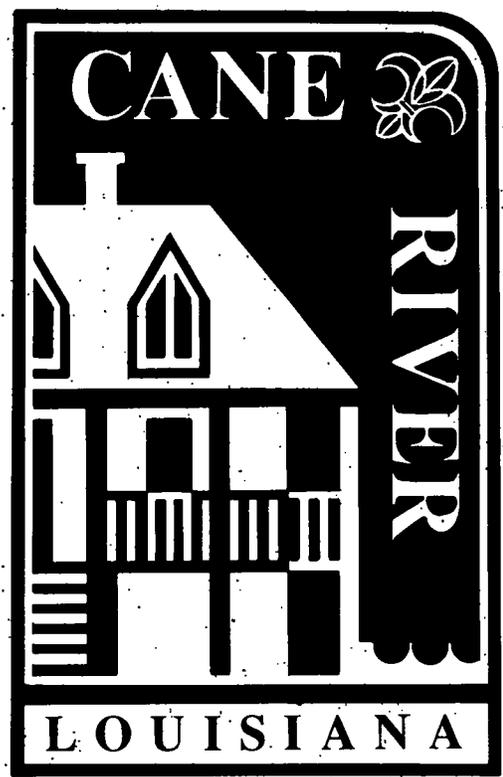


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Special Resource Study
Environmental Assessment



CANE RIVER
Louisiana

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Special Resource Study
Environmental Assessment

June 1993



Cane River Lake, Louisiana

CANE RIVER

Louisiana

SUMMARY

As directed by Congress, the National Park Service has initiated a special resource study to identify and evaluate alternatives for managing, preserving, and interpreting historic structures, sites, and landscapes within the Cane River area of northwestern Louisiana, and how Creole culture developed in this area. The study includes an evaluation of resources for possible inclusion in the national park system using the requirements set forth in the NPS publication *Criteria for Parklands*, including criteria for national significance, suitability, and feasibility.

The study area boundary includes Natchitoches Parish (pronounced Nack-a-tish), which still retains significant aspects of Creole culture. White Creoles of colonial Louisiana were born of French or Spanish parents before 1803. The tangible close of this period came with the formal establishment of United States presence as represented by Fort Jesup. Creoles of color emerged from freed slaves who owned plantations, developed their own culture, and enjoyed the respect and friendship of the dominant white Creole society. In Louisiana, Creole could refer to those of European, Afro-European heritage, or European-Indian heritage.

The study area also includes Cane River Lake (originally the main channel for the Red River) and 4 miles of the Cane River to Cloutierville. For purposes of the study this segment will be referred to as Cane River. This study focuses on the following structures, sites, and landscapes: Natchitoches Historic District; Kate Chopin House (locally referred to as the Bayou Folk Museum); Badin-Roque House; Melrose, Oakland, Magnolia, Cherokee, and Beau Fort plantations; and Los Adaes, Fort St. Jean Baptiste, and Fort Jesup state commemorative areas. Although outside Natchitoches Parish, Fort Jesup is being studied because of its importance to the Creole culture story. Natchitoches Historic District, the Kate Chopin House, Melrose Plantation, and Los Adaes and Fort Jesup state commemorative areas are national historic landmarks.

New additions to the national park system will not usually be recommended if other arrangements can provide adequate protection for the resources and opportunities for public enjoyment.

Upon evaluation against NPS new area criteria for national significance, suitability, and feasibility, at this time the resources within the Cane River area that appear to meet the criteria for potential establishment as units of the national park system are Oakland Plantation and Magnolia Plantation slave quarters and outbuildings.

Three conceptual alternative strategies have been developed for preserving and interpreting significant natural and cultural resources in the Cane River area. A no-action, or continuation of existing conditions, alternative is also included. Management options for these alternatives range from no federal action to the creation of a new national park system unit. All of the alternatives are intended to increase public awareness and appreciation of the multicultural encounter that characterized the period of French and Spanish colonization in Louisiana, and to improve the accuracy and objectivity with which the story is told. It is important to note that while each alternative could stand on its own,

certain elements could be combined to better serve resource protection and interpretation objectives. The alternatives are briefly described below.

Alternative A – No Action. Although various interpretive opportunities are currently offered to the visiting public by federal, state, local, and private entities, there is no coordinated interpretive effort on a sustained basis. Preservation efforts also vary based on the resources available to each owner. Certain resources are in imminent danger of losing integrity. Under this alternative, visitors would have to experience on their own the complete story of significant past events related to frontier and plantation lifestyles.

Alternative B – Frontier Story: Historic Viewshed. Under this alternative, the frontier story of the Creole culture of the Cane River area would be emphasized by interpreting how people of various cultures competed and cooperated in the settlement of the area, and how the lifeways provided by Cane River determined how these people lived and interacted. Interpretation would focus on the Natchitoches Historic District, Oakland Plantation, Magnolia Plantation slave quarters and outbuildings, Badin-Roque House, and Fort St. Jean Baptiste, Los Adaes, and Fort Jesup state commemorative areas. Under this alternative, a coordinating entity (composed of representatives from each of the sites as well as members from all segments of the community) would have responsibility for interpretation and preservation.

Alternative C – Plantation Story: NPS Management of Two Sites. Under this alternative, a new unit of the national park system would be created. This designation would provide preservation and protection of Oakland Plantation and Magnolia Plantation slave quarters and outbuildings. These resources are vital to interpretation of the Creole culture. In addition to NPS management of these resources, cooperative agreements should be sought with the city of Natchitoches, owners of the Badin-Roque House, Melrose, Cherokee, and Beau Fort plantations, and other entities as needed for coordinating interpretive aspects of the plantation story. The National Park Service would provide limited technical assistance for preservation and interpretation outside the park boundary on a priority basis.

The National Park Service would encourage preservation of the historic scene along the Cane River. This could be accompanied by purchase of scenic easements by local or regional entities or a nonprofit land trust.

Alternative D – Comprehensive Story: Heritage Partnership. Under this alternative, a Cane River heritage partnership would be established that would comprehensively interpret the entire area by incorporating and expanding on the frontier and plantation stories suggested in alternatives B and C. This alternative would require cooperative agreements between various private, local, state, and federal entities who currently manage resources within the proposed heritage partnership area. NPS involvement could be as the startup coordinator providing technical assistance for restoration, rehabilitation, and interpretation. The National Park Service could also assist with the establishment of a commission that would oversee the coordination of all visitor opportunities in the area.

Overall implementation of this alternative would be the responsibility of others, not the National Park Service. There would be no direct NPS ownership or management involved. Funds to assist in implementation of this alternative would be appropriated by Congress.

A general evaluation of impacts (visitor, natural, cultural, and socioeconomic) is also included in this study for the purpose of providing Congress information on some of the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative concept.

Any NPS involvement in the study area in the form of national park system unit designation, funding, and/or technical assistance, other than in existing programs, would require congressional action.

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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The National Park Service has been directed by Congress to undertake a study to identify and evaluate a range of alternatives for managing, preserving, and interpreting historic structures, sites, and landscapes within the Cane River area of northwestern Louisiana, and how Creole culture developed in this area. The study includes an evaluation of resources for possible inclusion in the national park system using the requirements contained in the publication *Criteria for Parklands* (NPS 1990), which encompasses the methodology for new area studies found in the *Management Policies* (NPS 1988) and the *Planning Process Guideline*, NPS-2 (1986).

The Cane River study area includes Natchitoches Parish. The boundary incorporates the area of French settlement (1714) and Spanish settlement (1717), which still retains significant aspects of Creole culture. The study area also includes Cane River Lake and 4 miles of Cane River to Cloutierville. For purposes of this study, this segment will be referred to as the Cane River.

Natchitoches was the head of navigation for the Red River until the river changed course in the 19th century and created Cane River Lake. Along the lake's banks are the Natchitoches Historic District, the Kate Chopin House (Bayou Folk Museum), and antebellum plantation homes — Melrose, Oakland, Magnolia, Cherokee, and Beau Fort. Some of the plantations, such as Oakland and Magnolia, have been owned by the same families for 200 years or more. Also included in the study area are three state commemorative areas — Los Adaes, the site of an 18th century Spanish military post (presidio); Fort St. Jean Baptiste, the site of an 18th century French fort; and Fort Jesup, a United States military post. Although outside Natchitoches Parish, Fort Jesup is being studied because of its importance to the Creole culture story. Five of the above-mentioned resources are national historic landmarks — Natchitoches Historic District, Kate Chopin House, Melrose Plantation, and Los Adaes and Fort Jesup state commemorative areas.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The city of Natchitoches and the plantations along Cane River have been recognized for their rich cultural heritage. Both private and public groups have spent large sums of money to preserve and protect structures related to this heritage. Despite these efforts, significant cultural resources are being lost. The state of Louisiana has only limited funds available for preservation work.

Behind the impetus for additional external assistance is the growing recognition that the grass roots movement and existing sources of funding have just about been depleted in the development and promotion of the Cane River area as a cultural attraction to future visitors. Noteworthy efforts have been made to identify, evaluate, and nominate cultural resources to the National Register of Historic Places. However, the shortage of funds and sufficient levels of continued technical assistance, and the necessity for operation and maintenance for existing historic sites/attractions have either caused projects to languish

or not be undertaken. Much has been done to preserve significant cultural resources in Natchitoches Parish, but much more remains to be accomplished.

THREATS TO THE RESOURCES

The resources of the study area include the surrounding environment, specific sites, structures, and the Cane River. The aesthetic quality of these resources has already been adversely affected by a variety of visual intrusions. Along the Cane River some of the historic viewsheds have been affected by the presence of power lines and house trailers. These intrusive developments may lend a sense of legitimacy to other similar encroachments and are therefore a threat to the future integrity of the area's resources.

Land use development patterns have divided Natchitoches into distinct older and newer sections. While this in itself is not detrimental, the location of new development between Interstate 49 (I-49) and the core resources effectively screens the resources and inhibits public recognition of their presence. These developed areas — mainly highway commercial zones — have generated traffic congestion and many commercial business signs, especially on those routes leading to the bridges over Cane River Lake. Heavy traffic affects scenic quality and threatens visitor safety.

Several implied economic threats could have detrimental effects on the study area. Possible situations include the loss of funding for the continued preservation and development efforts locally; liability issues associated with developing tourism in the area where potential hazards are part of the resource; saturation of the tourist market by similar or competing developments nearby (i.e., Lafayette, Louisiana; Natchez, Mississippi); and the general economic situation of the state and nation, which could have serious implications for a single-focus marketplace such as the Cane River area (which depends on tourism) through fluctuation in disposable income, labor force, and oil and gasoline prices.

In the Natchitoches Historic District, a number of structures, mainly commercial, are vacant and deteriorating, resulting in the loss of some of these structures and threatening others. Many structures in the study area, both publicly owned (state and city) and privately owned (individuals and organizations), are facing deterioration because of inadequate funding to carry out necessary maintenance. Heat, humidity, and the lack of adequate annual maintenance might result in the loss of some of these structures. For the most part, the privately owned structures are adequately maintained, but individual owners often lack sufficient knowledge of the technical preservation methods necessary to maintain the architectural integrity of residences or businesses. Some also lack the funds to hire technical preservation specialists for consultation on their preservation efforts. This could lead to the individual structures, particularly the outbuildings, inadvertently losing much of their historical integrity.

The present road system along the Cane River is deteriorating in places, and additional traffic could create safety problems. In particular, if large tour bus traffic increases, this could cause damage to plantation grounds and create problems on the two-lane roads along the river.

STATUS OF PLANS IN OTHER AGENCIES

The state of Louisiana proposes to improve access and visitor facilities at Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Commemorative Area, and to construct a visitor center at Los Adaes State Commemorative Area, as well as a partial excavation of the site for exhibit purposes. The exact schedule for accomplishment of these plans is in doubt because of the financial problems faced by the state government.

The local community is planning to convert the Natchitoches Parish Court House into a visitor center. In addition, a theater is being constructed that will be used for interpretive purposes. Both facilities would provide visitor orientation.

THE STUDY AREA

CANE RIVER CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Today's system of plantations, fields, river, and forest in the Cane River area represents the culmination of many centuries of manipulation by people of different cultural backgrounds, from prehistoric inhabitants to today's living communities. This evolution has resulted in a unique cultural landscape in which one can read the cultural history of the area. This mixture of natural and cultural features has remained relatively intact into the 20th century.

