of State Parks is a holder and guardian of such areas in the public trust. It is in the public interest to have places where the focus is on the quality of the landscape, the cultural, recreational and educational resources rather than upon the need for profit.

OBJECTIVE : Provide for a Program of Orderly Acquisition, Development and Administration of Holdings Based on Sound Statewide Planning Objectives.

ACTION : Establish a stable funding source to allow consistency of operations and personnel from year to year.

One of the major obstacles in developing the quality of Louisiana's State Parks System is the lack of a predictable economic base from which to plan from year to year. This lack of permanent funding makes it difficult to develop programs to meet visitor needs, to develop a proactive approach to facility upgrading and acquisition and development of new facilities, promotional programs to attract more visitors to the facilities, and educational programs for the state's children.

ACTION : Purchase land in areas of need in order to achieve a better distribution throughout the state.

This action addresses the need for every person to be able to enjoy the refreshment and renewal that comes from visiting natural areas of scenic beauty and culturally important sites. Findings show that this is more available in some areas of the state than in others.

ACTION : Develop parks in proximity to urban centers and with major highway access.

Remote state parks, even those with outstanding attractions, will likely go unused by many people who lack the time to drive the long distances necessary to reach them. Furthermore, it is difficult to attract visitors traversing the state to facilities not within a reasonable drive of the interstates or major highways. Whenever possible, new facilities should be within a 45 to 50 mile radius of urban areas or major highway intersections.



OBJECTIVE : Establish Operational Standards and Management Policies that Allow for the Optimum Usage of All Louisiana State Parks Holdings Consistent with the Purpose for Which They Exist.

ACTION : Review and revise the policies governing development, management and visitor use of Office of State Parks' holdings.

Act 314-74 required that the Office of State Parks adopt such an action. This has been done to some extent for each category as discussed in the Current Plan Analysis. However, since the formation of these policies there have been many changes in use and operation of the parks. The past policy statements need to be revised and updated with current Office of State Parks' goals. These will be the guiding "in-house" documents to accomplish the above objective. There should be yearly review and a mechanism for revision.

ACTION : Market and develop site clusters.

Site usage may be enhanced by marketing several related sites as part of a physical or thematic cluster. A physical cluster refers to holdings in close proximity to one another; a thematic cluster refers to holdings connected by offering related information or experiences. The cluster approach can be achieved by the acquisition of new sites and by an effort to link sites through publications, publicity and park personnel. The cluster concept should not necessarily be limited to Office of State Parks' holdings as it can include other public sites and private developments.

ACTION : Seek legislation which would facilitate the procurement of items and services special to the needs of the Office of State Parks.

There are many limitations in the current state guidelines for the procurement of goods and services for the Office of State Parks holdings such as concessions, programming, and procurement of historic items. Some of the current regulations are especially limiting to the ability of the Office of State Parks to provide for the needs of the public.



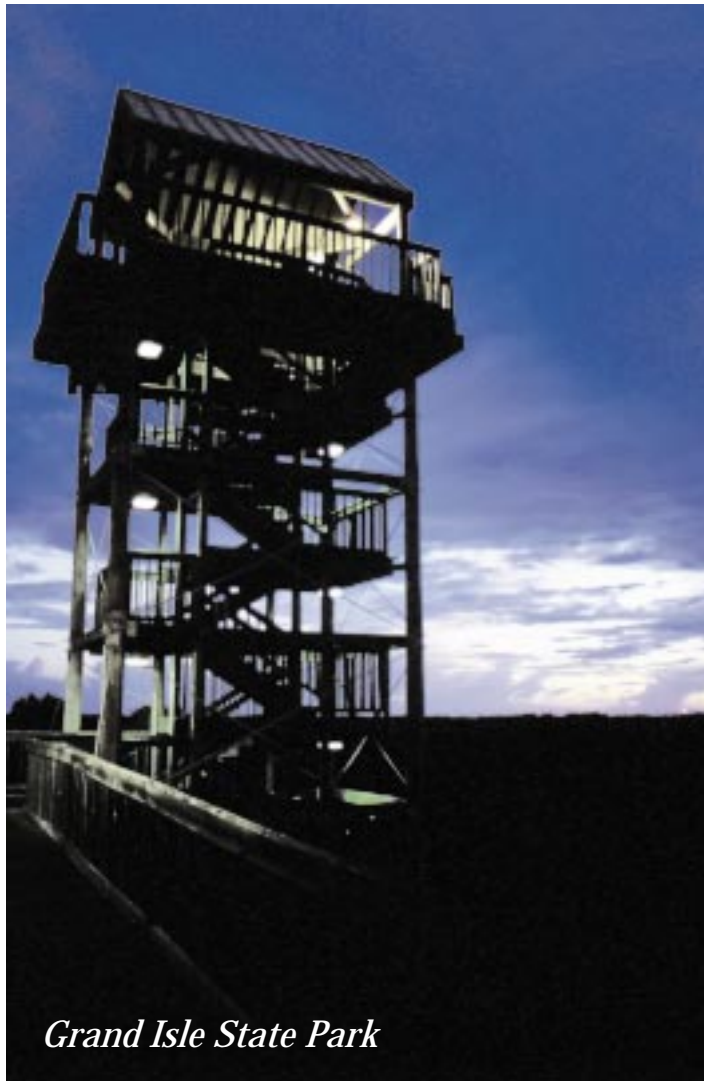
Bayou Segnette State Park

OBJECTIVE : Promote the Value of Specific Office of State Parks Holdings Through the Development of Sound Management, Preservation and Interpretive Standards.

ACTION : Develop a strong link to education programs in schools.

An alliance between the Office of State Parks and various educational institutions and programs is an excellent way for parks to assist in early development of an environmental ethic and to gain park constituency. Opportunities exist to:

1. Provide programs related to science, natural resources, cultural heritage, the arts, and social sciences.
2. Provide for school day trips to sites to take advantage of interpretive programs.
3. Research sites for university graduate students.
4. Develop World Wide Web pages to provide students with information for use in their courses of study.
5. Actively participate in appropriately developed educational programs.



Grand Isle State Park

ACTION : Provide a visitor's information center at each holding.

This center would provide the visitor with an overview of the park and its region and information on the activities and facilities available. The visitor would receive up-to-date park information including information on area attractions, guides, rentals, and a map of the park. This is currently available at some of the holdings and should be extended to all holdings.

ACTION : Provide interpretive personnel and programs.

One of the greatest needs at all park sites is for interpretive programs directed by the Office of State Parks personnel. This need was identified by managers, Office of State Parks staff, surveys and through visitation and observation by consultants.

OBJECTIVE : Promote and Market All Aspects of the Louisiana State Parks System, and Its Economic Value to the State, to the Public, the Potential Tourist, the Legislature and Other User and Support Groups.

ACTION : Establish and promote the economic value of the Louisiana State Parks System to the state's economy.

The message to promote is the significant economic value of the Louisiana State Parks System to the state and the relationship of this value to the quality of facilities and experiences people have when visiting them. Quality is dependent upon good design, maintenance, treatment by park personnel, interpretation and programming, and location and relationship to other activities in the region. To reach its full economic potential, the state must provide adequate funding of Office of State Parks holdings and personnel on a consistent basis. This funding will provide a higher level of visitor satisfaction which will result in repeated usage of Louisiana's state parks, state commemorative areas, and state preservation areas. This, in turn, will bring more money into Louisiana's economy.

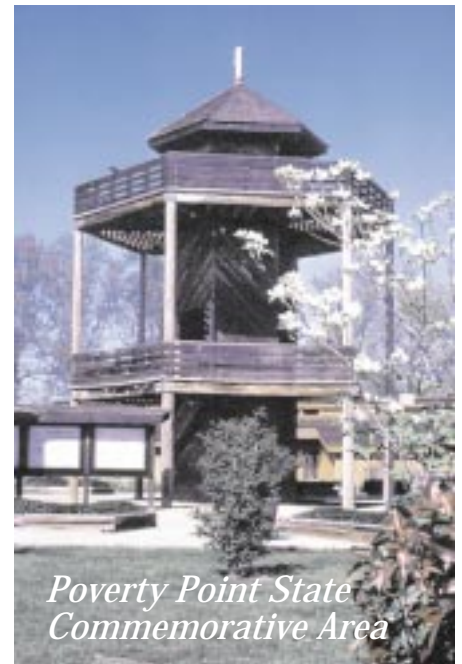
ACTION : Hire an in-house marketing specialist.

While the Office of State Parks is within the same department as the Office of Tourism, the agencies have different agendas. The Office of State Parks should have a specialist who understands state parks, state commemorative areas, and state preservation areas to develop and maintain an in-house strategy for marketing facilities and resources.

ACTION : Develop a marketing strategy to increase public awareness of the Louisiana State Parks System.

The holdings of the Louisiana State Parks System are a great economic force in the state's economy. The economic potential of the sites, equipment, staff and programs can be realized if support is given to properly and effectively market the Office of State Parks resources. A marketing program may include:

1. A focus to attract overnight visits to sites by people in the area for other events.
2. Creation of a specific image or "theme" for each site such as "Gulf Fishing," "Sailing," "Civil War," "Colonial Louisiana," etc. . .
3. Use of multi-media to promote the interests of the Office of State Parks, including newspapers, radio, television spots, and on-line computer information such as the World Wide Web.
4. Development of toll-free access numbers for park reservations and information, and an improved reservation system.
5. Update brochures and work with the Department of Transportation and Development on location and design of signage. Brochures should be made available at state tourism Welcome Centers, and each site should have brochures available on all other state parks, state commemorative areas and state preservation areas.



Actions Relating to State Parks

Over the past twenty years the Office of State Parks has successfully acquired and developed many quality state parks which provide recreational and educational opportunities in a natural setting. While much development has occurred since 1975, there is still a need for additional parks. The 1975 - 1990 goals for acquisition and development for state parks in Regions 1 - 6 were not completely met and current demand figures established in this plan indicate that acquisition and development of new state parks in these regions is needed. Development of new state parks in these regions will meet the demand figures established and should, to the extent possible, create recreational clusters between Office of State Parks holdings and other recreational resources. The 1975 - 1990 goals for development of state parks in Regions 7 and 8 were largely met, and demand figures, established in this plan, indicate that development of new state parks in these regions are not currently needed.

This plan recommends an estimated \$269,166,413 in acquisition and development for new and existing state parks over the next fifteen-year period. All estimated costs are 1996 dollars and should be adjusted for inflation as years pass.