LOCATION, ACCESS, AND TRANSPORTATION

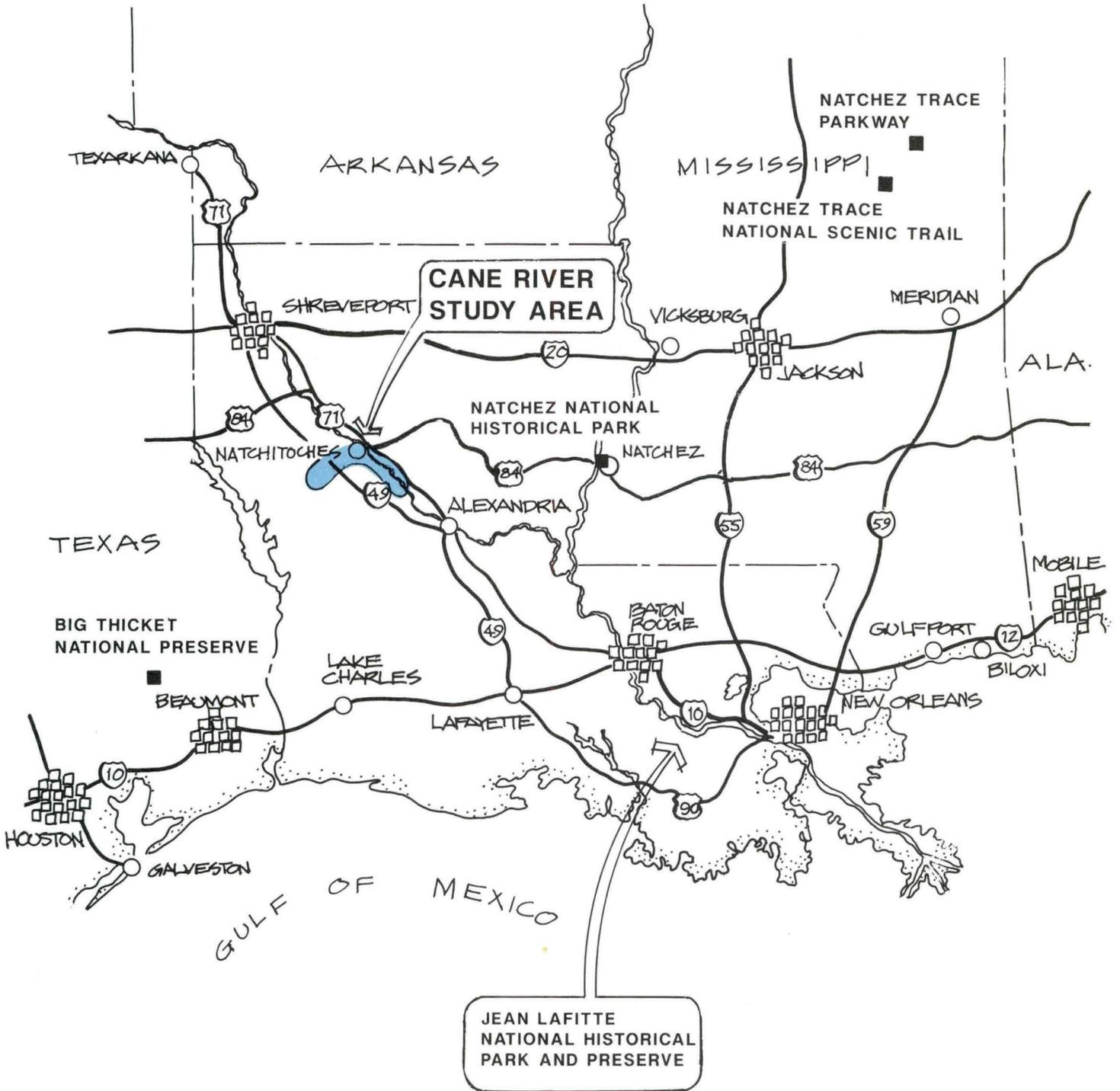
Natchitoches Parish is in northwest Louisiana approximately 120 miles northwest of Baton Rouge and 50 miles southeast of Shreveport (see Region map). The largest city, Natchitoches, is in the approximate center of the parish.

The Kisatchie Ranger District of the Kisatchie National Forest dominates the southern portion of the parish. Both the 17-mile Longleaf Trail Scenic Byway and the Kisatchie Hills Wilderness lie within this national forest unit. The majority of the Winn District is in the adjacent parish to the east, but a small portion, along with the 19-mile Saline Bayou National Scenic River, are in the northeastern portion of Natchitoches Parish.

Numerous streams, creeks, and bayous intersect the parish, but the Red River, flowing through the heart of the parish, is the major drainage and crosses the parish from northwest to southeast. Cane River Lake, a 39-mile-long old Red River channel, lies just to the west of the present Red River channel and merges with the Red River near the southeast corner of the parish.

Natchitoches Parish is well served by an extensive system of county, state, and federal highways. Local roads provide access throughout the parish. U.S. Highways 71 and 84 and State Route 1 are the main thoroughfares for traffic passing through the parish. Several other state routes also serve the parish. An interchange between State Route 6 and I-49 is located about 4 miles from the center of the city of Natchitoches. I-49 runs northwest to southeast through the parish. It connects I-10 and I-20, which are primary freeways traversing the state from east to west. According to the Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce, the city of Natchitoches is within a day's drive of several major cities: New Orleans, 241 miles; Memphis, 275 miles; Atlanta, 600 miles; Dallas, 263 miles; Houston, 232 miles; and Jackson, Mississippi, 217 miles. The distance is computed between business districts.

One airport serves the parish. Three railroads, two bus lines, and a number of trucking firms provide freight and passenger service linking the parish with the rest of the country. The Red River, which forms the northeast boundary of the parish, is being developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to provide a navigable waterway north to Shreveport, Louisiana. It should be ready for watercraft by the early 1990s.



Not to Scale



Region

United States Department of the Interior • National Park Service
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NATURAL RESOURCES

Geology, Topography, and Soils

The study area consists of three major physiographic areas: the level to gently undulating floodplains, the level to steep terrace uplands, and the level to gently sloping, low stream terraces. Elevations range from about 350 feet above sea level on the terrace uplands to about 80 feet in the southeastern part of the parish near the confluence of Cane River Lake and Red River.

The soils of the floodplains range from loamy to clayey and from well drained to very poorly drained. The loamy soils are on higher, natural levees of rivers and bayous. These soils are fertile and have few limitations for crops. Some of the clayey soils are flooded by runoff and stream overflow. The clayey soils, which are in the lower areas, are limited by wetness.

The terrace uplands make up more than two-fifths of the study area. The soils on the uplands range from sandy to clayey. Most of the acreage is woodland and is generally low in natural fertility. The low stream terraces make up the remainder of the study area and are in narrow bands that parallel the floodplains of major streams. The soils of these terraces are mainly sandy and loamy and low in natural fertility.

Floodplains and Wetlands

The floodplains of the study area are mainly in a wide band along the Red River and also in narrow bands along the major tributaries of the Red River. They make up nearly two-fifths of the parish. The width of the floodplain is less than 4 miles at its narrowest point just north of Natchitoches and more than 16 miles at its widest point. Most of the floodplain acreage is in cultivated crops such as soybean, cotton, and corn. Most of the area along Cane River Lake lies within the 100- or 500-year floodplain.

Approximately 7% of study area lands have been identified as wetlands. The National Wetlands Inventory of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicates palustrine wetlands (dominated by trees and shrubs) of both permanent and seasonal flooded areas are the type of wetlands that predominate the study area. Riverine (river channel) and lacustrine (dammed river channel lacking trees or shrubs) wetland areas exist, but to a much lesser extent.

The area along Cane River Lake primarily consists of channelized, riverine wetlands of permanently flooded open water. The minor portion of Cane River Lake, north of the city of Natchitoches, is primarily channelized, lacustrine wetlands of diked, permanently flooded open water. Small isolated patches of palustrine, seasonally flooded broad-leaved deciduous wooded wetlands do exist within the 300-meter corridor adjacent to the river.

Prime and Unique Farmlands

Approximately 45% of the study area is considered good quality agricultural lands for crops such as cotton and soybeans.

Vegetation

Coniferous and deciduous forest dominate approximately 58% of the study area. Coniferous forests are characterized by loblolly-shortleaf pine, and deciduous woodlands typically consist of upland and bottomland hardwoods. Agricultural cropland, pasture, and orchards comprise approximately 28% of study area lands. Urban, barren, water, and wetlands make up the remainder of study area lands.

Along Cane River the vegetation is primarily bottomland hardwoods, pasture plants, and agricultural crops. Bottomland hardwoods typically consist of cypress, sycamore, pecan, and ash. Agricultural crops are soybean, cotton, corn, and wheat. Pasture plants are Bermuda grass, fescue, and white clover.

Wildlife

The study area has a large and varied population of wildlife. Habitats include open agricultural land, upland pine forest, and bottomland hardwood forests, each supporting populations of game and nongame wildlife. Red River is a primary migration route for waterfowl and provides resting areas in spring and fall. Temporarily flooded fields also provide food and resting areas for large concentrations of migrating waterfowl.

Areas of cropland and pasture provide food and cover for mourning dove, bobwhite quail, common snipe, American woodcock, killdeer, cottontail and swamp rabbits, red fox, coyote, and other nongame animals. The upland pine forests provide good habitat for bobwhite quail, wild turkey, coyote, opossums, cottontail rabbit, and white-tailed deer. Most of the bottomland hardwood forests in the study area have been cleared for use as cropland. The remaining areas of bottomland hardwoods provide habitat for white-tailed deer, gray and fox squirrel, swamp rabbit, raccoon, bobcat, coyote, wild turkey, and many species of birds, reptiles, and amphibians.

The many lakes, ponds, bayous, and rivers of the parish support small to large populations of fish. Major species include largemouth bass, white bass, yellow bass, striped bass, white and black crappie, sunfish, catfish, bowfin, gar, carp, shad, and pickerel.

Threatened and Endangered Species

In Natchitoches Parish, the red-cockaded woodpecker is listed as a federally and state endangered species. Although probably extinct in Louisiana, the red wolf is listed as federally endangered.

The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program has compiled a list of plants and animals that are rare within the state. Four species of rare animals and 36 rare plant species have been identified within the parish (see appendix A).

Natural communities of hillside bog, cypress-tupelo swamp, riparian forest, wooded seep, cave, hardwood slope forest, mixed hardwood-loblolly forest, pine savannah, upland longleaf pine forest, sandy woodland, and sandstone glade/barrens have also been identified by the Louisiana Natural Heritage Program as rare within the parish.

Climate and Air Quality

Annual precipitation for the study area is approximately 50 inches, and about one-half of that falls in April through September. Measurable snowfall is rare in the area. In winter the average temperature is 51°F, and the average daily minimum temperature is 39°F, with the lowest record of 3°F. The highest temperature recorded was 108°F, but the summer average temperature is 82°F. The sun shines approximately 70% of the time in summer and 50% in winter. Average relative humidity in mid-afternoon is about 60%, but higher at night with an average at dawn about 90%.

Air quality in the study area is considered some of the best in the state. The state of Louisiana conducts no air quality monitoring in the study area because of low population and lack of industry. Air quality in the study area meets the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for criteria pollutants.

Water Resources and Water Quality

The largest source of surface water in the parish is the Red River, which drains approximately 65,000 square miles upstream from the parish. The Red River transports considerable suspended material; thus, the chemical character of the water varies considerably during the year.

Both surface and ground water in the study area is considered hard because of the high amount of dissolved calcium carbonate. Water quality monitoring was conducted sporadically in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, but no recent monitoring data are available.

Potential Historic and Scenic River Designation

The state of Louisiana has selection and qualification guidelines for wild and scenic rivers, but not historic and scenic rivers. However, the state is developing management and qualification guidelines for the historic and scenic rivers designation. Cane River Lake is historically significant and could be considered a good candidate for this designation.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Historical Background

Louisiana Settlement. René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle in 1682, claimed Louisiana for France. Near the end of the 17th century, King Louis XIV considered another venture in the New World. In 1698 he commissioned Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, and Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville II, to implement La Salle's original colonization plan for Louisiana.

Iberville readied an expedition force and departed from Brest, France, on October 24, 1698. The expedition reached the vicinity of Dauphin Island on the Gulf of Mexico on January 31, 1699. Eventually it settled near Biloxi, Mississippi, and later New Orleans, Louisiana. Iberville resolved to erect a number of forts and trading posts along the Mississippi and its tributaries.

In order to carry out this decision the next year, Bienville led an exploration of the Red River to open trade with local tribes. Accompanied by Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, Bienville's group reached the vicinity of Natchitoches and established friendly contacts with the Caddo tribes. In 1702 Iberville returned to France to obtain more settlers, supplies, and military equipment for the colony.

Settlement of Natchitoches. The disappointing progress of the colony convinced King XIV to extricate himself from an unprofitable venture, an action accomplished by transferring Louisiana to the rich merchant Antoine Crozat, Marquis de Chatel.

On September 14, 1712, the king officially granted Crozat exclusive trading rights and governing rights in Louisiana for 15 years. Under terms of the royal charter, the French government accepted part of the colonial expenditures for nine years. Crozat planned to more fully exploit the agricultural and commercial potential of the colony. In 1713, Crozat sent agents to revitalize trade with the Indians and to more efficiently administer colonial affairs. Among the agents dispatched was the new governor, Antoine de la Mothe, Cadillac. Cadillac in 1714 requested that St. Denis, a leader of the earlier French exploration to the Red River valley, return to that area for the purpose of establishing a French settlement. St. Denis chose the site that became the city of Natchitoches to construct Fort St. Jean Baptiste. Thus began the oldest permanent settlement in the present state of Louisiana (New Orleans was established in 1718). For many years this post served as an important strategic and trade center on the Red River. St. Denis was well suited for this task as he had both courage and tact and was well acquainted with the ways of the Indian frontier. During his tenure, St. Denis developed into a key figure in colonial affairs.

French Land Use Regulations. Cadillac's administration succeeded in attracting new settlers to the colony, which resulted in the need to develop a well-defined land grant system. The king in 1716 adopted a series of colonial land regulations, which stipulated that a land grant had to be cleared within two years or else revert back to the crown. In addition, the land was to be two-thirds cleared before the original grantee could sell it.

These land concessions were categorized as being either general or special. A general concession designated any portion of the vacant lands for development while a special

concession provided fixed boundaries for land grants. Early grantees received between 50 and 100 arpents (approximately 190 feet to the arpent) facing Red River. The decree of 1716 ordered unimproved land divided into sections of from two to four arpents each in front and extending back from the river a distance of 40 arpents. This system allowed each landholder to have some of the good natural levee land along with backswamp.

The river provided the focal point for settlement as it served as a transportation route upon which commerce and communication reached all parts of the colony. The presence of natural levees along the river led to the adoption of a linear settlement pattern, possibly based on European models, wherein the main structures of the plantations were found nearest the river, while the rear portions of the grants contained fields followed by swamps or woods. At river bends this type of settlement pattern led to the formation of pie-shaped land holdings rather than the usual rectangular sections. These land patterns can still be seen in the Cane River area.

A Frontier Economy. French Louisiana's commercial activities centered around the Indian trade. Because of the proximity to Spanish Texas and the Indian nations, Natchitoches was ideally suited to a frontier market economy. Because a giant logjam called the Great Raft blocked Red River navigation above the settlement, Natchitoches was the northern terminus for traffic to and from downriver ports. In addition, the city's location near the Spanish Camino Real, a major east-west overland route, further enhanced its growth as a trade center.

Spanish Reaction. The French expansion in the Red River valley caused concern among Spanish authorities in east Texas, and in 1717, they countered the French settlement with one of their own: the mission post of Los Adaes. Located 14 miles southwest of Natchitoches, this outpost eventually became the capital of Spanish Texas. Proximity, necessity, and mutual profit resulted in a lively contraband trade relationship between those two communities, despite the opposing mercantile policies of both governments. The Spanish needed tobacco, medicine, liquor, firearms, salt, and other goods obtained through the Red River trade, while the French provided a ready market for Spanish silver and cattle.

France Loses Louisiana. The Seven Years' War, known in America as the French and Indian War, concluded in 1763 with the expulsion of France from North America. In 1762 during the course of the war, Spain was induced to enter on the side of France. The price for Spanish participation was the cession to Spain of Louisiana lands on the west bank of the Mississippi, including Natchitoches and those lands on the east bank below Bayou Manchac. This agreement was formalized by the Treaty of Fontainebleau in 1762. The Treaty of Paris in 1763 further clarified the military and diplomatic results of the war.

Spanish Louisiana. The formal transfer of the colony from France to Spain did not occur until January 1767, and during this period resentment grew among the French settlers concerning Spanish administration of Louisiana. This displeasure resulted in a revolt against Spanish rule and the expulsion of the Spanish governor on November 1, 1768. For the next 10 months, the colony pursued an independent course free from any European control. The period of rebellious self-rule abruptly ended in July 1769, with the arrival at the mouth of the Mississippi of a Spanish fleet carrying Gen. Alejandro O'Reilly and an army of more than 2,000 soldiers. The rebellion quickly collapsed before this show of

Spanish strength. This time Spanish authorities imposed Spanish law and government on the former French colony.

French fears of Spanish domination soon proved unfounded. The new regime caused little visible change in daily life. At Natchitoches, the Spanish retained the services of the French commandant, Anthanase De Mezieres, son-in-law of St. Denis and brother-in-law of the Duc d'Orleans. An able administrator and an expert in Indian affairs, De Mezieres played an important role in the development of the Louisiana-Texas border region during the following decade. De Mezieres's Indian expertise was especially valuable as Spain had the difficult task of bringing the Louisiana tribes under their influence without starting a protracted and debilitating conflict.

In order to attract Indian commerce, De Mezieres persuaded the government to abandon the system of Indian control through missionary work and adopt the French method of trade and presents. By doing so, he succeeded in maintaining relative stability in the Red River valley throughout the period of Spanish dominion.

Commercial agriculture based on tobacco and indigo production replaced earlier frontier economy, although animal skins and products remained a staple of the Natchitoches economy. During this time, farmers adopted the plantation system and formed large agricultural units worked by slave labor. By 1776, Natchitoches Parish had a slave population of nearly 4,000.

The United States Purchases Louisiana. The king of Spain in the secret Treaty of San Ildefonso in 1800 ceded Louisiana back to France, an action reconfirmed in 1801 in the Treaty of Madrid. Actual transfer of Louisiana from Spain to France was delayed until November 1803. In the light of these developments, U.S. President Thomas Jefferson instructed his minister to France, Robert R. Livingston, to negotiate with French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte for the purchase of Louisiana. This resulted in the Louisiana Purchase and France turning over Louisiana territory to the United States in December 1803.

President Jefferson dispatched two exploration parties under Zebulon Pike and Thomas Freeman, respectively, to reconnoiter the Red River. Both groups were particularly interested in the area between Natchitoches and the Sabine River, which had been a disputed area between the French and Spanish. The border question was raised again with the U.S. purchase of Louisiana. In 1806, American forces established themselves east of Arroyo Hondo (a small stream just west of Natchitoches), with Spain forces on the west bank of the Sabine River. This created a "neutral strip," which became a haven for outlaws, bandits, fugitive slaves, and filibusters gathering for the invasion of Texas. In 1821 a series of treaties resulted in the boundary between the two countries being fixed at the Sabine River. Soon the U.S. government established several new forts on the Louisiana frontier. Lt. Col. Zachary Taylor commanded the Seventh Infantry to construct Fort Seldon, which was occupied for four months between 1821 and 1822 until a more strategic site was selected. The new site was 14 miles to the southwest and named Fort Jesup. Fort Jesup remained a significant American frontier post until the Mexican War.

Plantation Society. After the area became part of the United States, plantation society, including the institution of slavery, flourished along the Red River for a number of

reasons. In 1810 cotton was introduced into the Red River, but prosperity came to the area with the twin technological developments of the steamboat and the cotton gin.

A series of events resulted in the decline of Natchitoches, including the removal of the log raft above the city by Henry Shreve and the subsequent establishment of Shreveport, which eventually superseded Natchitoches as a major port and trade center; the Red River's gradual abandonment of the channel, which ran by the city and plantations in Natchitoches Parish; the westward expansion of the United States; and the American Civil War and its consequences.

Control of Shreveport and the cotton supplies of the Red River valley were the primary motivations for the Red River campaign, one of Louisiana's most famous Civil War engagements. The campaign began in the spring of 1864 with a military force under Union Gen. Nathaniel Banks pushing Confederate forces under Gen. Richard Taylor slowly north along the Red River. A series of skirmishes and battles were fought, which included areas near Cloutierville and Magnolia Plantation. This fighting culminated with the battle at Pleasant Hill. The Union forces retreated and the Confederates remained in control of the area until the end of the Civil War.

Impact on Native Populations of European Settlement. During a century of dominion, the French and Spanish left a lasting imprint on Louisiana: they introduced Catholicism, developed land use patterns, and initiated an economic system that superseded the one developed by Native Americans. In order to develop the colonial economy, the white settlers required both territorial control and the cooperation of the Indian populations. The French distributed gifts through Indian traders and agents in order to court local tribes; the Spanish used mission outposts. And for both nations, a small display of military force did much to ensure the security of their New World investments. Eventually, the increasing pressure of European settlement and the European and American policies towards Indians resulted in the destruction of Indian lifeways and eventually their removal from the Cane River area.

Creole Culture. The term "Creole" is used to refer to a number of diverse cultural groups. The white Creoles of colonial Louisiana were born of French or Spanish parents before 1803. They were landed gentry who adopted and retained European mannerisms, and enjoyed a cultured and sophisticated lifestyle.

The Cane River Creoles of color emerged from a family of freed slaves, some of whom became wealthy from their plantations, developed their own unique culture, and enjoyed the respect and friendship of the dominant white Creole society. The social stratum occupied by Creoles of color was unique to Louisiana. In the context of racial mixing, Creole could refer to those of European-Indian bloodline.

Native American Cultures. The state park staff identified one Indian tribe as considering the resources in Los Adaes commemorative area significant. They stated that some members of the Caddo tribe from Oklahoma still may occasionally use a site in the commemorative area for traditional ceremonies. The study team was unsuccessful in contacting members of the Caddo tribe. If any further federal action is taken in the Cane River area, an ethnographic survey should be undertaken.

Historic Resources

Photographs of the resources evaluated, except for Los Adaes and Fort Jesup state commemorative areas, Kate Chopin House (Bayou Folk Museum), and Beau Fort Plantation, are grouped together at the end of this section. Site plans are also included for Natchitoches Historic District and Oakland and Magnolia plantations.

Natchitoches Historic District (National Historic Landmark). In 1690, French explorer Henri de Tonti arrived in the Indian village of Natchitoches. In 1714, three years before New Orleans was founded, another Frenchman, Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, ordered the first substantial dwellings to be built in Natchitoches. This established the first permanent settlement in what became the vast Louisiana Purchase Territory. As the settlement grew, active trade began with the Spanish. When Natchitoches became an outpost for the Spanish government in 1764, there was little concern for the colony's French Creoles. They had been trading with the Spanish since the founding of the city. This became part of the United States in 1803, and by this time, Creole planters were building more pretentious structures using traditional "bousillage" construction (a building technique that used wood frame, e.g., upright and angular posts, infilled with Spanish moss and mud). The city of Natchitoches continued as an important trading and navigation center on the Red River. In 1825 the Red River began changing course and continued to do so until 1849 when the old river channel was abandoned and Cane River Lake was formed. Steamboat traffic to the city was possible only during periods of high water.

The plan for the city was developed from property lines radiating from the river. In the late 1700s, these property lines became streets, and later were intersected by other streets forming rectangular blocks. The area retains the atmosphere of a rural town with well-kept lawns and homes. Pride of ownership in this area is evident, and in recent years restoration work has been undertaken by private individuals. The business and residential areas are clearly defined due to early zoning restrictions. Front Street, which stretches the length of the business district, is brick paved and overlooks Cane River Lake. The bank is terraced down to the river and landscaped with crepe myrtles and oaks. Most of the opposite bank, also landscaped, belongs to the city. The area in the old town section is low density. Old trees dot the landscape in the business district. Buildings that have gone up in recent years have been designed to be compatible with the surroundings. Only those streets that run east and west are straight. Other streets are narrow and crooked, giving the appearance of quaintness since most of the dwellings were built at angles to the street.

The historic district has a mixture of architecture from the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries. About 60 buildings and places of interest or historic note are located within the district.

Kate Chopin House (National Historic Landmark). This building was originally constructed in the early 1800s. Home of Alexis Cloutier, for whom Cloutierville was named, and later Kate Chopin, American author of Creole stories, it is an example of a raised Louisiana cottage illustrating French construction methods. The structure represents a typical house used in small rural communities by Creoles. The complex includes a restored blacksmith shop, a building that served as a doctor's office, and other relics of past life in the Cane River area.

Melrose Plantation – National Historic Landmark. Established in 1796 by a former slave who became a wealthy businesswoman, the plantation was developed by Creoles of color over several generations. A number of famous artists, including Clementine Hunter, and writers, including Francois Mignon, spent time at the plantation.

Today the buildings of Melrose Plantation include the big house, the African house behind it, the yucca house, the Ghana house, the writers' cabin, the weaving house, the bindery, and the barn. The African house, an unusual structure with an umbrella-like roof, and Ghana house contain features that are similar to structures in the Caribbean and Africa. Except for the writers' cabin, the weaving house, and the bindery, all the buildings are on their original sites. The three exceptions were moved to Melrose by Mrs. Cammie Garrett Henry, the last private owner. They are old buildings from the vicinity but not original to this plantation.

Los Adaes State Commemorative Area – National Historic Landmark. The Spanish founded this presidio in 1721 to check French expansion into east Texas. It played a part in maintaining the international balance of power between Spain and France. This presidio served as an administrative capitol for the province of Texas from 1751 to 1770 before being abandoned in 1773. Los Adaes, or Nuestra Senora del Pilar de los Adaes, is one of the few Spanish presidios in the borderlands that has not been affected by modern agricultural practices or urban expansion. The site of the main presidio and associated buildings is owned by the state; the mission site is located on private land and is currently used as pastureland. The presidio remains are located on a low ridge. The area of the site is an open field surrounded by pine forest. It has never been cultivated, and archeological remains are abundant and in place. Los Adaes provides opportunities to study, research, and interpret life at a Spanish colonial frontier settlement, including European-Indian interdependency.

Fort Jesup State Commemorative Area – National Historic Landmark. Fort Jesup was the most southwesterly military outpost in the United States from its establishment in 1822 until the Mexican War. In March 1845, Texas was offered admission to the Union and Gen. Zachary Taylor's "Army of Observation," stationed at Fort Jesup, was ordered to hold its troops ready to march into Texas. After Texas joined the Union, Taylor was ordered to move into the new state.

After the sale of the lots and buildings of Fort Jesup at the auctions of 1850, 1875, 1880, and 1885, the great stone and log garrison structures were torn down, removed, or gradually deteriorated. By 1929 only one building remained, the kitchen. The roof and floor were nearly all gone, and the crumbling foundation threatened the collapse of the entire structure. Local interest in the history of Fort Jesup provided funds for the restoration of this building. In replacing the roof, hand-riven cypress boards were used and the original handwrought hinges and nails reused. The old rock chimney was rebuilt, decaying members were replaced with hewn logs, and sills were replaced where needed. A new floor of rough oak boards was laid and the stone foundation was also replaced. The extent of the park around this structure was 3 acres.

In 1957, Fort Jesup State Monument was established, consisting of 20.5 acres. The original restored building was refurnished with period reproductions and authentic pots, pans, and utensils. One of the officers' quarters has been reconstructed for use as a visitor

center and park administrative office, with exhibits designed to tell the story of the fort. The area has also undergone extensive landscaping.

Oakland Plantation. The plantation house of Jean Pierre Emmanuel Prud'homme was most likely constructed by slaves beginning in 1821. It has been occupied by seven generations of the Prud'homme family. Many of the original outbuildings for this plantation are intact. Many of the surviving structures including the French colonial main house are examples of bousillage construction. Also important is the landscape, which contains an 1835 bottle garden, a formal entranceway, and intact agricultural fields.

The plantation setting is open and flat, and the only change in elevation occurs at the riverbanks, where there is a drop of a few feet. The only intrusion in the area is a small metal truss bridge; however, this is not a major feature in the landscape.