ACTION : Establish the following development goals for the next fifteen years:

1. Continue to develop new facilities, and interpretive and educational programs which will enhance the recreational and educational experience at existing state parks.
2. Complement existing holdings by developing new sites which will provide a high quality recreational and educational opportunity in the planning regions in need of new state parks.
3. Develop recreational clusters between Office of State Parks holdings and natural

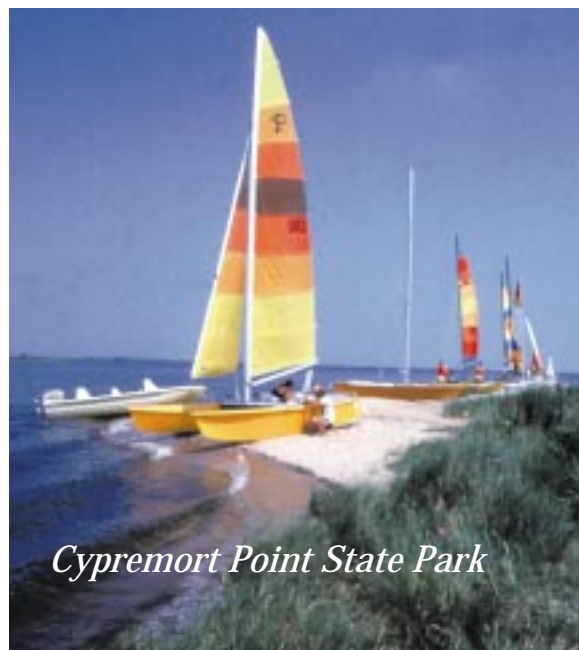
resources, such as a series of state parks which would provide access to the Gulf Coast.

- 4) Provide interpretive and recreational programming to enhance the overall experience.
- 5) Develop and institute a comprehensive resource management plan for all state parks.

ACTION : Develop, renovate and acquire facilities or elements which are:

1. Included in current master plans, but not completed or acquired, and
2. determined to be necessary to improve the recreational and educational experiences of a state park, or
3. are needed to help meet the criteria for state parks.

State parks have been developed to provide access to specific natural resources for Louisianians and out-of-state visitors. These resources should be developed to maximize the experience without degrading the integrity of the natural resources. All of the existing sites are in need of additional facilities and/or upgrading of existing facilities to maximize the recreational opportunities of each holding. Additional facilities and programs are important for the overall quality of the Louisiana State Parks System and should be pursued on a statewide basis.





State Parks must evaluate sites prior to acquisition to determine if the specific tract of land under consideration meets the criteria established for state park status.

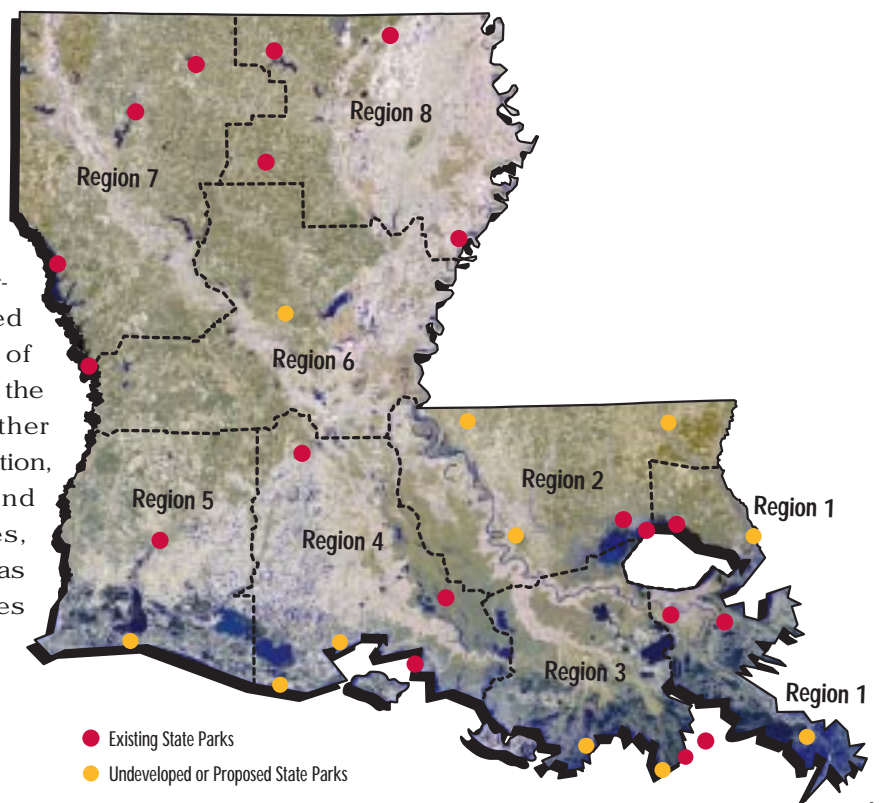
ACTION : Develop the number of new state parks per region as outlined below.

Region One 3 New Parks ... For a total of 8
 Region Two 3 New Parks ... For a total of 4
 Region Three... 2 New Parks ... For a total of 2
 Region Four..... 2 New Parks ... For a total of 5
 Region Five 1 New Park..... For a total of 2
 Region Six 1 New Park..... For a total of 1
 Region Seven.. 0 New Parks ... For a total of 4
 Region Eight 0 New Parks ... For a total of 4

NEW ACQUISITIONS

New state park acquisitions are based on an analysis of current population, projected population, recreation trends and location of existing parks. Recommendations for the number and location of new state parks have been determined through the Demand/Need Analysis in this plan. Because of changing conditions in availability, the quality of the resources and other unpredictable aspects of site selection, this plan does not recommend specific sites for state parks. It does, however, recommend general areas with access to specific resources which should be considered for new park sites. The Office of

Figure I - Distribution of State Parks, Existing and Proposed



Actions Relating to State Commemorative Areas

Over the past fifteen years the Office of State Parks has successfully developed a state commemorative area program that includes facilities and interpretive materials. Essentially, the goals of the previous plan have been met. The current strategy should improve existing commemorative areas by adding facilities where needed to enhance programming, and to develop new state commemorative areas to fill the gaps in the Office of State Parks' cultural and historical holdings. Unlike state parks, state commemorative areas are not based on regional distribution or access to population centers. The location and development of new state commemorative areas must be based upon the quality of the resource and the need for cultural and historical representation. Programming and maintenance are critical issues at all state commemorative areas, and must be quality offerings.

This plan recommends \$49,231,414 in acquisition and development of new and existing state commemorative areas over the next fifteen-year period. All estimated costs are 1996 dollars and should be adjusted for inflation as years pass.

ACTION : Establish the following development goals for the next fifteen years:

1. Complement present holdings by adding new sites based on unrepresented cultures or neglected historical areas. These sites must meet criteria established by the Office of State Parks.
2. Continue to develop interpretive and educational programs to further enhance the recreational and educational experience of the visitor.
3. Maintain and upgrade present sites of statewide significance.
4. Consider special action on sites that do not substantially meet the criteria or have other problems associated with them.
5. Develop and institute a comprehensive resource management plan for all state commemorative areas.

ACTION : Develop, renovate and acquire elements which are:

1. Outlined in current master plans of existing state commemorative areas, but not completed, and
2. determined to be necessary to improve the recreational and educational experiences of state commemorative areas, or
3. are needed to help meet the criteria for state commemorative areas.



Port Hudson State Commemorative Area

Exhibit VI. - Cultural and Historical Gaps and Proposed New Sites

NEW ACQUISITIONS

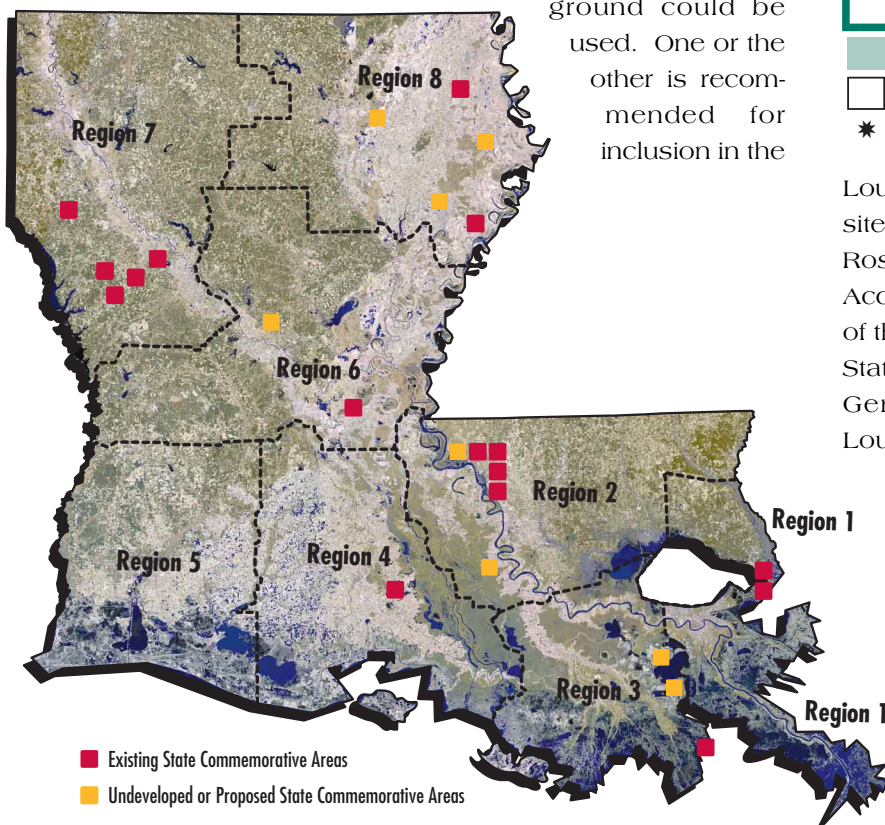
Additional sites for state commemorative areas should be evaluated based upon the criteria established at the time of potential acquisition or when serious proposals for donation are made to the Office of State Parks. Given the limited funds, priority should be given to fully developing existing state commemorative areas before additional sites are acquired.

ACTION : Use discretion in acquisition and development of new state commemorative areas acquiring sites which meet state commemorative area criteria and may otherwise be lost if not acted upon.

Six sites have been identified as significant and unique additions to the Louisiana State Parks System. Acquisition of Laurel Valley Plantation, the Southern Heritage and Research Center, Oakland Plantation, Evergreen Plantation, Watson Brake and regained operation of Plaquemine Lock are recommended at this

time. Four additional comparable sites sharing the same cultural background could be used. One or the other is recommended for inclusion in the

Figure II. - Distribution of State Commemorative Areas, Existing and Proposed



	Proposed New Acquisitions	Laurel Valley Plantation	Southern Heritage & Research Ctr.	Evergreen Plantation	Watson Brake	Oakland Plantation	Plaquemine Locks	Raffmann Mounds	Prichard Landing Mounds	Rosedown Plantation	Whitney Plantation
Cultural Representation											
Pre-Historic Indian				*							
Early Indian											
Middle Indian								*	*		
Late Indian								*	*		
Caddoan Indian											
Historic Indian											
Colonial Spanish											
Colonial French											
African American			*								
German											
Early English											
Acadian											
Anglo Upland											
Historical Representation											
Fort and Expansion											
Antebellum Plantation											
Civil War											
Historic Sugar		*	*								*
Historic Cotton					*				*		
Lumbering		*									
Oil Industry											
River Navigation						*					
Education											
Government											
Music											
Cemetery											

- Historical or Cultural Representations Currently Provided in OSP System
- Gaps in Historical or Cultural Representations
- Proposed Historical or Cultural Representations for New Sites

Louisiana State Parks System. The alternate sites are: Raffman Mounds, Prichard Landing, Rosedown Plantation and Whitney Plantation. Acquisition of these new sites would close most of the cultural and historical gaps in the Office of State Parks' offerings. This would leave only the Germanic Culture, the Oil Industry and Louisiana Government History without representative sites in the Louisiana State Parks System.