The main house is set at the head of a short alley of live oaks behind a small formal garden. The parterres are outlined in various kinds of bottles — crock bottles from Scotland, square bitters bottles, round bottom beer bottles from Ireland, torpedo-shaped bottles from England, and wine bottles from France. The main house is a large hip roof, raised cottage, with surrounding galleries and 28 chamfered posts. The three dormers on the front are original. Most rooms have double French doors. The interior walls are paneled with random-width boards. Only one of the original mantels remains — a comparatively plain Greek Revival wooden mantel in one of the bedrooms. The finer marble mantels cracked and were replaced with plain wooden mantels in 1915. Most of the transom doors and floorboards are original.

The plantation includes several outbuildings. The old store — a frame, gable-fronted building — dates from the Civil War era. Behind the store is the carriage house, an old but nondescript frame building, which was converted into a machine shop in 1960. There are two frame hip roof pigeoniers at opposite ends of the access lane and a small log carpenter's shop with half dovetail joints at the corners. Behind the carpenter's shop is an old frame barn that was once a smokehouse; the smoked and charred beams remain. The overseer's house is a raised cottage that has been re-sided. The largest residence other than the plantation house is the doctor's house, a five-bay frame cottage with a pitched roof. Though much reworked, it still contributes to the overall appearance of the plantation.

Magnolia Plantation. The main plantation house of Ambrose LeComte was most likely constructed by slaves in the 1830s. The large plantation house was burned in 1864 by the army of Union General Banks as they retreated to Alexandria after the battles of Mansfield and Pleasant Hill. Construction of the plantation house was completed in 1899 in an amalgam of Greek Revival and Italianate.

Magnolia Plantation is set along Cane River Lake amid 10 acres of open flat farmland. The big house is surrounded by several 150-year-old live oaks and magnolia trees. The house itself is approached by means of a gravel driveway set on axis with the central front door.

Although the present plantation house dates from 1899, it partially follows the plan of the house that previously occupied the site. The raised plantation house has one principal

floor, under a large pitched roof garret. The five-bay plan has a central hall and double parlors with chimneys set between them. There is also a front gallery and a rear gallery that encompasses not only the house but also a rear wing. The house, traditional in form and plan, is large and plain with square post galleries, transom panel doors, and simple Renaissance Revival mantels. The upstairs walls are entirely sheathed in narrow gauge wainscotting with plain mantels. All doors have four panels and windows are sash mounted. The 2½-story structure contains 27 rooms and an extensive collection of Southern Empire and Louisiana furniture.

The plantation includes a number of important outbuilding and dependencies, such as an overseer's house, slave quarters cabins, a plantation store, a corn crib, a blacksmith shop, a pigeonier, and a cotton press-gin building. The cotton press-gin building contains a rare cotton press and two types of gins. These remnants of a working plantation are invaluable in understanding southern antebellum agricultural practices. The unusually large overseer's house is a hip-roof, raised Acadian cottage, which is almost completely surrounded by square post galleries. This structure served as the family residence after the Civil War to the reconstruction of the large plantation house. Modifications to the overseer's house include the tin roof and the interior, which is much reworked. The transom, doors, windows, and shutters remain.

Of the original slave dwellings, eight remain in a double row in the southeast portion of the plantation. These are brick, two-room, galleried houses with central chimneys and gable parapets — unusually high quality construction for slave cabins. Each fireplace has an iron lintel. There has been some deterioration, including the loss of several parapets, chimney tops, windows, and doors. In addition, some gallery roofs have collapsed. The cotton press dates back to ca. 1830 and is one of about five or six comparable examples in the South. This building also contains 19th century ginning equipment. In addition, the landscape of fields and woodlands surrounding the plantation are intact.

Badin-Roque House. The Badin-Roque House is set on flat farmland adjacent to Cane River Lake, approximately 10 miles south-southeast of the city of Natchitoches. It probably was constructed in the early 19th century as a *poteaux en terre* (posts in the ground) cottage with two front rooms of unequal size and two rear cabins with a small space between. This structure typified bousillage construction techniques. The house had a single central chimney and a dirt floor. In the 1830s a beaded tongue and groove ceiling was added as was much of the present board and batten fenestration. In about 1850 the present pitched roof and siding was added. In addition, the small rear gallery was enclosed and a 9 over 6 window installed. In the 20th century, the present tin roof covering was installed. The structure is stable, but some of the studs have tilted and the brick fireplaces have partially crumbled.

Cherokee Plantation. The Cherokee Plantation house dates from the 1820s and is named for the Cherokee roses in the front yard. It is typical of early Louisiana plantations and reflects the lifestyles of French planters. South and west of the house are three very old barns, one a "log crib." Across the road on the riverbank facing the big house is a slave cabin with the original fireplace. This has been restored for caretakers, but the style and flavor have been preserved.

Beau Fort Plantation. Jean Pierre Emmanuel Prud'homme began building this plantation in 1830 for his son, L. Narcisse Prud'homme. It has been modernized with a several additions including a patio, a breakfast room, a kitchen, and storage rooms.

Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Commemorative Area. Louis Juchereau de St. Denis supervised the construction of a small structure in 1713 known as Fort St. Jean Baptiste. This post served as the center for French trading activities as well as presenting a challenge to Spanish authority in the area and stands on a rough boundary between French Louisiana and Spanish Texas. The Spanish responded to this by establishing a military post and religious mission among the Adaes Indians approximately 15 miles west of the French fort. The fort was moved from an island in the Red River (now Cane River Lake) to the west bank. After 1803 the fort was abandoned and torn down. The Louisiana Office of State Parks in 1971-72 purchased the site of this post. Construction of a replica fort began in 1980 and was completed in 1981.



- Significant and Contributing Buildings
- Non-Contributing and Intrusive Buildings



Not to Scale

ON MICROFILM



Natchitoches Historic District

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Service League House - Natchitoches Historic District



Typical Front Porch - Natchitoches Historic District



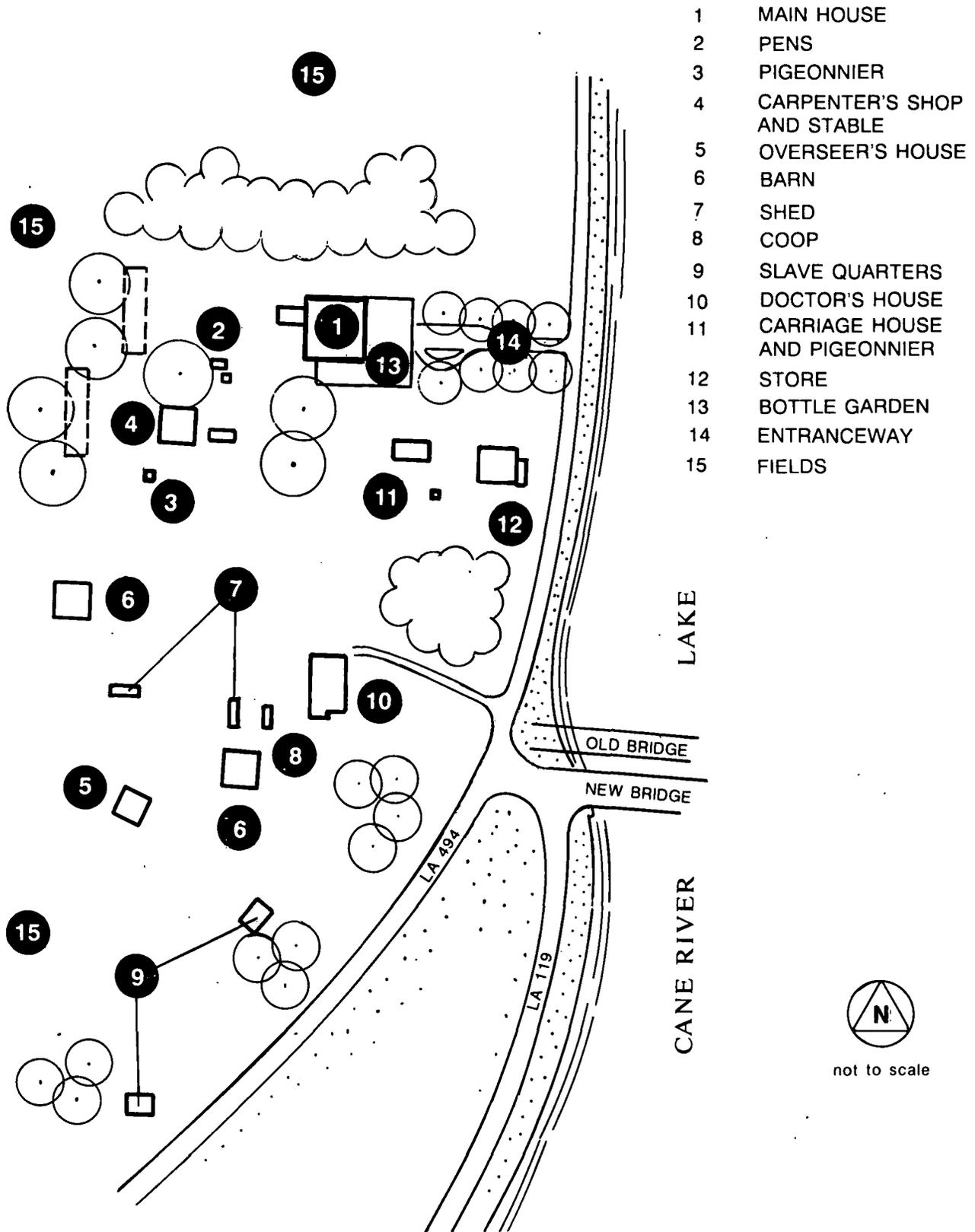
Main House - Melrose Plantation



The African House - Melrose Plantation



The African House (Interior) - Melrose Plantation



- 1 MAIN HOUSE
- 2 PENS
- 3 PIGEONNIER
- 4 CARPENTER'S SHOP AND STABLE
- 5 OVERSEER'S HOUSE
- 6 BARN
- 7 SHED
- 8 COOP
- 9 SLAVE QUARTERS
- 10 DOCTOR'S HOUSE
- 11 CARRIAGE HOUSE AND PIGEONNIER
- 12 STORE
- 13 BOTTLE GARDEN
- 14 ENTRANCEWAY
- 15 FIELDS



not to scale



Site Plan: Oakland Plantation

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**Publ.As 25001A
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Main House - Oakland Plantation



Landscape - Oakland Plantation



Pens - Oakland Plantation



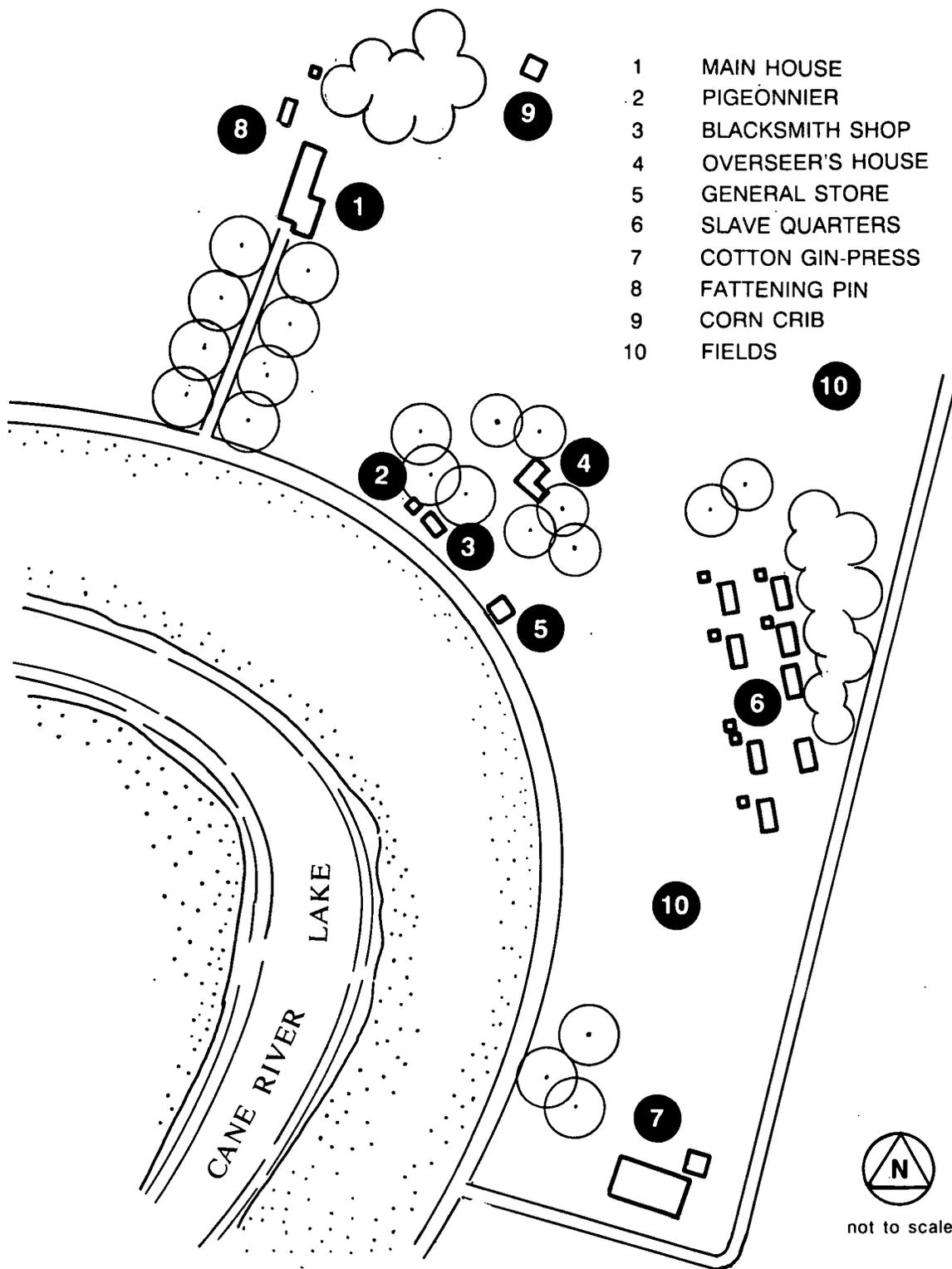
Pigeonnier and Stable - Oakland Plantation



Shop and Stable - Oakland Plantation



Overseer's House - Oakland Plantation



Site Plan: Magnolia Plantation

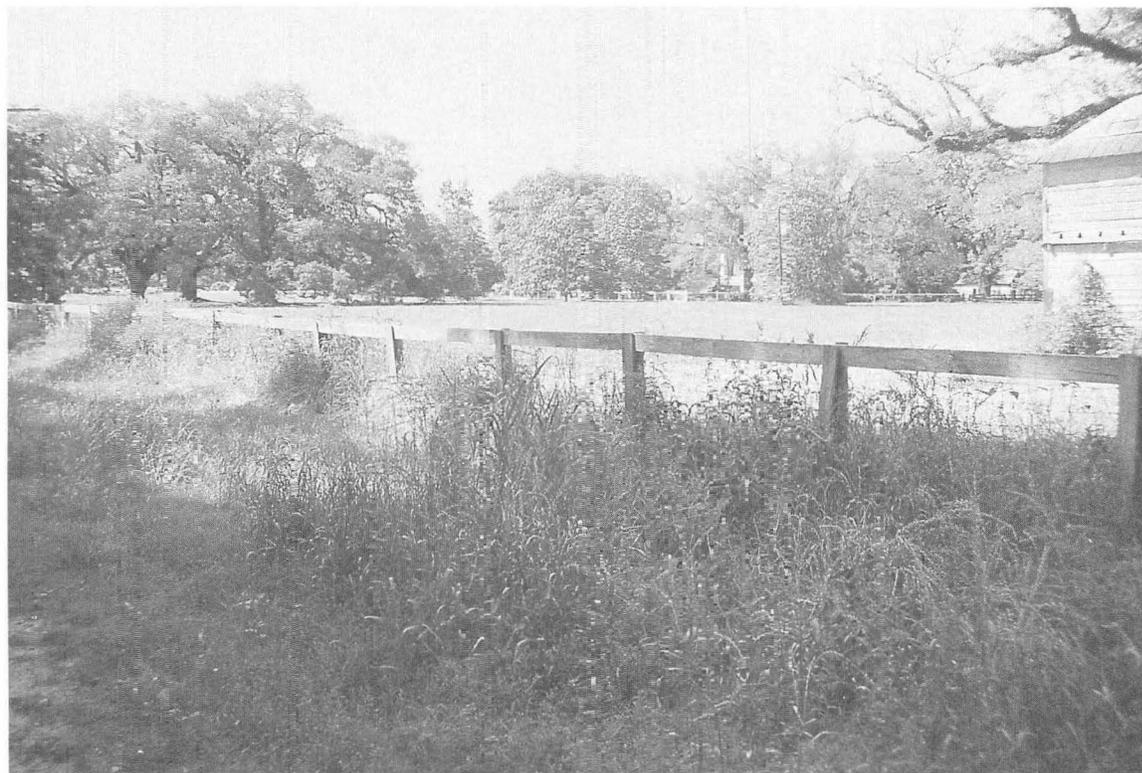
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Main House - Magnolia Plantation



Landscape - Magnolia Plantation



Slave Quarters - Magnolia Plantation



Overseer's House - Magnolia Plantation



Pigeonnier - Magnolia Plantation



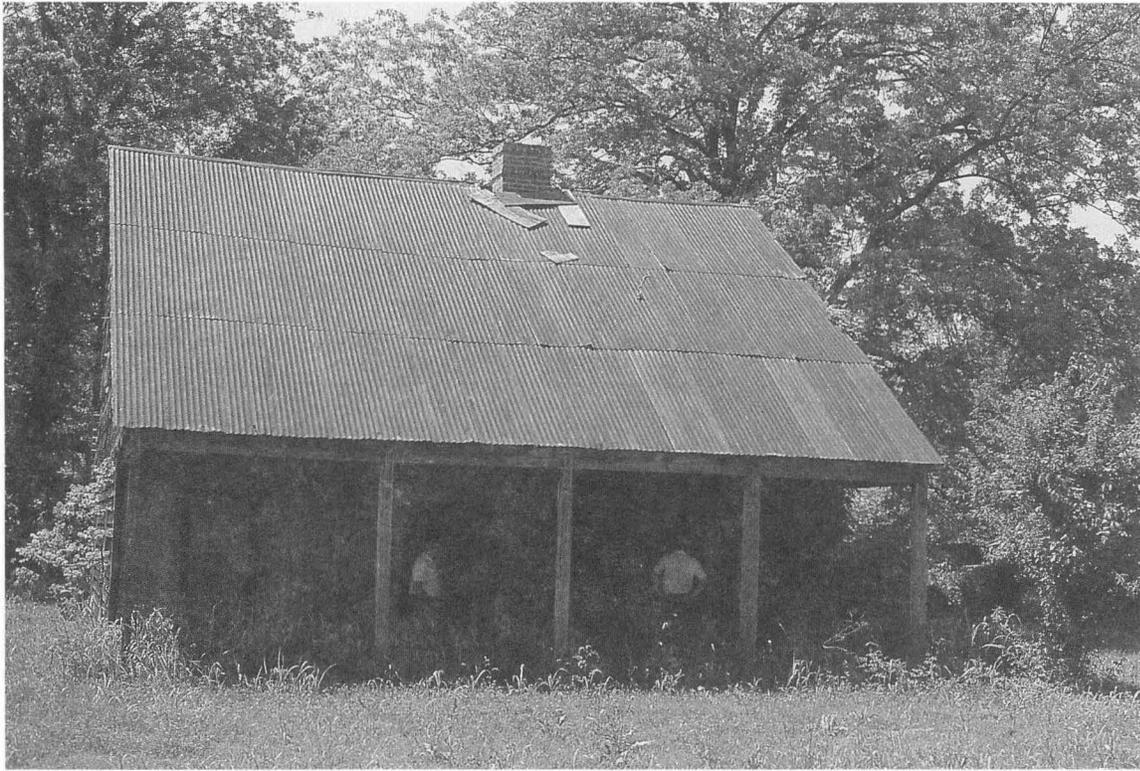
Blacksmith Shop - Magnolia Plantation



General Store - Magnolia Plantation



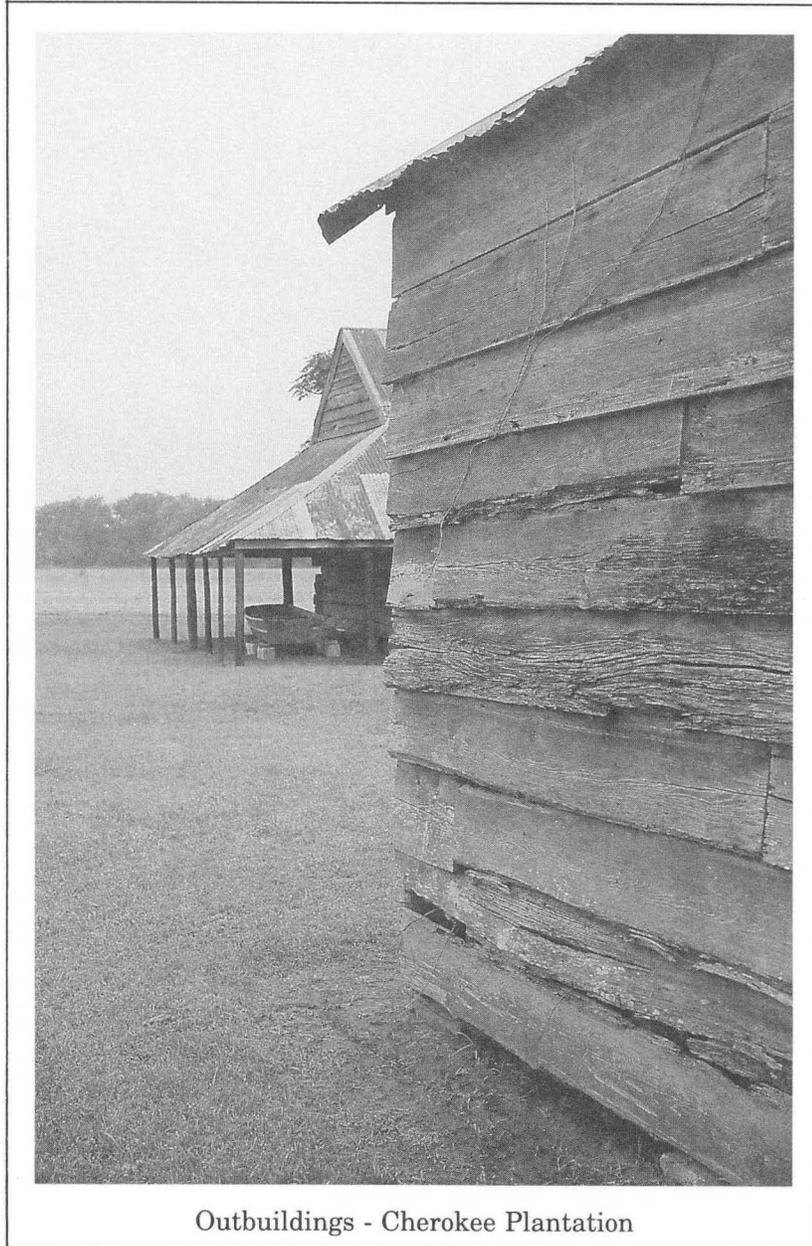
Cotton Gin-Press - Magnolia Plantation



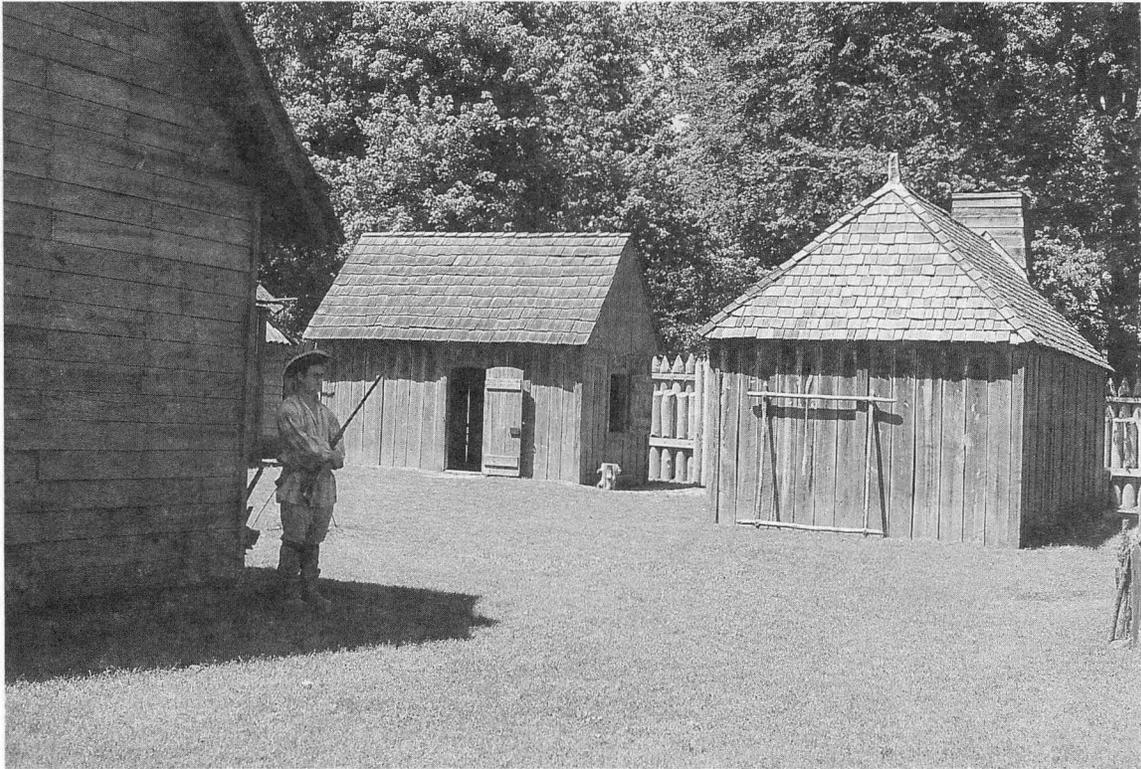
Badin-Roque House



Main House - Cherokee Plantation



Outbuildings - Cherokee Plantation



Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Commemorative Area

SOCIOECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Population and Economics

Natchitoches Parish is one of 64 parishes in Louisiana (in Louisiana, parishes are the equivalent of counties in other states). In 1988 the parish had a population of approximately 39,000 — a decline of 900 persons since 1986 (see table 1 in appendix B). The population in 1990 was 36,689. According to table 1, Natchitoches Parish had a population density that was significantly less than that for the state as a whole. Selected population characteristics are given in tables 2, 3, and 4 (see appendix B). The largest city in this rural parish is Natchitoches, which had a population of about 16,660 in 1988 and 16,609 in 1990. Populations of other towns within the parish are under 1,000. As shown in table 1, the 1984 per capita personal income for the parish was \$7,838 compared to \$10,741 for the state. In 1988 the per capita personal income of \$9,205 ranked the parish 49th in the state. This personal income was only 75% of the state average of \$12,296 and 56% of the national average of \$16,490. Total personal income for Natchitoches Parish in 1988 accounted for only 0.7% of the state total. Yet, this placed the parish 30th among the state's 64 parishes in total personal income. The parish's relatively high unemployment rate is indicative of a depressed local economy. .