Exhibit VI, above, shows the cultural and historical gaps in current Office of State Parks' holdings as detailed in the resource study. It also shows the existing historical and cultural values of the current holdings and the representations' proposed new sites.

Actions Relating to State Preservation Areas

State preservation areas should be acquired and developed to foster natural resource education and ecotourism opportunities. During the past fifteen years the Office of State Parks has had difficulty developing state preservation areas and their facilities using the normal channels of acquisition, planning and development. Due to the lack of operating funds, the significant issue of management of these unique, and often rare, environments and habitats has also been stymied. Management may be the single greatest issue that assures that a state preservation area retains the qualities for which it was acquired and worthy of preserving. Conservation and proper resource management of significant ecological environments should be provided at all Office of State Parks holdings.

This plan recommends an estimated \$33,560,000 worth of acquisition and development at existing and proposed sites over the next fifteen-year period. All estimated costs are 1996 dollars and should be adjusted for inflation as years pass.

ACTION : Establish the following development goals for the next fifteen years:

1. Develop, maintain and upgrade present sites of statewide significance.
2. Complement present holdings by cooperative development and management ventures with other agencies such as the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers or the Louisiana Nature Conservancy. Priority in adding new sites should be given to sites owned and managed in cooperation with other agencies or solely by the Office of State Parks, and should be based on representative geologic or vegetative associations not currently in the Louisiana State Parks System. These sites must meet the criteria established by the Office



Audubon State Commemorative Area

of State Parks, or have significant potential for natural resource education and ecotourism.

3. Continue to develop interpretive and educational programs.
4. Develop and institute a comprehensive resource management plan for all preservation resources.

ACTION : Focus on a few sites and work with other groups on preservation.

State preservation areas currently include the Atchafalaya Wilderness Center, Big Cypress, Coochie Brake, Tunica Hills, Chenier Au Tigre and the Washington Parish site. All are viable sites for preservation areas with the exception of the Washington Parish site. Given the limited funds available, these sites should be developed to meet their potential and be exemplary models for design, use and management. Once these sites are in a position to showcase the preservation concept in action, acquisition and development of other sites should be pursued. The preservation policy in the Office of State Parks should be oriented to working with other groups on preservation area issues. Already, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, through its Natural Heritage Program, and the Nature Conservancy, with its purchase and management program, working together have made great strides in acquisition and preservation of critical state habitats when possible.

ACTION : Focus on sites for preservation which have high potential for natural resource education and ecotourism opportunities.

The Office of State Parks is one of several agencies concerned with the preservation of natural ecosystems in Louisiana. While some agencies, such as the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' Natural Heritage Program and the Nature Conservancy, are oriented toward preservation and management, the role of the Office of State Parks should be slightly different. It should be oriented more towards the preservation of natural settings, while providing natural resource education programs to the public. Sites should not only meet the criteria for geologic and vegetative representations, but should also allow the public to visit the areas to learn about the natural systems without degradation of the resource.

UPGRADING OF PRESENT SITES

Most of the existing state preservation holdings meet the established criteria for state preservation area status. The Atchafalaya Wilderness Center lacks significant basin habitat, but it is intended to provide a base where visitors can learn about the features of the basin and how access can be gained and appreciated at other nearby facilities. The Washington Parish State Preservation Area currently does not meet the criteria for preservation area status. There are some problems with the integrity of the natural resource and it does not fit well within the geologic and vegetation representations that are designated in the criteria. It is recommended that additional land be acquired and that this site be reclassified as a state park on the Bogue Chitto River. Wherever the deficiencies detract from the proper use or interpretation of the area, it must be corrected within reasonable means and costs.

ACTION : Develop, renovate and acquire elements which are:

1. Outlined in current master plans of existing state preservation areas, but not completed, and
2. determined to be necessary to improve the recreational and educational experiences of state preservation areas, or
3. are needed to help meet the criteria for state preservation areas.



Sam Houston Jones State Park

NEW ACQUISITIONS

When determining whether a potential preservation area site is needed in the Louisiana State Parks System, it is important to realize that many different combinations of geology and vegetation are possible and that not all combinations will justify state preservation area status. Selection should be based primarily upon filling gaps in major representations of statewide significance. A new site should be added only when its addition improves the state parks system from an ecotourism and natural resource education standpoint and when practical means for resource management are available. Only new sites that meet the criteria for state preservation area status, that provide for natural resource education and ecotourism, and whose natural resources can be effectively managed should be considered. Other sites should be left to agencies whose mission is specific to preservation and management. Of the potential new sites studied, only one, the Atchafalaya Wilderness Center East, is recommended for inclusion in the Louisiana State Parks System, at this time.

Exhibit VII outlines the different geologic and vegetation representations currently in the Louisiana State Parks System, as well as the gaps in representations.

ACTION : Actively pursue the land in the Atchafalaya Wilderness Center East for inclusion into the Louisiana State Parks System as a new state preservation area.

There are 12,000 - 20,000 acres of the Atchafalaya Wilderness Center East that should be considered for state preservation area status. The

Corps of Engineers is in the process of determining the future use of this land and the Office of State Parks is a potential agency that this land may be transferred to. The inclusion of this land into the Louisiana State Parks System is recommended for a new state preservation area to be called the Atchafalaya Wilderness Center East. The estimated costs for the acquisition of land for the development of the interpretive center, parking and other necessary facilities to provide access into this new area is \$7,000,000.

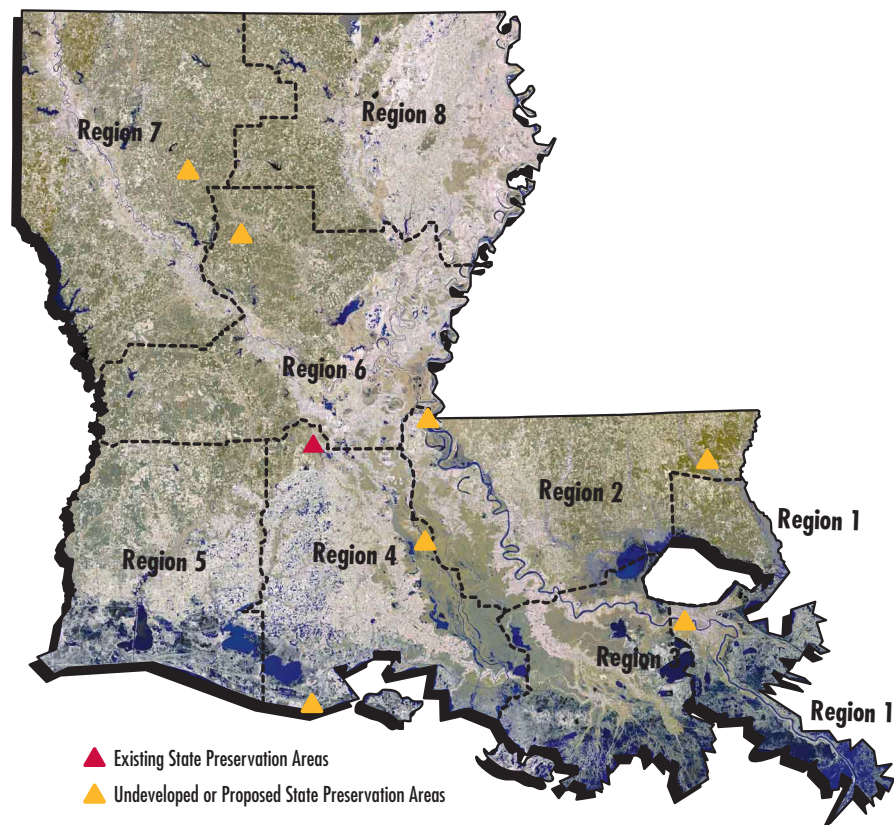
Exhibit VII. Current Representations and Gaps in State Preservation Areas

	Existing Sites	La State Arboretum	In Progress Sites	Atchafalaya Wilderness Center	Parish S.P.A.	Tunica Hills	Trudeau Site	Chenier Au Tigre	Big Cypress	Cochie Brake
Geologic Representations										
Deltaic / Cheniere Plains								*		
Major Alluvial Bottoms				*						*
Pleistocene Prairie Terraces										
Pleistocene Hill Terraces		*			*	*	*			
Tertiary Uplands (Hills)									*	
Small Alluvial Bottoms										
Vegetation Representations										
Coastal Marshes								*		
Coastal Prairies										
Bottomland Hardwoods				*						
Cypress/Cypress Tupelo Swamps				*					*	*
Longleaf Pine/Savannah										
Bayhead Swamps									*	
Small Stream Forests										
Spruce Pine Hardwood Forests										
Mixed Hardwoods - Loblolly Pine Forests		*		*						
Upland Hardwood Forests		*			*	*				
Chenier Forests: Coastal Live Oak-Hackberry										
Upland Longleaf Pine Forests										
Shortleaf Pine Forests										

 Gaps in Geologic or Vegetation Representation
 Current Representation in OSP System



Figure III. *Distribution of State Preservation Areas - Existing and Proposed*



Interrelating State Resources

Louisiana's history, culture and natural attributes provide the Office of State Parks with a valuable resource to draw from and to provide for the recreational and educational needs of Louisianians and their visitors. This plan considers holdings, as well as recreational resources not owned by the state, as important elements in the overall pool of resources.

The State Parks Master Plan 1997-2012 sets forth many ways for the Louisiana State Parks System to pool its resources, which involves additions to present holdings, development of new facilities and concepts for the marketing of parks, and commemorative and preservation areas as clusters or packages rather than as independent resources. Examples of two of the major concepts, Recreational Chains and the development of parks as Recreational Hubs, follows.

THE RECREATIONAL CHAINS

The Louisiana Gulf Coast and the vast wetland areas in the southern part of the state are among the most significant natural recreational resources in Louisiana. The opportunities for fishing, bird watching, hiking and boating abound. The recreational potential of the area combined with the Cajun culture and ease of accessibility create a major ecotourism draw, however, State Parks presence is minimal. The action plan calls for a series of coastal state parks and preservation areas extending from Plaquemines Parish to Cameron Parish. These facilities would provide access to this vast recreational resource providing actual coastal fronting parks, as well as "base camp" parks (overnight areas with direct access into the marshes and estuaries of the coastal zone).

The popular scenic rivers in the southeast part of the state are a natural draw for boating and fishing enthusiasts and have good access from the major highway system. This plan recommends a series of river-oriented state parks, existing and proposed, in Regions One and Two which, in combination with existing private establishments, create a chain of recreational links extending from above McComb, Mississippi to the Pearl River.

The beautiful and bountiful lakes of the northern part of the state were a natural draw for State Parks development in the previous plan. The existing parks are currently providing for much of the recreational needs for the region, but need additional facilities and promotion to fully meet their potential. These peaceful, natural resource-based parks currently create a chain of similar, but varying resources that should be promoted as a group of related lake-oriented parks.