During 1988 the largest economic sectors in the parish were government, services, and manufacturing (see table 5 in appendix B). Comparing 1984 earnings by economic sectors for the parish and the state shows that Natchitoches was considerably more dependent on government and agricultural sectors than the state was as a whole (see table 6 in appendix B). The chief industries in the city and parish now are education, food processing, wood and paper products, government, agriculture, and tourism (see table 7 in appendix B). Northwestern State University, with an enrollment of over 6,000 students, offers a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs in the Arts, Sciences, Social Sciences, and Business. The university is the educational and cultural center of the parish.

Existing Landownership and Use

Natchitoches Parish encompasses approximately 808,960 acres. Agriculture is a major land use. In 1985 approximately 69,000 acres were planted in crops, and another 100,000 acres were devoted to hay and pasture. Commercial woodland encompassed some 620,000 acres. Most land is privately owned, but some land is owned by the federal government. The majority of federal land is within the Kisatchie Ranger District of the Kisatchie National Forest in the southwest corner of the parish. Except for the Los Adaes, Fort St. Jean Baptiste, and Fort Jesup state commemorative areas, the other sites included in the Cane River study area are privately owned. The properties within the Natchitoches Historic District are used for a variety of commercial and residential purposes and/or tourist attractions. The remainder of the sites are used as private residences and/or tourist attractions. All sites are open for some public visitation, and most charge modest entrance fees.

Recreation, Visitor Use, and Visitor Services

Natchitoches Historic District has about 60 points of interest on its walking tour. In addition to these sights, a variety of other historic and recreational resources as well as additional points of interest are located in Natchitoches Parish. Walking tours of the historic district and an automobile tour of the parish and the Cane River area are promoted by the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Commission. A variety of outdoor recreational opportunities are available on Kisatchie National Forest lands. In 1990 recreational use of Kisatchie Ranger District totaled 44,800 recreation visitor days (see table 8 in appendix B).

Visitor use data for most individual attractions within the parish are either not recorded or not available. Some data was obtained for three sites within the parish. The first two are designated study sites. One plantation that did keep records of visitation, reports an average of over 7,100 visitors per year during 1983-1990. Visitation at this particular site was nearly 10,000 in 1990. Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Commemorative Area reported 9,391 visitors for the 1989-90 season and 8,889 visitors for the 1990-91 season. The Natchitoches National Fish Hatchery and Aquarium reported 29,501 visitors in 1987, 30,980 in 1988, 25,541 in 1989, and 23,765 in 1990.

The Natchitoches Chamber of Commerce keeps records of visitors to their office and the area in general (see table 9 in appendix B). In 1990, 14,241 out of over 39,000 visitors recorded by the local Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Commission signed the register at the chamber office. They represented all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Visitors from Louisiana and Texas (split about equally between the two states) made up over one-half of those who recorded their visit. Over 36 foreign counties were also represented by at least one visitor to the chamber office. The total number of visitors to the parish is not known, but local chamber officials estimate that as many as 250,000 visitors come to the parish to enjoy the numerous attractions and festivals.

A usable estimation of projected visitation to all the locations within the study area is not possible because of a lack of reliable data. Considering the data obtained from the Chamber of Commerce for use in table 6 and projecting future visitation to the county based on this information results in the graph following table 9 in appendix B. The trend for Natchitoches is for tourist visitation to continue to increase. This forecast predicts that as many as 70,000 documented visitors to the parish may be expected by the year 2000. These estimates may undercount the actual number of tourists to the parish. The Natchitoches Parish Tourism Commission estimates that many thousand of visitors to the parish are not counted in the data presented here.

There has been a genuine effort on the part of the community to expand the tourism sector of the parish economy. In the last 10 years several businesses catering to tourists have opened up or expanded. There were six festivals scheduled for 1992. The 1992 Natchitoches Christmas Festival of Lights was the 66th time this annual event has been held. Attendance at this one-day event has been estimated in the past at between 125,000 and 150,000 people.

As mentioned earlier in this study, plans are also underway in the community to convert the Natchitoches Parish Court House into a visitor center and to develop a theater for interpretive purposes.

It is expected that a large percentage of visitors to the Chamber of Commerce and the parish in general visit one or more of the numerous historical or cultural sites within the parish. While this does not equal the visitation to the 11 locations within the study area, it does provide a frame of reference. In reality, however, visitation to the study area is essentially unknown. Although the data for a single site would establish a minimum level at 7,000 to 10,000 visits per year, this information is not sufficient to accurately predict future visitation to the study area.

The city of Natchitoches is the focal point for the tourism industry in the parish. Most necessary visitor services can be found here. The parish has 33 restaurants and five motels providing a total of 321 rooms. Bed-and-breakfast establishments also cater to the tourist trade. The usual complement of public services (for a city of its size) are available. A total of 24 physicians, 9 dentists, and an 84-bed hospital serve the populace. The city offers a four-screen theater, two golf courses, a number of city parks as well as the downtown historic district for visitors' amusement. Several shops and businesses provide gifts, craft items, and souvenirs for tourists. Outdoor recreation opportunities such as boating, fishing, hunting, and skiing are available on Cane River, Saline, Black, Clear Lake, Chaplins, and Sibley lakes.

RESOURCE CRITERIA AND EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

Various Creole structures, sites, and landscapes exist throughout Louisiana outside the study area that are representative of Creole culture. Those listed as national historic landmarks include Acadian House in St. Martinville, built of bousillage construction in 1765; George Washington Cable House in New Orleans, which served as home for this regional Creole writer; Homeplace Plantation House near Hahnville, which is an example of Creole construction; Madame John's Legacy in New Orleans, which is an example of a Creole style popular in urban areas; Shadows-on-the-Teche, which is a rather unusual French colonial plantation; Parlange Plantation House, which is another example of a Creole raised cottage; and Vieux Carre Historic District in New Orleans, which is the original city area. The main difference between these sites and those in the Cane River area is that many of these plantations are isolated examples and lack the original outbuildings. Also, many of the structures lack the historic setting, as many intrusive elements have encroached on the historic scene. Only a few other areas offering such a concentrated collection of Creole structures with a high degree of structural and setting integrity exist, as in the Cane River area.

In Louisiana, Vieux Carre Historic District (a national historic landmark) represents urban French colonial culture and has a high concentration of these structures, but does not contain the frontier and plantation elements present in the Cane River area. Outside the state of Louisiana, the only national historic landmark that is comparable is Sainte Genevieve Historic District in Missouri. The main structures left here are townhouses, but this area lacks the extensive plantations, outbuildings, and field systems found at Cane River.

The major significance of the Cane River area is the variety of features that represent various aspects of Creole culture and form a holistic approach to understanding this civilization. There exists urban townhouses, a commercial district, rural plantation complexes, and cultural landscapes consisting of fields, forests, and a river-lake in such close proximity and high degree of integrity that visitors would be provided with a unique opportunity to experience and understand Creole culture. The sheer number of resources help provide a context that is lacking in other areas.

CRITERIA

The criteria for significance, suitability, and feasibility are outlined in the NPS *Management Policies and Criteria for Parklands* brochure. To be eligible for favorable consideration as a unit of the national park system, an area must (1) possess nationally significant natural, cultural, or recreational resources; (2) must be a suitable and feasible addition to the system; and (3) require direct NPS management instead of alternative protection by other agencies or the private sector. These criteria are designed to ensure that the national park system includes only outstanding examples of the nation's natural, cultural, and recreational resources. They also recognize that inclusion in the national park system is not the only option for preserving the nation's outstanding resources.

SIGNIFICANCE

The National Register of Historic Places, established by law and maintained by the National Park Service, is a record of sites, structures, districts, or objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, and culture. National register properties can be publicly or privately owned and fall within three levels of significance — local, state, and national. NPS cultural resource management policy states that national significance for national register properties is only a recommendation. The only accepted national significance is for those properties that are designated as national historic landmarks. National historic landmarks are acknowledged as our nation's most important historic and cultural resources.

Specific criteria are prescribed for evaluating properties nominated for designation as national historic landmarks (see appendix C). Significance listings on the national register only reflect recommendations that appear on the nomination form. National historic landmarks, in contrast, are properties that have been found by the secretary of the interior to be nationally significant through a review process set forth in the national historic landmarks program regulations (36 CFR 65). Criteria used to determine eligibility for national historic landmark designation are almost identical to those outlined in the NPS *Management Policies* for use in judging national significance of cultural resources and evaluating proposals for additions to the national park system. For this special resource study, the procedures of the national historic landmarks program provide an appropriate method of documenting national significance.

The following sites and groups of sites adjacent to the Cane River are the resources considered to be most important to the commemoration and interpretation of the Creole culture or in understanding the history of the Creoles. All of the sites evaluated in this section, except one (Fort St. Jean Baptiste), are currently listed on the national register for national, state, or local significance; five are national historic landmarks. (See "The Study Area" section for more description of the historic resources.)

National Historic Landmarks

The five national historic landmarks in the study area are currently being managed and protected by organizations other than the National Park Service. If these nationally significant sites were found to meet feasibility and suitability criteria, they could potentially become units of the national park system.

Natchitoches Historic District. Natchitoches Historic District became a national historic landmark on April 16, 1984. It has multiple ownership (city, private individuals, etc.).

Kate Chopin House. The structure became a national historic landmark on April 19, 1993. It is owned by the Association of Natchitoches Women for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches. Today it is operated as a local museum (the Bayou Folk Museum) and contains mementos of life in the Cane River country.

Melrose Plantation (Yucca). The plantation complex became a national historic landmark on May 30, 1974. Melrose Plantation is currently owned by the Association of Natchitoches Women for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches. This is a major cultural and educational draw in the area.

Los Adaes State Commemorative Area. Los Adaes became a national historic landmark on June 23, 1986. The site is owned by the state of Louisiana.

Fort Jesup State Commemorative Area. Fort Jesup became a national historic landmark on July 4, 1961. The site is owned by the state of Louisiana.

Potentially Nationally Significant Sites

As part of the current study, the following sites were analyzed to determine whether they appeared to meet national historic landmark criteria for national significance. A national historic landmark theme study should be undertaken to determine if these sites actually meet national historic landmark criteria. Some of the sites have previously been evaluated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places; some have received no known evaluation other than by the current study team.

Oakland Plantation. The plantation, consisting of the main house, several outbuildings, and various landscape elements, is currently listed on the national register for local significance. However, the former state historic preservation officer for Louisiana, Leslie Tassin, commented in a letter dated June 18, 1991, to former Congressman Jerry Huckaby that, "In our opinion, Oakland is of national significance as a historic agricultural complex." The rest of the letter detailed specific reasons as to why the plantation should be considered of national significance. The reasons include the number, significance, and integrity of the remaining buildings. Mr. Tassin ended his letter by saying, "Anything you or your office could do to help preserve these important buildings would be a great service to the nation." Oakland is privately owned but open for public visitation with permission.

Oakland Plantation appears to meet the criteria for national significance. It is an outstanding example of a nearly intact southern plantation agricultural complex. Of the many thousands of complexes that once existed, only a handful of them survive today. These include, in Louisiana, the national historic landmark sites of the Acadian House in St. Martinville, Homeplace Plantation House near Hahnville, Shadows-on-the-Teche in New Iberia, and Parlange Plantation house in the vicinity of Mix. Oakland is distinguished among these surviving examples by its size. The average surviving plantation complex might have 6 to 10 buildings; Oakland has 22. In addition, over half of Oakland's surviving buildings are from the antebellum period (the remaining historic buildings date from the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s).

This plantation possesses exceptional value in illustrating French colonization and settlement, southern antebellum agriculture, the institution of slavery, and Creole culture. The proximity and number of historic buildings, the integrity of the buildings, garden, grounds, and fields, and the continuity of one family living here for seven generations combine to make this plantation complex a superlative resource in interpreting the above topics.

The French colonial style Oakland Plantation differs from others in Louisiana — e.g., Acadian House (1765, colonial period), Homeplace Plantation House (1787-1791, colonial period), Shadows-on-the-Teche (1831-1834, American period), and Parlange Plantation (ca. 1750, colonial period), in that they lack some of the detail of Creole plantation life. Oakland's features like the bottle garden, plantation support buildings, and extensive field systems are not all present in these other sites. Architecturally, this plantation differs from plantation homes such as Auburn in Natchez, Mississippi; Oak Valley Plantation in Vacherie, Louisiana; and Madewood Plantation house in Napoleonville, Louisiana, which have architectural characteristics of the Greek Revival style, a popular style among American plantation owners.

The fact that so many of the original plantation buildings remain and can be found on their original sites and in such close proximity provides an excellent opportunity for public use and enjoyment and for scientific study.

The landscape, which includes structures, fields, and other natural features, retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of the resource. This landscape is a significant element of the overall plantation complex.

Magnolia Plantation. The plantation, which burned during the Civil War, was reconstructed in an amalgam of Green Revival and Italianate styles. Portions of the Magnolia Plantation are currently listed on the national register for local significance. It remains the center of a working plantation devoted to raising cotton, soybeans, and cattle. Portions of this privately owned plantation are open for public visitation.

The plantation possesses exceptional value in illustrating the development of southern antebellum agriculture, the institution of slavery, and Creole culture. The condition of the plantation offers a unique opportunity for scientific study. A substantial amount of historic fabric exists and the historic configuration of plantation buildings remains. Little archeological or historical investigation has taken place here.

The Magnolia Plantation may meet the criteria for national significance in the context of Creole culture. The slave quarters and outbuildings (e.g., overseer's house, cotton gin-press building) are excellent examples of a plantation complex and offer a combination of structures rarely found intact. While the main house probably does not meet the criteria for national significance, it is important to the overall historic setting.