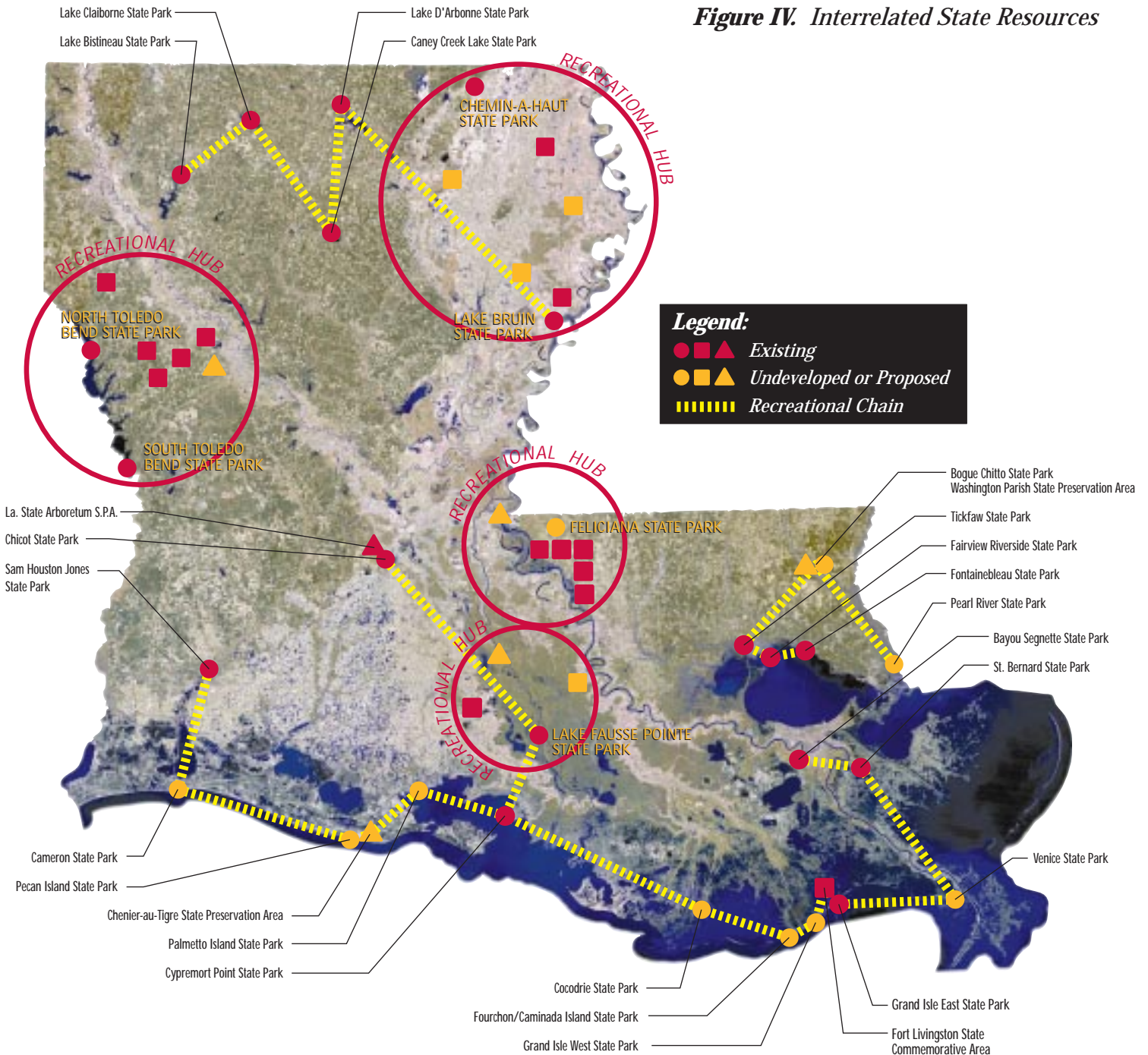
RECREATIONAL HUBS

As set forth by the classification system, state parks is the only class of holdings that provides overnight facilities. In some cases, however, there is great need to provide these overnight facilities in proximity to existing and proposed commemorative and preservation areas. Providing new state parks or promoting existing parks in close proximity to commemorative and preservation areas as overnight destinations will create recreational clusters and, thereby, more fully meet the mission of the Office of State Parks. State parks, where possible, should be used as "destination hubs" where visitors can stay overnight and gain access to other recreational and educational assets in an area, as well as enjoy the assets of the park itself.

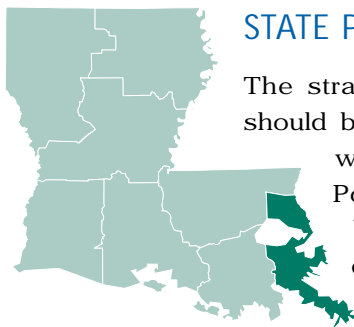
Examples of this concept are: the proposed Feliciana State Park in Region Two, Lake Fausse Pointe State Park in Region Four, North Toledo Bend State Park in Region Seven, Lake Bruin and Chemin-A-Haut State Parks in Region Eight. These parks should be promoted as central hubs where visitors can

stay overnight, enjoy the natural resources of the park, but also have good access to the numerous state commemorative areas, state preservation areas, and other privately provided recreational and educational assets of the area.

Figure IV. Interrelated State Resources



Region One



STATE PARKS

The strategy for existing state park sites should be to develop a recreational cluster with strong links to the north of Lake Pontchartrain and the wetlands that border the metropolitan area immediately to the south. State parks, state commemorative areas, and state preservation areas should be clustered to better promote regional offerings.

ACTION : Complete the development of each existing state park in accordance with its master plan.

Fontainebleau and **Fairview-Riverside State Parks** could support one another through joint promotion. **Fontainebleau** has more space for development of new facilities. Given its growth potential and the changes in its physical site over the years, the site master plan should be updated. **Fairview-Riverside** is smaller and has little possibility of acquiring additional land; thus, it should have less new development. It must be monitored for its carrying capacity to avoid overuse. **Fontainebleau** should be marketed for heavier use; **Fairview-Riverside** should be marketed for its quaint character and charm. These two state parks should be

viewed as complementing, not competing facilities.

St. Bernard State Park and **Bayou Segnette State Park** are both oriented to day use recreation. The elements remaining on the master plans for these two facilities should be completed. It is important to be aware of the differences between these two state parks when developing programming and marketing strategies. While they should not be marketed as competing facilities, they should be marketed in similar ways and to similar users. **St. Bernard State Park** should take advantage of the Mississippi River for viewing, walks and boat trips since it is the only state park in Louisiana located on the Mississippi River; and **Bayou Segnette State Park** should continue to take advantage of its constructed day use areas and its overnight accommodations as its main attraction for tourists visiting New Orleans.

Grand Isle East State Park provides a recreational node on the Gulf of Mexico. **Grand Isle West**, an undeveloped site, should be master planned and developed to incorporate features, where possible, which are not already available at the East site. These two sites should be complementary, and non-competing. Their assets should be marketed as a cluster clearly showing each site's recreational opportunities.

ACTION : Develop three new state parks in Region One.

The Action Plan calls for the development of three new state parks in Region One over the next fifteen years. The preferred scenario for development of this region would include the development of **Grand Isle West**, a current Office of State Parks holding, a site near the Gulf of Mexico in the **Venice area**, and one on or near the **Pearl River**.

A site in the **Venice area** would allow access to the mouth of the Mississippi River and the recreational opportunities in the area.



St. Bernard State Park

PMENT STRATEGIES

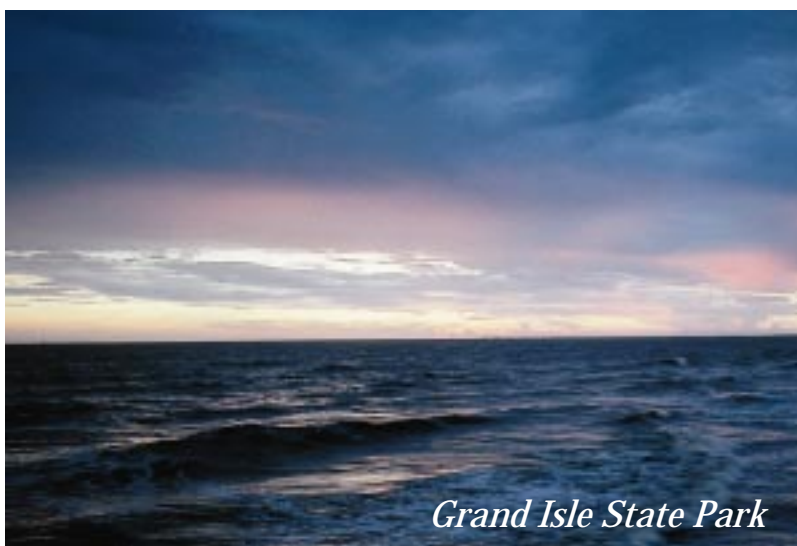
It would also serve the New Orleans area more effectively than the Grand Isle State Park due to easier access via Louisiana Highway 23. This Venice Area State Park would be the easternmost anchor of the proposed series of state parks which would provide access to the entire Louisiana Gulf Coast.

Development of the current holding at **Grand Isle West** is recommended. This could act as an annex to the **Proposed Fourchon/Caminada Island State Park** which would offer a larger land base, more overnight facilities, and different uses from those offered at Grand Isle West. Recommendations for proposed development of the state park at **Fourchon / Caminada Island** are made in the action plan in section V-B:3, in Region Three (even though the site crosses both Region One and Three). The proposed development would range westward from Caminada Pass, approximately eight miles to Fourchon in Region Three. The proposed development of this area could include an entrance on the Caminada Pass side as well as one on the Fourchon side.

The **Pearl River** site, proposed in the GSRI plan and Act 314-74, would be a state park bordering the river basin with access to the river. It would provide for the recreational needs of Region One and could be a part of a complex of related facilities along the Pearl and Bogue Chitto Rivers making these popular fishing and boating sites more readily accessible. While located in Region One, it could be closely linked to a Region Two cluster of state parks and related activities, thus also serving the recreational needs of Region Two. Given its proximity to Mississippi and interstate travel, the **Pearl River site** would also be a natural ecotourism draw.

Given the natural resources and existing tourism attractions, developments in this region are investments in ecotourism. This idea should be promoted to the fullest extent possible.

*The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at existing state parks in Region One is **\$34,356,250**. The estimated acquisition and development cost for three proposed state parks (**Venice, Grand Isle West** and **Pearl River**) in Region One is **\$23,126,500**. The total estimated acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for state parks, existing and proposed, in Region One is **\$57,482,750**.*



STATE COMMEMORATIVE AREAS

Develop and promote a historic cluster of the existing front line, 1800 period forts (**Fort Pike, Fort Macomb** and **Fort Livingston**.) These forts were initially developed as a system of installations to protect New Orleans from coastal invasion. They should function to complement, rather than compete, with each other. Services and facilities should not be duplicated, but consolidated wherever possible. This is particularly important between **Fort Pike** and **Fort Macomb**, given their close proximity. Efforts should be made to operate both facilities as separate units of one area to



reduce expenses. The location of these forts creates an opportunity to develop interpretive programs which explain not only the individual installations, but the entire system of fortifications. **Fort Pike**, the only fort of the three currently open, needs additional funding to bring it to the level of the average state commemorative area. **Fort Macomb** is in the best physical condition, but needs to be developed to standards so it can be opened to the public. **Fort Livingston** is an interesting site, but is being lost to the forces of nature. Access to the fort is difficult due to its location on Grand Terre Island in the Gulf of Mexico. This site is accessible only by boat and development of docking facilities should promote its use as a commemorative ruin.

Fort Pike should be the flagship example of this type of fortification due to its proximity to New Orleans and Interstates 10 and 12 and its present level of development. In addition to the museum, a visitor's information center and interpretive program which portrays the history of these forts could be located here. Pre-arranged tours of the forts could start at **Fort Pike**. Promotion to schools and to Civil War enthusiasts should be increased.

ACTION : Continue the development of the existing state commemorative areas in Region One as master planned.

The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at existing state commemorative areas in Region One is **\$6,097,339**. There are no proposed state new commemorative areas in Region One.

STATE PRESERVATION AREAS

There are currently no state preservation areas in Region One. The 12,000 - 20,000 acres of land as referenced on page 24 of this document should be pursued as additional land for the development of a state preservation area. This land could be developed into the Atchafalaya Wilderness Center East to provide similar services as those provided at the Atchafalaya Wilderness Center West.

ACTION : Develop the Atchafalaya Wilderness Center East State Preservation Area upon the donation of the 12,000 - 20,000 acres from the US Army Corps of Engineers.

The approximate land acquisition and development cost for the proposed state preservation area in Region One is \$7,000,000.

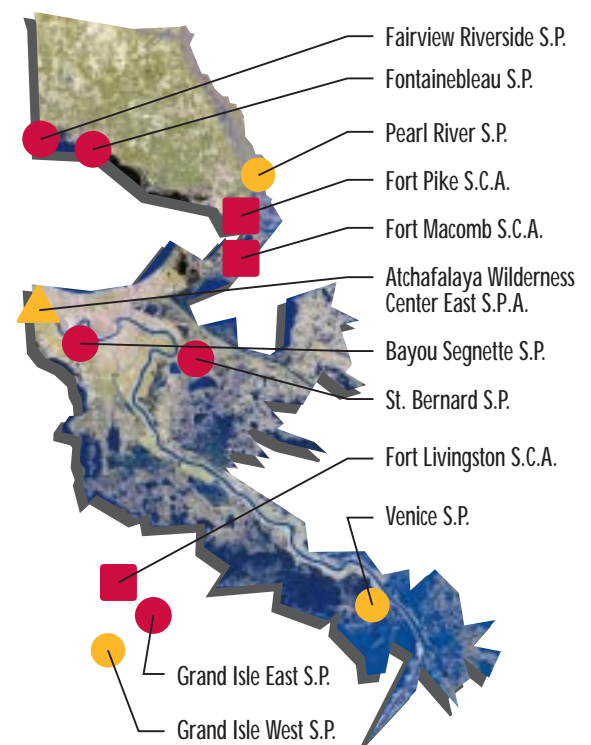


Figure V. - REGION ONE FACILITIES

● ■ ▲ Existing
● ■ ▲ Undeveloped or Proposed

Region Two



STATE PARKS

The strategy for existing sites should be to develop recreational clusters around the state commemorative areas (Audubon, Port Hudson, Centenary and Locust Grove) in the western part of the region and around **Tickfaw State Park** and the proposed state parks on the **Tangipahoa** and **Bogue Chitto** rivers in the eastern part of the region, and around the proposed **Pearl River State Park** in Region One. The state commemorative areas and other historic sites in the region form a cluster of related areas that possess the potential to become a major tourism and recreation destination. The addition of a state park in the area could create a hub for visitors to stay overnight while enjoying the natural, cultural and historic features of this area. More importantly, it would provide much-needed recreational and educational facilities for the Baton Rouge area.

ACTION : Complete the development of each existing state park in accordance with its master plans.

Tickfaw State Park is in the development stage and is scheduled to open in 1997-98. The park will provide overnight facilities. **Tickfaw State Park** is a well-located facility in the lower part of the region where a transition is made from high terrace to lowland basin. This site has the potential to become a great ecotourism draw due to its proximity to major highways, natural resources, and its master plan concept.

ACTION : Develop three new state parks in Region Two.

The Action Plan calls for the development of three new state parks in Region Two over the next fifteen years. The preferred scenario would include the development of the **Bogue**

Chitto River site, which was proposed in the GSRI plan and Act 314-75, the development of a state park in the **Felicianas** and a state park on either **Alligator Bayou/Spanish Lake** or the **Tangipahoa River**.

The **Bogue Chitto** site could become a part of a series of recreational links along this popular fishing and boating river extending from above McComb, Mississippi, to the Pearl River. The use of the existing Washington Parish State Preservation Area site as the **Bogue Chitto State Park** site is recommended. A series of river parks and outfitters are already in place and this proposed state park could continue the linkage to the **Pearl River State Park** proposed for Region One.

A site in the **Felicianas**, on Thompson Creek or another similar water body in the area, would provide creek beds of sandy clear water well-suited for passive water recreation such as wading and relaxing. The existing topographic change and natural wooded areas would be excellent for nature walks and hiking. If a quality water-based resource is not available, another development concept for a park in this region is to develop a state park with a 19th century theme. This concept uses the collective historic aspects of the area as the resource and would be designed to complement this historic theme. Whether the site includes a natural water-based resource or not, the park would have great access to the many state commemorative areas, plantation homes and historical areas and should express this historic character. Other recreational resources are local golf courses nearby. A park in the Felicianas would serve as an overnight hub for visitors and would provide access to the many recreational opportunities both on-site and in the area. This would act as a linking element between several existing Office of State Parks' resources.

A new state park at **Alligator Bayou/Spanish Lake** would provide a quality recreational and educational experience in a natural setting while providing a much-needed park in close

proximity to Baton Rouge. Because of the water quality problems which currently exist, this site can not be considered for state park status at this time. However, efforts to correct the current problems are under way and may be successful within the next five to ten years.

A site on the **Tangipahoa River**, once one of the best canoeing and tubing rivers in the state, should remain in the long-range plans. There is strong local support in Tangipahoa Parish for a basin-wide recreation plan that could include a state park. Given the water

The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at existing state parks in Region Two is **\$10,821,500**. The estimated acquisition and development cost for proposed state parks in Region Two (**Bogue Chitto, Feliciana**, and either **Tangipahoa** or **Spanish Lake**) is **\$45,047,800**. The estimated total acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for state parks, existing and proposed, in Region Two is **\$55,869,300**.

STATE COMMEMORATIVE AREAS

A cluster of state commemorative areas in the northern part of the region related to the era before, during and after the Civil War should be developed. This area is rich with both public and private antebellum historic sites, and the state commemorative areas should be the main tourism draws. **Audubon** and **Port Hudson** are exemplary state commemorative areas. Their historical significance, facility development, interpretive programming and operation are outstanding. They are already significant tourism draws. These two sites should be used to promote each other, and as anchors to promote **Centenary** and **Locust Grove** as related historical side trips. Further development of **Audubon, Port Hudson** and **Centenary** to complete the master plans for each site is recommended. This would improve the experience and is recommended. Additional interpretive programs at all sites are needed.

ACTION : Continue development of the existing state commemorative areas in the region according to the master plans and acquire and develop **Rosedown Plantation** and **Plaquemine Lock** as new state commemorative areas.

The return of **Plaquemine Lock** to the Office of State Parks is recommended, to be re-developed as a state commemorative area representing River Navigation, an historical unit presently unrepresented. Since the site



quality problems, this site cannot be considered for state park status at this time. However, efforts to correct the current problems are under way and may prove successful within the next five to ten years. This could make this area worthy of inclusion in the Louisiana State Parks System. Other resources in the region which might meet the criteria for state park status are the **Lower Amite River, Old River, False River and Lake Maurepas**. Indications are that sufficient land is not available along these resources. However, if parcels of land become available, new state park sites should be considered along these resources. However, the goals for this region call for the establishment of no more than three new state parks over the next fifteen-year period.

was at one time a state commemorative area, it should require relatively little redevelopment costs. **Rosedown Plantation** is recommended for acquisition and development as an additional major tourism draw in the northern part of the region to complement existing holdings.

The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at existing state commemorative areas in Region Two is \$2,574,850. The estimated acquisition and development cost for proposed new state commemorative areas in Region Two is \$10,061,000. The estimated total acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for the state commemorative areas, existing and proposed, in Region Two is \$12,635,850.

STATE PRESERVATION AREAS

This plan recommends the development of two state preservation areas in Region Two during the next fifteen years. Both of the sites, **Tunica Hills** and **Washington Parish** are undeveloped Office of State Parks holdings. The **Tunica Hills** site is a spectacular representation of the Mississippi River Bluffs and the mixed hardwood plant associations. Sites similar to these in Mississippi are currently open to the public and attract considerable use. The **Washington Parish** site is more appropriately utilized as the Bogue Chitto State Park site and the designation should be changed.

ACTION : Develop the two existing state preservation areas in Region Two.

*The approximate land acquisition and development cost for the proposed items at **Tunica Hills** and **Washington Parish State Preservation Areas** is \$4,511,800.*

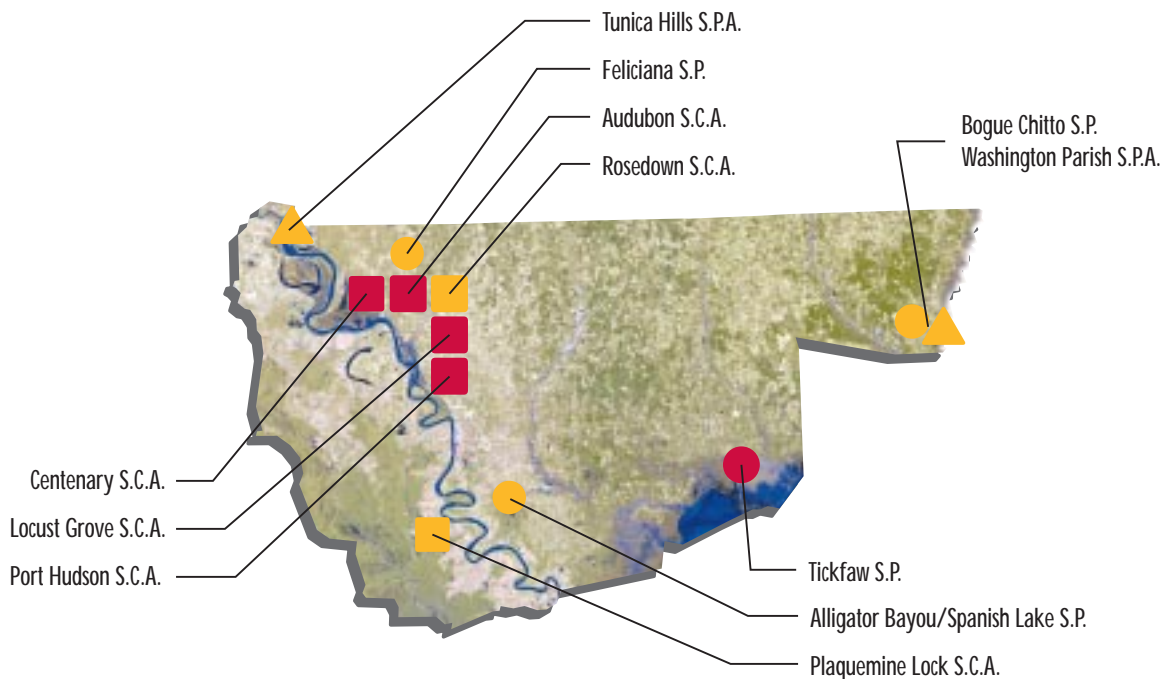
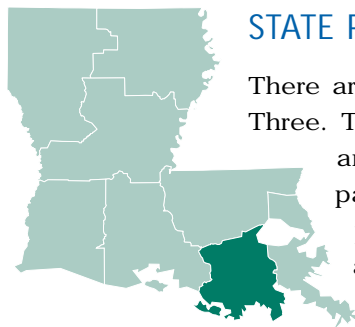