The cultural landscape, including the cotton fields, structures, and agricultural equipment, retain a high degree of integrity. This landscape is a significant element of the overall plantation complex.

Other Sites Important to the Creole Story

These sites represent important aspects of the Creole story either as individual or as a combined group of resources. However, the planning team found they did not appear to meet all of the criteria for national historic landmark status.

Badin-Roque House. The house is a relatively rare example of *poteaux en terre* cottage architecture. It illustrates a form of construction prevalent in the Mississippi Valley during the 18th and early 19th centuries, and provides an excellent opportunity to understand Creole frontier life. This particular structure is associated with the Isle Brevelle colony of Cane River Creoles of color. The house is owned and maintained by the St. Augustine Historical Society, a private nonprofit group. It is listed on the national register for national significance, but has not been designated as a national historic landmark. Badin-Roque House requires further research to determine its degree of integrity.

Cherokee Plantation. Begun in the 1830s, this plantation is typical of early Louisiana plantations and reflects the frontier lifestyle of French planters. The plantation is listed on the national register for state significance. The plantation house is privately owned and has been restored and refurnished with some period pieces. This plantation, with its fields and structures, is an important part of the cultural landscape. In addition, the main house of the plantation reflects the Creole lifestyles and construction techniques. However, most of the original outbuildings are gone.

Beau Fort Plantation. The plantation is listed on the national register for local significance. It is privately owned and open for public visitation. The main house exhibits typical Creole features. The field system remains intact; however, the plantation lacks most of its original outbuildings.

Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Commemorative Area. The fort was constructed in 1713. It was later moved from an island in the Red River (now Cane River Lake) to the west bank. After 1803 the fort was abandoned and torn down. The Louisiana Office of State Parks in 1971-72 purchased the site of this post. Construction of a replica fort began in 1980 and was completed in 1981. This reconstruction does not qualify for listing on the national register. The fort is an excellent resource for the interpretation of the French-Spanish colonial story, which resulted in the development of Creole culture. However, the fort does not meet NPS criteria for significance because it is a replica.

Based on the above information, the following resources meet or appear to meet the national historic criteria for national significance: Natchitoches Historic District, Melrose Plantation, Los Adaes State Commemorative Area, Fort Jesup State Commemorative Area, Kate Chopin House, Oakland Plantation, and Magnolia Plantation slave quarters and outbuildings.

SUITABILITY

An area that is nationally significant must also meet criteria for suitability to qualify as a potential addition to the national park system.

To be suitable for inclusion in the system, an area must represent a natural or cultural theme or type of recreational resource that is not already adequately represented in the national park system or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by another land-managing entity. Adequacy of representation is determined on a case-by-case basis by comparing the proposed addition to other units in the national park system,

considering differences or similarities in the character, quality, quantity, or combination of resources and opportunities for public enjoyment.

A national park system unit that is comparable to the study area is Natchez National Historical Park in Natchez, Mississippi. The structures there illustrate some of the finest Anglo-American construction techniques of their day (1840s to 1860s), and do not reflect Creole traditions. Also, the magnificent homes of Natchez do not have the number or diversity of outbuildings found in the Cane River area, nor do the fields and slave quarters exist there. Another NPS holding is the Kingsley Plantation located in the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve in Jacksonville, Florida. Even though this plantation contains a few outbuildings and most of the slave quarters, it remains in isolation away from the wide variety of antebellum homes found in the Cane River area.

One national park system unit in the area that interprets the regional cultures is Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. Cane River resources are complementary, but not duplicative of resources being interpreted and preserved by that park. Vieux Carre Historic District, which forms the French Quarter unit of Jean Lafitte, contains properties that are associated with Creole culture. However, the Cane River area contains properties that provide greater understanding of the French and Spanish colonial frontier conflict and Creole culture.

The seven resources evaluated for suitability are or can be classified — using the booklet entitled *History and Prehistory in the National Park System and the National Historic Landmarks Program* (NPS 1987) — under the following appropriate themes, subthemes, and facets.

- I. Cultural Developments: Indigenous American Populations
 - D. Ethnohistory of Indigenous American Populations
 - 6. Myth of the Vanishing Native

- II. European Colonial Exploration and Settlement
 - A. Spanish Exploration and Settlement
 - 2. Southwest
 - B. French Exploration and Settlement
 - 4. Gulf Coast

- V. Political and Military Affairs, 1783-1860
 - K. The Army and the Navy

- XI. Agriculture
 - B. Plantation Agriculture, 1607-1860

- XVI. Architecture
 - V. Historic District (Colonial through Green Revival)

- XIX. Literature
 - B. Fiction
 - 1. Novel

- XXX. American Ways of Life
 - A. Slavery and Plantation Life
 - E. Ethnic Communities (including Immigration)

Natchitoches Historic District

This area represents theme XVI, subtheme V. At the present time, there is no existing national park system unit representative of this theme. Natchitoches Historic District appears to meet the criteria for suitability.

Kate Chopin House

This property represents theme XIX, subtheme B, facet 1, which is represented in the national park system by Minute Man National Historical Park. The literature theme illustrated by the Kate Chopin House, which is that of women authors, is not represented in the national park system and appears to meet the criteria for suitability.

Melrose Plantation

This property represents theme XXX, subthemes A and E. Ethnic Communities (including Immigration). Currently, 12 existing national park system units are representative of this theme, including the following which represent the African-American Heritage: Booker T. Washington National Monument, Colonial National Historical Park, and Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site, all in Virginia; George Washington Carver National Monument in Missouri; Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site in Georgia; Tuskegee Institution National Historic Site in Alabama; and Boston African American National Historic Site in Massachusetts. Melrose Plantation's unique story of blacks as plantation owners and slaves is not represented in these existing units; therefore, this site appears to meet the criteria for suitability.

Los Adaes State Commemorative Area

This property represents theme II, subtheme A, facet 2. Five NPS units (Coronado National Memorial and Tumacacori National Monument, both in Arizona; El Morro and Pecos national monuments in New Mexico; and San Antonio Missions National Historical Park in Texas) represent that theme. Three of these units interpret Spanish exploration and settlement through mission activity. Two of these units are directly related to Spanish exploration. The military settlement illustrated by Los Adaes is not represented in the National Park Service and appears to meet the criteria for suitability.

Fort Jesup State Commemorative Area

This property represents theme V, subtheme K, which is represented in the national park system by Boston National Historical Park in Massachusetts, Castle Clinton National

Monument in New York, Fort Jefferson National Monument in Florida, Fort Pulaski National Monument in Georgia, Fort Sumter National Monument in South Carolina, and Gulf Islands National Seashore in Florida and Mississippi. These units appear to adequately represent this theme; therefore, Fort Jesup does not appear to meet the criteria for suitability.

Oakland Plantation

This property appears to fit best under theme XI, subtheme B, and theme XXX, subthemes A and E. A total of 12 national park system units (previously listed under Melrose Plantation) and one affiliated area (Green Springs Historic District in Virginia) represent this theme. However, these units either do not represent plantation systems or represent other than French colonial plantations. Also, Oakland is representative of the Creole culture, which is not found in existing national park system units. It appears that this property meets the criteria for suitability.

Magnolia Plantation Slave Quarters and Outbuildings

This property appears to fit best under theme XI, subtheme B, and theme XXX, subthemes A and E. This property has the same significance as Oakland Plantation and thus appears to meet the criteria for suitability.

FEASIBILITY

An area that is nationally significant and meets suitability criteria must also meet feasibility criteria to qualify as a potential addition to the national park system.

To be feasible as a new unit of the national park system, an area's natural systems and/or historic settings must be of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure long-term protection of the resources and to accommodate public use. It must have potential for efficient administration at a reasonable cost. Important feasibility factors include landownership, acquisition costs, access, threats to the resource, and staff or development requirements.

Natchitoches Historic District

The historic district is not feasible for inclusion in the national park system for the following reasons: existing zoning regulations provide adequate protection for historic structures; private owners have pride and sensitivity in their properties; it has a multiplicity of ownership; and NPS ownership of large portions of an active town is not desirable and would be exceedingly costly.

Kate Chopin House

The present public ownership of this property is cost-effective. NPS ownership would not prove as cost-effective as technical assistance from the national historic landmarks program.

Melrose Plantation

The present administration of the site is both cost-effective and has strong community support. NPS ownership would not prove as cost-effective, and it could result in the loss of local support for preserving the plantation. Because of these factors, the plantation is currently considered not feasible for inclusion in the national park system. However, despite the excellent efforts in preservation and interpretation, some problems exist (i.e., drainage), where additional funding is necessary to adequately protect the resource.

Los Adaes and Fort Jesup State Commemorative Areas

Neither Los Adaes nor Fort Jesup are currently feasible for inclusion in the system, as they are being adequately interpreted and protected for public enjoyment by the state of Louisiana. Federal ownership would not be as cost-effective as state ownership.

Oakland Plantation

Oakland Plantation appears to be feasible for inclusion in the national park system for the following reasons. The site has an adequate land base for resource protection. The plantation grounds are sufficient to allow visitor access without harming the cultural landscape's integrity. Since the buildings here are, for the most part small wooden structures and currently in use, preservation costs would be reasonable. Even though some structures are deteriorating, many have withstood the southern climate for 50 years or more. The cultural landscape has a high degree of integrity, which is expected to remain as no change is anticipated in the configuration of fields, gardens, and plantation open space. Maintaining these features could be done at minimal cost. This site is compact enough to be managed in a cost-effective manner. Acquisition costs should be within reasonable parameters because the property is owned by one family.

Magnolia Plantation Slave Quarters and Outbuildings

This property appears to be feasible for inclusion in the national park system for the following reasons. The land base is of sufficient size to afford resource protection. Acquisition costs should be within reasonable parameters because the property is owned by a nonprofit organization. Currently the state of Louisiana has granted funds for preservation work on the slave quarter buildings. The site is sufficient for visitor access and compact enough for cost-effective administration.

CONCLUSION

New additions to the national park system will not usually be recommended if other arrangements can provide adequate protection for the resources and opportunities for public enjoyment. Upon evaluation against NPS criteria for national significance, suitability, and feasibility, the resources within the Cane River area that appear to meet the criteria for potential establishments as units of the national park system are Oakland Plantation and Magnolia Plantation slave quarters and outbuildings.

INTERPRETIVE THEMES

Interpretive themes are statements of the principal ideas for which opportunities conveyed to visitors help them understand the significance of the roots of western Louisiana Creole culture. The primary theme is the major, overall concept or idea, and the subthemes further elaborate on more specific points. The themes and subthemes listed below do not state every detail that should be interpreted; rather, they form a framework for developing a complete story. These are the ideas that are considered essential for the public to know in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the story. They form the foundation for interpretation under any alternative.

PRIMARY THEME

The struggle for dominion between the French and Spanish in what is now western Louisiana, left a lasting imprint on the area. They vied to win the allegiance of the Indians; they developed land use patterns and initiated an economic system that evolved into plantation-based commercial agriculture; and they introduced the bousillage-type construction, Catholicism, and European style slavery. This century-long French and Spanish influence laid the groundwork for the emergence of the Creole culture found in western Louisiana.

Subthemes

The Frontier Story. Fort St. Jean Baptiste and Natchitoches, the oldest permanent settlements in Louisiana, were established to promote trade with the Spanish and the Indians and to protect the French frontier.

The presidio of Los Adaes was established by the Spanish to check the French expansion into east Texas, and for nearly 50 years it served as the capital of the province of Texas.

Although contact between the Spanish and French at the western frontier was greater than officially sanctioned, Los Adaes did succeed in blocking the French drive into east Texas and was strategic in maintaining the international balance of power between Louisiana and Texas.

The French were more successful than the Spanish in establishing the allegiance of the Indians because they traded goods desired by the Indians and did not attempt to convert them to Christianity or convince them to resettle.

The mercantile system created undue hardships on the colonies because of their isolation from supply centers. By ignoring the mercantile system, the colonies were able to progress from bare subsistence to living comfortably and making a profit.

During the colonial period the prevailing type of architecture was *poteaux en terre* often using bousillage construction.

Plantation Story. By the mid 18th century, the early frontier trade economy was being replaced by commercial agriculture (tobacco, indigo, and eventually cotton).

With the introduction of the cotton gin and the steamboat, cotton plantations were able to escape mere subsistence and become profit-making operations. Cotton became the backbone of the pre-war economy.

Lowland plantations showed strong West Indian influence in layout and method of operation. The combination of large landholdings, fertile alluvial soil, slave labor, water transport, and a planter-merchant alliance resulted in their success.

Creole Culture. The white Creoles of colonial Louisiana were born of French or Spanish parents before 1803; they were landed gentry who adopted and retained European mannerisms, and were highly cultured and sophisticated.

The Cane River Creoles of color emerged from a family of freed slaves who became wealthy from their plantations, developed their own unique culture, and enjoyed the respect and friendship of the dominant white Creole society. The social stratum occupied by Creoles of color was unique to Louisiana.

Slavery. Trade in slaves dated to antiquity, but the Atlantic slave trade, beginning in the 15th century, was characterized by its westward direction, volume, "middle passage," and racial makeup.

Colonial failures to supply a work force composed of immigrants and American Indians led to the importation of labor from Africa.

Southern slavery was very diverse, depending on time, place, size, and type of crop production on slave holdings, as well as on slave skills and individual slave-master relationships.

Even though slaves achieved some autonomy in their lives, under the slavery system they were considered to be and were treated as dependents and as property.

The dramatic end to slavery in the region came with the Civil War. The area was decimated during the RR Campaign when battles and skirmishes resulted in the burning of substantial numbers of plantations. Many of these structures were never rebuilt.