Figure VI. - REGION TWO FACILITIES

● ■ ▲ Existing
● ■ ▲ Undeveloped or Proposed

Region Three



STATE PARKS

There are no existing state parks in Region Three. The major population centers, Houma and Thibodaux, are in the southern part of the region and are in close proximity to the vast coastal recreation area. Development in the region should focus on that part of the region.

ACTION : Develop two new state parks in Region Three.

The Action Plan calls for the development of two new state parks in Region Three over the next fifteen years. The recommended scenario would include the development of state parks in both the **Fourchon / Caminada Island** and **Cocodrie areas**. This would provide accommodations and further access to the natural marsh and coastal areas. Additionally, it would complete a series of state parks extending from the proposed Venice State Park westward to Terrebonne Bay. These state parks would increase coastal access from all of the major population centers in the southeastern part of the state. Schematic recommendations on these potential areas are made in the Action Plan.

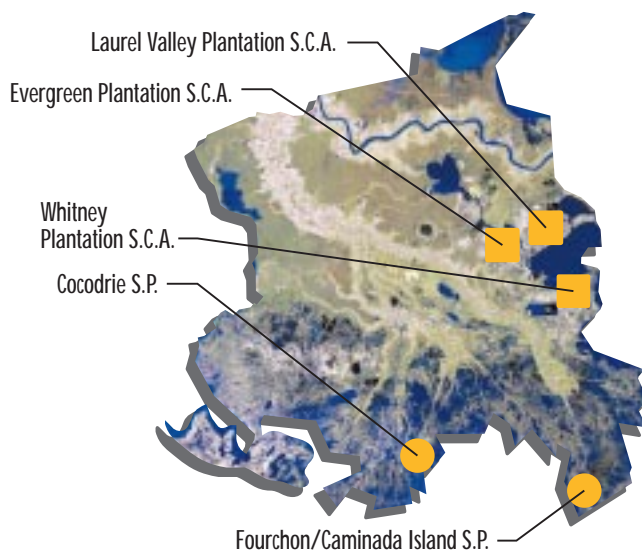


Figure VII. - REGION THREE FACILITIES

● ■ ▲ Existing
● ■ ▲ Undeveloped or Proposed

There are no existing state parks in Region Three. The estimated acquisition and development cost for the proposed new state parks in Region Three is **\$31,607,750**.

STATE COMMEMORATIVE AREAS

There are currently no state commemorative areas in this region. However, the acquisition of either **Laurel Valley Plantation** in Lafourche Parish, or **Whitney Plantation** in St. John the Baptist Parish, is recommended for development as a state commemorative area representing the historic sugar industry in Louisiana. **Laurel Valley** would be the first choice. If it is unavailable for acquisition, **Whitney Plantation** is recommended. **Evergreen Plantation**, also in St. John the Baptist Parish, is recommended for acquisition and development as well. Evergreen has one of the most intact sets of actual slave cabins in the South, and its interpretive focus should be pre-Civil War, African-American Culture. The two sites which are developed should be clustered and marketed together to the extent possible.

ACTION : Acquire and develop either Laurel Valley Plantation or Whitney Plantation and Evergreen Plantation as state commemorative areas.

There are no existing state commemorative areas in Region Three. The estimated acquisition and development cost for the proposed new state commemorative areas in Region Three is either **Laurel Valley Plantation** or **Whitney Plantation** and **Evergreen Plantation**, **\$11,039,500**. The estimated total acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for state commemorative areas, existing and proposed, in Region Three is **\$11,039,500**.

STATE PRESERVATION AREAS

There are no existing or proposed state preservation areas in Region Three.

Region Four



STATE PARKS

The strategy in this region is to market the existing parks as facilities which offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities in diverse settings. The Louisiana State Arboretum State Preservation Area, Chicot Lake, and hiking experiences should be highlighted at **Chicot State Park**; the Atchafalaya Basin should be the focus of marketing for **Lake Fausse Pointe State Park**; **Cypremort Point State Park** should emphasize access to the Gulf of Mexico, and **Palmetto Island State Park**, once developed, should focus on wetland settings. Development of this state park should be high priority. There are other recreational opportunities in the region such as Longfellow-Evangeline State Commemorative Area, Avery Island, Jefferson Island, Jean

Lafitte National Historic Park and Preserve, Chitimacha Cultural Center, and Prairie Acadian Cultural Center in Eunice, all of which can be promoted along with the state parks. The Acadian culture is an excellent tourist attraction, and the parks should be viewed as complementing this tourism interest. Programming should emphasize the unique culture of the area and on the Atchafalaya Basin. Both should play a prominent role in the marketing and continued development of this region.

ACTION : Develop two new state parks in Region Four.

The Action Plan calls for the development of two new state parks in Region Four over the next fifteen years. The preferred scenario

would include the development of the **Palmetto Island** site, which is in the planning stages; it should receive high priority. This, along with the development of a new park at **Pecan Island**, would add two parks to the series of Louisiana Gulf Coast-oriented parks.

Palmetto Island State Park is a current holding with a high degree of local support. The master plan needs to be revised to comply with the wetland designation. The park will provide a recreational resource in a wetland area and fits well into the "chain of Gulf Coast State Parks." Development of a state park in the **Pecan Island** area could provide easy access into the marshes and estuaries of the

area. This "base camp" park's main purpose is to provide facilities that would allow camping, cabins and other recreational opportunities for extended stays not provided by the private sector.

The estimated cost for completion of

*the recommendations at existing state parks in Region Four is **\$30,101,250**. The estimated acquisition and development cost for the proposed new state parks in Region Four is **\$8,749,488**. The estimated total acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for the state parks, existing and proposed, in Region Four is **\$38,850,738**.*



STATE COMMEMORATIVE AREAS

The recommended strategy for Region Four is to expand the existing state commemorative area at **Longfellow-Evangeline** to enhance the facilities and programming which currently commemorate the French-speaking peoples of Louisiana. Given the popularity of the Acadian culture, efforts to

develop and market this to the tourism industry should continue. The Office of State Parks should cluster this site with Lake Fausse Pointe State Park and the proposed Atchafalaya Wilderness Center State Preservation Area. These facilities should be promoted as a group of related areas which access the rich culture and natural resources of South Louisiana. Both the facilities and the programming need further development. Promotion of this identified cluster of Office of State Parks' holdings would be a key tourism draw for the region.

ACTION : Continue the development of facilities and programming at Longfellow-Evangeline State Commemorative Area as master planned.

*The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at the existing state commemorative area in Region Four is **\$1,491,000**. There are no new state commemorative areas proposed for Region Four. The estimated total acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for the state commemorative areas, existing and proposed, in Region Four is **\$1,491,000**.*

STATE PRESERVATION AREAS

The Action Plan recommends the development of two state preservation areas in Region Four during the next fifteen years. Both of the sites, **Chenier-Au-Tigre** and the **Atchafalaya Wilderness Center State Preservation Area West** are currently undeveloped holdings. **Chenier-Au-Tigre** is a coastal site representing coastal marshes and deltaic plains. It provides access to the vast wetland resources of the area. The concept for the **Atchafalaya Wilderness Center West** will be an ecotourism draw that will interpret the Atchafalaya Basin's cypress bottomland swamp habitat, provide day use and programming for visitors, and orient visitors to other natural areas such as Lake Fausse Pointe State Park. The site should introduce the Atchafalaya Basin to visitors and will link many facilities into a unified Atchafalaya Basin / Cajun theme.

ACTION : Develop the two existing state preservation areas in Region Two.

*The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at the proposed state preservation area in Region Four is **\$11,294,000**.*

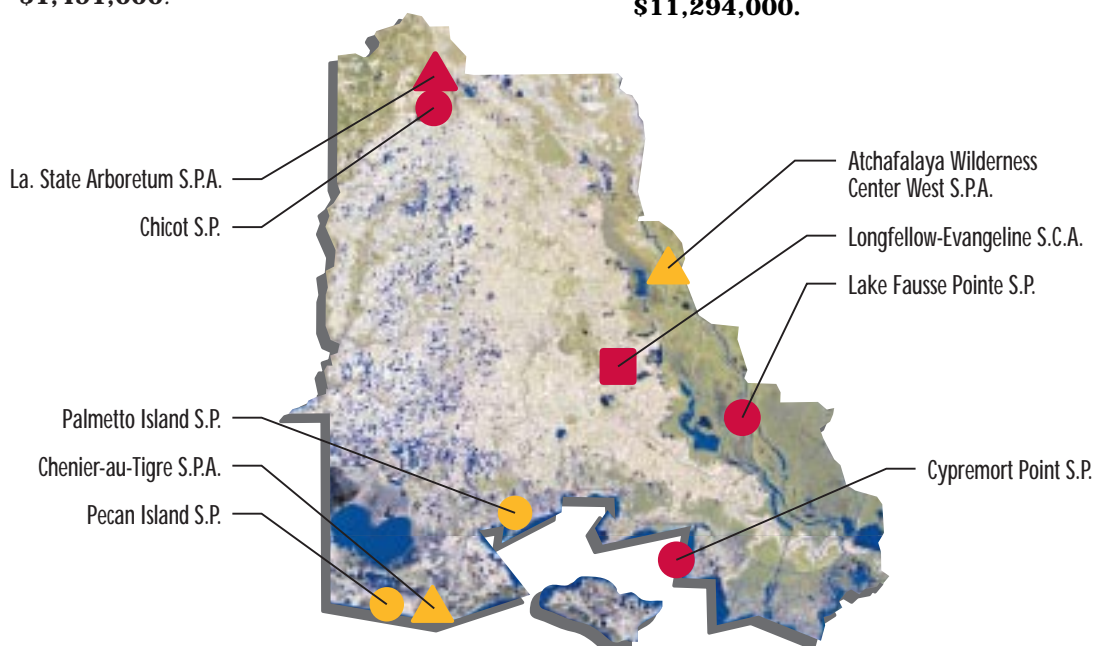
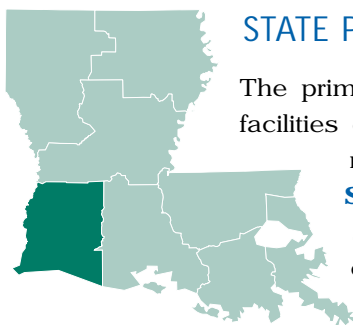


Figure VIII. - REGION FOUR FACILITIES

● ■ ▲ Existing
● ■ ▲ Undeveloped or Proposed

Region Five



STATE PARKS

The primary focus here is to complete the facilities outlined in the master plan at this region's only existing state park, **Sam Houston Jones**. This park services the population well. It is centrally located and has good access. The close proximity of the park to Interstate 10 makes it a good facility to draw vacationers and "rovers" as they travel the east-west corridor. This region, particularly along the coast, has great potential for nature-based ecotourism. Efforts to make **Sam Houston Jones State Park** a center for coordinating these activities should be made to capture a segment of this growing market. Its development as part of an ecotourism-oriented cluster will aid in capturing even more of this market.

ACTION : Develop one new state park in Region Five.

The Action Plan calls for the development of an accessible site along the coastline east of the Calcasieu River and west of Rockefeller Refuge. This proposed site should be accessible via Highway 82 from Lake Charles and Lafayette. It would complete the series of coastal recreational and educational resources spanning the entire coast from Plaquemines Parish to Cameron Parish.

*The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at existing state parks in Region Five is **\$8,883,750**. The estimated acquisition and development cost for the proposed new state parks in Region Five is **\$10,718,000**. The estimated total acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for the state parks, existing and proposed, in Region Five is **\$19,601,750**.*



Sam Houston Jones State Park

STATE COMMEMORATIVE AREAS

There are no existing or proposed state commemorative areas in Region Five.

STATE PRESERVATION AREAS

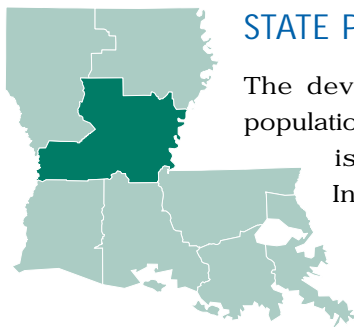
There are no existing or proposed state preservation areas in Region Five.



Figure IX. - REGION FIVE FACILITIES

- Existing
- Undeveloped or Proposed

Region Six



STATE PARKS

The development of a site to service the population of Alexandria and its surroundings is needed. A state park close to Interstate 49 would be desirable to attract travelers from this transportation corridor. The park, once developed, should complement National Forest activities in the area. Hiking could be promoted in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service trails in this region. Recreational services provided by the Office of State Parks should branch into other areas such as water-based activities not currently provided for in this region.

ACTION : Develop one new state park in Region Six.

The Action Plan calls for the development of one state park in Region Six over the next fifteen years. There are already United States Forest Service and United States Department of Agriculture and Forestry recreational facilities at many of the best natural resources in the region. The location of a new state park should not compete with these areas. The Office of State Parks-owned Larto Lake site is remote and of questionable quality and should remain undeveloped. Other potential resources in the region are the Red River Oxbow Lakes or Lake Rodemacher. These areas should be considered for development of this new state park.

There are no existing state parks in Region Six. The estimated acquisition and development cost for the proposed new state park in Region Six is \$9,240,250.



STATE COMMEMORATIVE AREAS

The recommendations for Region Six include the promotion of **Marksville State Commemorative Area** as a nationally recognized Native American burial site for educational and archeological purposes and the acquisition of a new potential site. The Office of State Parks should acquire the **Southern Forest Heritage Museum and Research Center** and develop it as a state commemorative area representing the lumber industry of Louisiana. The site is an 1892 sawmill town which is on the National Register of Historic Places. It captures a piece of American history that has nearly vanished and is unrepresented in the Louisiana State Parks System.

ACTION : Continue the development and promotion of Marksville State Commemorative Area and acquire and develop the Southern Forest Heritage Museum and Research Center as a new state commemorative area.

The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at the existing state commemorative area is \$1,573,200. The

estimated acquisition and development cost for the proposed new state commemorative area in Region Six is **\$2,703,000**. The estimated total acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for the state commemorative areas, existing and proposed, in Region Six is **\$4,276,200**.

ACTION : Develop the site as master planned with modifications as noted.

The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at the proposed state preservation area in Region Six is **\$2,254,000**.

STATE PRESERVATION AREAS

The Action Plan recommends the development of one state preservation area in Region Six during the next fifteen years. The **Coochie Brake** site is an existing holding representing the cypress tupelo swamp and major alluvial bottoms. The site will provide interpretive facilities and programming, as well as facilitate the management of the natural area.

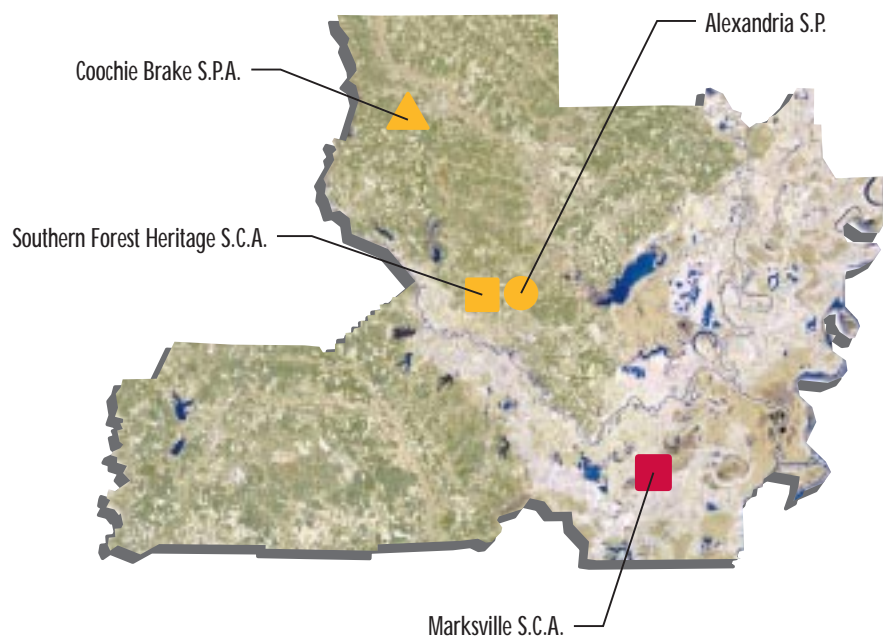
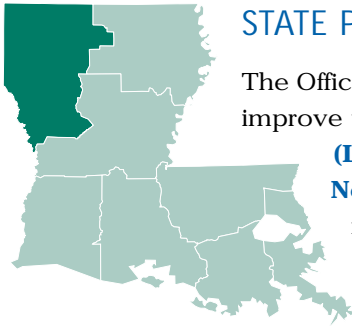


Figure X. - REGION SIX FACILITIES

- ■ ▲ Existing
- ■ ▲ Undeveloped or Proposed

Region Seven



STATE PARKS

The Office of State Parks should maintain and improve the existing state parks in the region (**Lake Bistineau, Lake Claiborne** and **North Toledo Bend**) according to the master plans. The development of **South Toledo Bend State Park** is recommended as master planned. The development of creative programming and support facilities at existing parks is the most important recommendation being made. Since the parks are accessible by major transportation corridors, including Interstate 20 and Interstate 49, efforts should be made to increase the appeal to tourists. Camping opportunities exist in the area, so emphasis should be placed on the development of cabins rather than tent or trailer camping.

ACTION : Supplement the facilities at the existing state parks and develop the South Toledo Bend Site as master planned.

The Action Plan calls for the purchase of no new sites in this region over the next fifteen years. The **South Toledo Bend** Site should be developed.

*The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at existing state parks in Region Seven is **\$30,753,875**. There are no new state parks proposed in Region Seven.*

STATE COMMEMORATIVE AREAS

This region has five state commemorative areas — **Rebel, Fort Jesup, Mansfield, Los Adaes** and **Fort St. Jean Baptiste** — that should be cluster marketed with the four state parks. Marketing as a cluster of complementing resources is recommended due to the remote location of some of the state commemorative areas. Los Adaes and Fort St. Jean Baptiste are both frontier forts from roughly the same historical time period. Each has a different story; therefore, efforts to develop unique interpretive programs are important. Mansfield, an important Civil War battle site, should become a resource of the same nature as **Port Hudson**. **Fort Jesup**, a pre-Civil War frontier fort of a different era from the others, could be promoted with **Mansfield** as a complementary site. **Rebel** has a unique identity. Its remoteness leads to a need for continued programming efforts and promotion of its country music theme.

Oakland Plantation, in Natchitoches Parish, is a significant site which represents the historic cotton industry in Louisiana. The site is currently being considered for acquisition by the National Park Service as part of the Cane River Creole National Historic Park. Because of the site's historical significance, the Office of State Parks should consider acquiring the site if the National Park Service does not.



*Fort Jesup State
Commemorative Area*

ACTION : Continue the development of the state commemorative areas in the region as master planned and consider the acquisition of Oakland Plantation as a new state commemorative area.

The estimated cost for the proposed development of existing state commemorative areas in Region Seven is **\$6,561,825**. The estimated acquisition and development cost for the potential new state commemorative area in Region Seven is **\$1,656,000**. The estimated total acquisition and development costs of the proposed improvements for the state commemorative areas, existing and proposed, in Region Seven is **\$8,217,825**.

STATE PRESERVATION AREAS

The Action Plan recommends the development of one state preservation area in Region Seven during the next fifteen years. The **Big Cypress** site is an existing holding including the cypress tupelo swamp and bayhead swamp, as well as tertiary uplands. The site will provide interpretive areas and programming, as well as facilitate the management of the natural area.

ACTION : Develop the site as master planned with modifications as noted.

The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at the proposed state preservation area in Region Six is **\$1,500,000**.

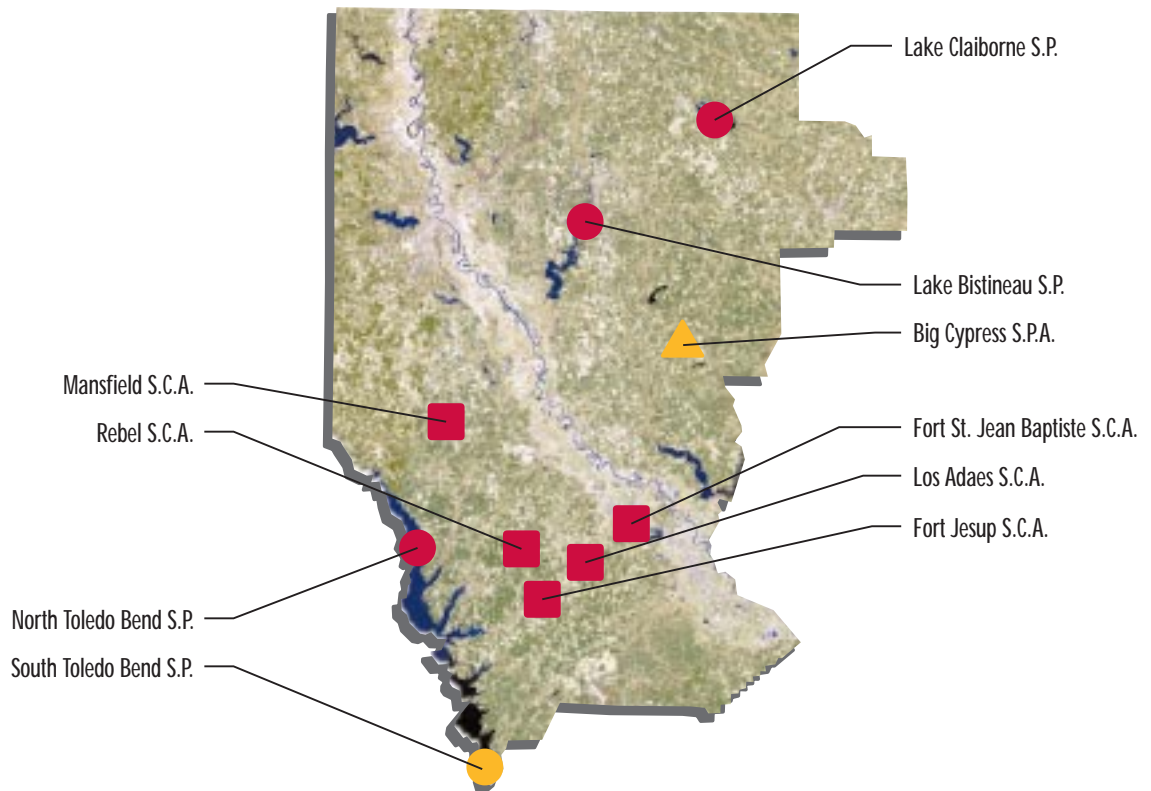
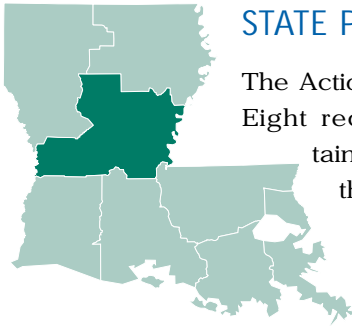


Figure XI. - REGION SEVEN FACILITIES

● ■ ▲ Existing
● ■ ▲ Undeveloped or Proposed

Region Eight



STATE PARKS

The Action Plan for Region Eight recommends maintaining and improving the existing facilities in this region.

The existing state parks (**Lake D'Arbonne**,

Chemin-A-Haut, **Lake Bruin**, and **Caney Creek Lake**) are

somewhat removed from transportation corridors and, therefore, attempts must be made to make these parks destination stops. The development of creative programming and a common theme such as trails and support facilities are the most important recommendations. Camping is well supplied by the Office of State Parks and private facilities in the region. Thus, emphasis should be placed on the development of cabins at **Lake D'Arbonne** and **Caney Creek Lake State Parks** rather than on tent or trailer camping. Development of facilities to attract large groups to the parks is needed. Poverty Point State Commemorative Area's national significance as an archeological site is a natural tourism draw. **Lake D'Arbonne** and **Chemin-A-Haut State Parks** should provide support facilities not available or desirable at Poverty Point State Commemorative Area. Cluster programming and marketing activities should be instituted. **Lake Bruin State Park** should promote its quality fishing as a main draw and should cluster with Winter Quarters State Commemorative Area as a good day trip. **Caney Creek Lake State Park**, recently opened, will need to find its own identity and provide programming which will make it a draw to visitors.



Winter Quarters State Commemorative Area

ACTION : Supplement the existing sites in the region with needed facilities, and concentrate on programming and marketing activities which promote these as destination parks.

The Action Plan calls for no new state parks to be developed in this region over the next fifteen years.

*The estimated cost for completion of the recommendations at existing state parks in Region Eight is **\$25,760,000**. There are no new state parks proposed in Region Eight.*

STATE COMMEMORATIVE AREAS

Poverty Point should be identified as one of the premier state commemorative areas in the Louisiana State Parks System for its national, historical and archeological significance. Funding for operations, programming and preservation should receive high priority. The acquisition of **Watson Brake Mounds** to develop as a state commemorative area representing a cultural and historical era of Pre-Poverty Point Native Americans is strongly recommended. Either the **Raffman Mounds** site or the **Prichards Landing** site should be acquired and developed as a state commemorative area representing the Late-Middle Native Americans. All of these sites should be promoted and developed as a package and should receive special attention

for acquisition and development due to their significance as national archeological sites.

Winter Quarters is a small site that is the only remaining example of an antebellum home along the Mississippi River in northeast Louisiana. The site is currently not large enough and does not have enough existing features to allow the needed interpretive facilities and programs desired for a state commemorative area. A new master plan and additional land acquisition is needed to bring this site to the standards of the other state commemorative areas. The Long Boundary Marker, which is currently owned by the Office of State Parks, does not meet the criteria for state commemorative area status and, therefore, should be left undeveloped.

ACTION : Continue the development of Poverty Point as master planned, develop Winter Quarters to expand the existing features and acquire Watson Brake and either Raffman Mounds or the Prichards Landing for development as a new state commemorative area linked with Poverty Point.



Caney Creek Lake State Park

The estimated cost for the proposed development of existing state commemorative areas in Region Eight is **\$807,300**. The estimated acquisition and development cost for the proposed new state commemorative areas in Region Eight is **\$4,442,750**. The estimated total acquisition and development cost of the proposed improvements for the state commemorative areas, existing and proposed, in Region Eight is **\$5,250,050**.

STATE PRESERVATION AREAS

There are no existing or proposed state preservation areas in Region Eight.

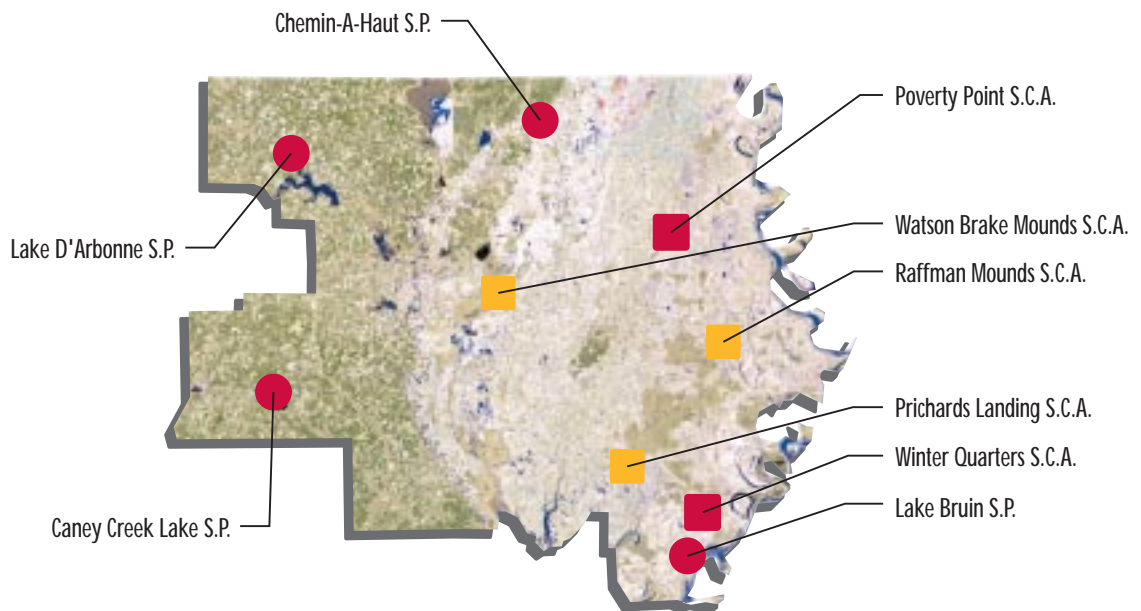


Figure XII. - REGION EIGHT FACILITIES

● ■ ▲ Existing
● ■ ▲ Undeveloped or Proposed

Acknowledgements

The Louisiana State Parks Master Plan, 1997-2012, prepared by the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, Office of State Parks, was financed jointly by the Office of State Parks and the U.S. Department of Interior, Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The Honorable Mike Foster, Governor of Louisiana

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION AND TOURISM

Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Blanco, Commissioner

Phillip Jones, Secretary

OFFICE OF STATE PARKS

Virginia Plauché, Assistant Secretary

Wylie J. Harvey, Deputy Assistant Secretary

Resource Development Division

Leslie Kent, Jr. - Chief Landscape Architect

Outdoor Recreation Division

Elinor Craven - Director

Operations Division

Randall G. Trahan - Chief of Operations

Interpretive Services Division

Jessica Routon - Interpretive Program Supervisor

Lands and Resources

Clay Fontenot, State Parks Land Officer

Executive Assistant

Julia Sulzer

Office of Cultural Development - C.R.T.

Jonathan Fricker - Historic Preservation

Tom Eubanks - Division of Archaeology

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE & FISHERIES

Gary Lester - Natural Heritage Program

STATE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Mr. Steve Perry *

(Representing Governor Mike Foster)

Ms. Sandra Thompson *

(Representing DNR Secretary Jack Caldwell)

Dr. Gerald Guidroz

Member at Large

Mr. Norwood Davis

Member at Large

Mr. John T. Landry

Member at Large

Ms. Lisa Creasman, Director
Louisiana Nature Conservancy

Mr. Bill Smith

Member at Large

Mr. Lee Dell Woods

Louisiana Recreation & Park Association

Mayor John A. Berthelot

Louisiana Municipal Association

Mr. Lenwood Broussard

Louisiana Police Jury Association

Mr. Curtis Landry

Louisiana Recreation & Park Association

Mr. William G. Palmer

Louisiana Recreation & Park Association

Mrs. Molly Rau

Louisiana - Federation of Women's Clubs

Mr. Larry Raymond

Louisiana Recreation & Park Association

Mrs. Bera Smith

Louisiana Garden Club Federation

This public document was published at a total cost of \$12,000. Five hundred (500) copies of this public document were published in the first printing. This document was published by Couvillion Graphics, Inc. and Franklin Press, Inc. of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. This material was printed in accordance with standards for printing by state agencies established pursuant to R.S. 43:31. Printing of this material was purchased in accordance with the provisions of Title 43 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes. Printed May of 1997.

LOUISIANA STATE PARKS MASTER PLAN 1997-2012

Prepared For:

Louisiana Department of Culture,
Recreation and Tourism,
Office of State Parks

Prepared By:

Reich Associates
Landscape Architecture
Land Planners

Dr. Daniel Earle
Landscape Architect

David Loughridge
Park Planner

Applied Technology Research
Corporation
Demographics & Surveys

Ashe, Broussard, Wcinzettle
Architects

Graphic Design by:
Couvillion Graphics, Inc.

Printed May 1997