ALTERNATIVES FOR MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Three conceptual alternative strategies have been developed for protecting and interpreting significant cultural and natural resources in the Cane River area; a no-action alternative is also included. These alternatives suggest ways to preserve, develop, and interpret historic sites, structures, and landscapes. Management options for these alternatives range from no federal action to the creation of a national park system unit. All of the alternatives are intended to increase public awareness and appreciation of the multicultural encounter that characterized the period of French and Spanish colonization in Louisiana, and to improve the accuracy and objectivity with which the story is told.

Each alternative includes a description of how resources would be interpreted for visitors, what future preservation and development needs would be undertaken, how management and operations would be accomplished, and what estimated implementation costs would be involved. The alternatives are not mutually exclusive. While each alternative could stand on its own, certain elements could be combined to better serve the resource protection and interpretation objectives.

Although this study was prepared by the National Park Service for Congress, it includes alternatives that would involve only limited federal government action. Creole culture could be commemorated by the federal government, by state or local governments, by private citizens, or by any combination of the above, and this variety of possibilities is reflected in the range of alternatives. Any NPS involvement in the study area in the form of national park system unit designation, funding, and/or technical assistance, other than in existing programs, would require congressional action.

ALTERNATIVE A - NO ACTION

This is the no action, or continuation of existing conditions, alternative (see Alternative A map). Various interpretive opportunities are currently offered to the visiting public by federal, state, local, and private entities. However, there is no coordinated interpretive effort on a sustained basis. Preservation efforts also vary based on the resources available to each owner. Certain resources are in imminent danger of losing their integrity. Under this alternative, visitors would have to experience on their own the complete story of significant past events related to frontier and plantation lifestyles. The Creole culture is still a viable part of the community life and visitor experience in this area.

Management

Management of the cultural properties along the Cane River is carried out by both public and private ownership. Funding consideration would be of primary importance in the ongoing management of significant cultural resources. Local individuals and organization work within funding constraints of existing federal, state, and local preservation programs. Funds are raised through sales of handicrafts and literature, tours of historic properties,

and sponsorship of special events and festivals. Other sources of financial assistance include bequests and donations from local subscribers, individuals, and foundations.

Visitor Use and Interpretation

Three sites owned and managed by the state of Louisiana — Fort St. Jean Baptiste, Los Adaes, and Ft. Jesup — have a plan for coordinated interpretation. The other resources are privately owned by individuals or nonprofit organizations — Natchitoches Historic District, Kate Chopin House, Melrose Plantation, Oakland Plantation, Magnolia Plantation, Badin-Roque House, Cherokee Plantation, and Beau Fort Plantation. Visitors can obtain brochures describing these properties, but interpretation is piecemeal, and there is no central overview of the entire area.

The Natchitoches Parish Tourist Commission, actively involved in local, state, and national promotion of the city/parish, relies on a 2% hotel, motel, and restaurant tax for its operating budget. Along with advertising parish-wide tourist opportunities, the tourist commission works closely with the Natchitoches Chamber of Commerce to encourage the development of tourist-related businesses. The city does not coordinate tourist-related promotional activities.

Within the Natchitoches Historic District are community groups and private individuals who open historic residences to visitors. In addition, a self-guided tour is available and tour buses go through the district. The reconstructed Fort St. Jean Baptiste is open for visitation and illustrates French colonial frontier life. Some structures open for visitation at Fort Jesup illustrate early U.S. military activity in the area. A brochure is available for Los Adaes that discusses Spanish colonial frontier life.

Creole and plantation lifestyles are the interpretive emphasis at Oakland, Magnolia, Cherokee, and Melrose plantations and at the Kate Chopin House. Individual and group tours are given, and most involve a small admittance fee. In addition, the role of Melrose Plantation in a local arts and craft colony is also interpreted. The Badin-Roque House is noted on driving tours of the area. At certain times of the year, boat tours of Cane River Lake are offered.

Preservation and Development

At the present time funds are being spent on the maintenance and preservation of the various privately owned plantation sites. In some cases, this spending exceeds the amount of funds taken in by the managing organization, thus limiting what preservation can be accomplished and setting up priorities for necessary maintenance work. Future development would continue to be subject to existing local ordinances, regulations, and plans. The state plans to develop the three commemorative areas in such a way that will impart to the public the struggle between France, Spain, and the United States for Louisiana. At Los Adaes, a visitor center and site excavation for interpretive purposes are being planned. And as funds become available, improved visitor access and interpretation are planned for Fort St. Jean Baptiste and Fort Jesup.

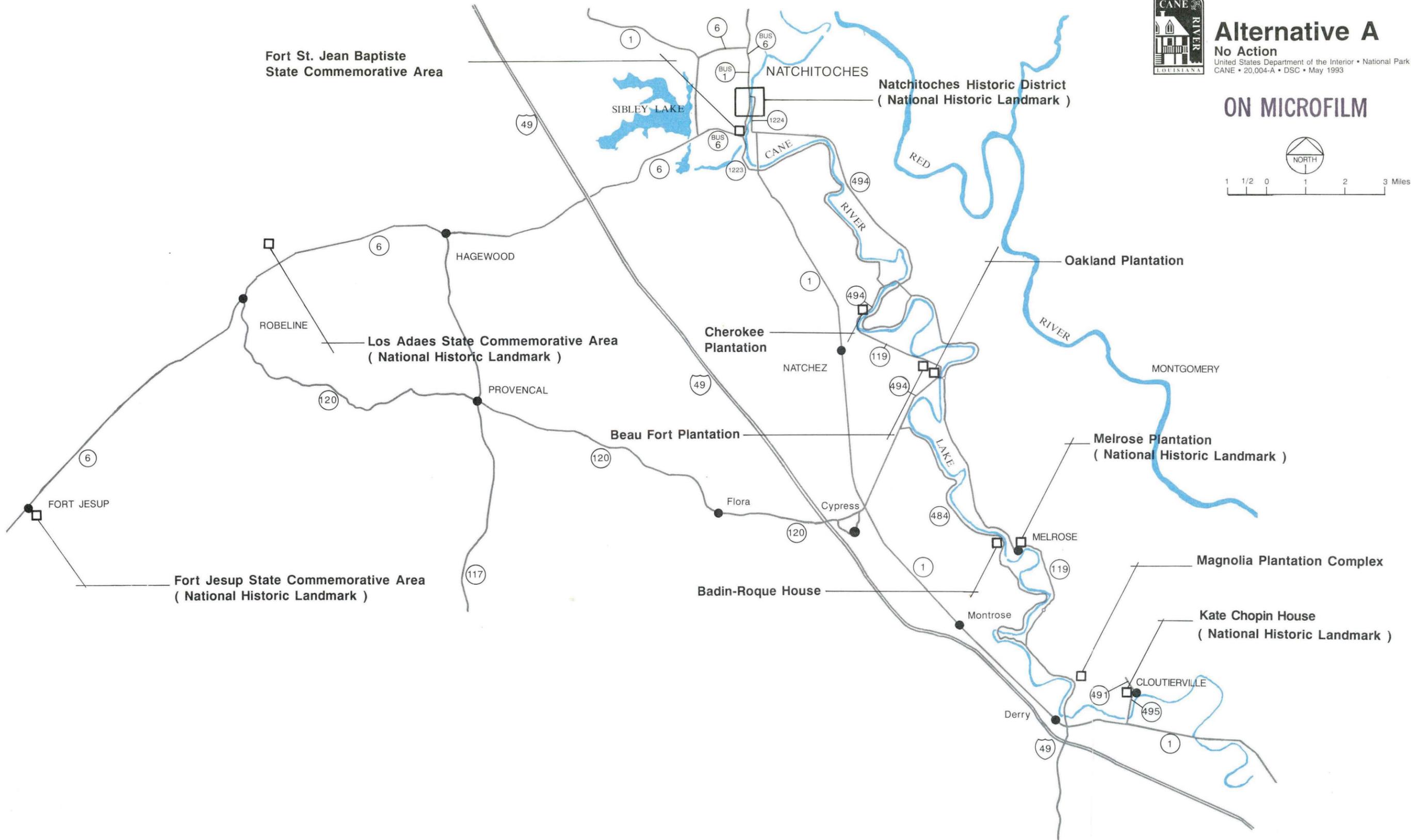
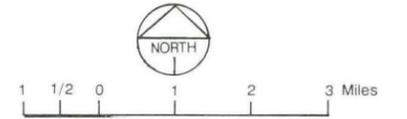


Alternative A

No Action

United States Department of the Interior • National Park Service
CANE • 20,004-A • DSC • May 1993

ON MICROFILM



Fort St. Jean Baptiste
State Commemorative Area

SIBLEY LAKE

NATCHITOCHES

Natchitoches Historic District
(National Historic Landmark)

CANE RIVER

RED RIVER

RIVER

MONTGOMERY

Melrose Plantation
(National Historic Landmark)

Magnolia Plantation Complex

Kate Chopin House
(National Historic Landmark)

CLOUTIERVILLE

Derry

Montrose

Badin-Roque House

Flora

Cypress

Beau Fort Plantation

NATCHEZ

Cherokee
Plantation

NATCHEZ

494

119

494

484

MELROSE

119

491

495

1

1

120

120

117

PROVENCAL

Los Adaes State Commemorative Area
(National Historic Landmark)

ROBELINE

HAGEWOOD

6

1

6

BUS 6

BUS 1

BUS 6

1223

1224

49

6

494

6

FORT JESUP

Fort Jesup State Commemorative Area
(National Historic Landmark)

49

49

49

Estimated Costs

No new additional federal funds would be expended under this alternative.

ALTERNATIVE B – FRONTIER STORY: HISTORIC VIEWSHED

The goal of this alternative is to emphasize the frontier story of the Creole culture of the Cane River area by interpreting how peoples of various cultures competed and cooperated in the settlement of the area and how the lifeways provided by the Cane River determined how these people lived and interacted (see Alternative B map). Under this alternative, a non-NPS coordinating entity would have responsibility for interpretation and preservation.

Management

Management of the privately owned Oakland Plantation, Magnolia Plantation slave quarters and outbuildings, and the Badin-Roque House would be undertaken by state, local, or private entities or a combination thereof. Fort St. Jean Baptiste, Los Adaes, and Fort Jesup state commemorative areas would continue to be managed by the state.

The Cane River Waterway Commission currently manages Cane River Lake. Cane River Lake and its viewshed would be the central focus of this interpretive story. To preserve this historic viewshed, a variety of cooperative agreements would be required with private, state, local, and federal entities along the 32 miles of Cane River Lake. This could include acquisition of scenic easements. The coordinating entity would have the responsibility for development and implementation of the cooperative agreements.

Visitor Use and Interpretation

Under this alternative, visitors would have an opportunity to experience the "feel" of frontier life and to learn about the beginnings of an area whose settlement reflected the struggle for dominion between international powers.

Visitors would continue to enjoy the restored historic properties along Cane River. However, interpretation would focus on the Natchitoches Historic District, Oakland Plantation, Magnolia Plantation slave quarters and outbuildings, and Badin-Roque House, as well as Fort St. Jean Baptiste, Los Adaes, and Fort Jesup state commemorative areas. These latter three areas are currently interpreted by the state to represent political and military aspects of frontier culture, and this interpretation would continue. The Natchitoches Historic District could serve to give the visitor an overview of the interpretive story, including the urban portions of the frontier story. To complete aspects of the frontier story such as commerce, lifeways, the institution of slavery, and social factors, this alternative would require interpretation of Oakland Plantation, Magnolia Plantation slave quarters and outbuildings, and Badin-Roque House.

Within this coordinating entity alternative, an interpretive committee composed of representatives from each of the sites should be set up to organize, and in some cases,

implement interpretation. Potential projects should include not only historic preservation projects but also ones that emphasize the vital, living culture of the area. For example, existing long-standing plantation families could be involved in oral histories and interpretive programs. In addition, perhaps the theatrical productions to be put on in the new theater space in Natchitoches could be integrated into the interpretive program for the area. Under alternative B, the following related aspects of the frontier story would be emphasized: French settlement, Spanish settlement, Indian relations, colonial economic developments, and colonial architecture.

Preservation and Development

The primary resources that would require assistance in preservation and development would be the Cane River viewshed, Natchitoches Historic District, Oakland Plantation, Magnolia Plantation slave quarters and outbuildings, and Badin-Roque House.

The most complex preservation action may be preserving the 32 miles of historic views along the Cane River from Natchitoches to the Badin-Roque House. It would be essential that the coordinating entity have legal authority through scenic and preservation easements to protect resources. The coordinating entity should be able to provide technical assistance and appropriate funding to assist owners whose property falls within the viewshed in maintaining the cultural landscape. Depending on how these options are implemented, they may not be entirely effective for resource preservation.

Orientation/administrative facilities for this alternative could be located within Natchitoches Historic District or at the Magnolia Plantation slave quarters and outbuildings. This could be accomplished by developing a new structure, adaptively using existing structures, or developing an agreement to share existing facilities.

For the three resources that are essential in completing interpretation of the frontier story — Oakland Plantation, Magnolia Plantation slave quarters and outbuildings, and Badin-Roque House — the coordinating entity should set up a preservation committee to provide assistance to these sites through cooperative agreements or ownership.

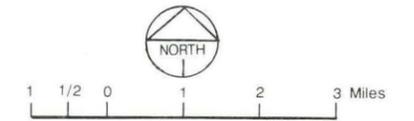
The main house at Magnolia Plantation is not essential to the frontier story and could remain in present ownership. The slave quarters should be restored for interpretive purposes. Outbuildings other than the slave quarters, e.g., the overseer's house and general store, could be adaptively used as a visitor orientation center. If it is determined that this would be an appropriate use for these structures, then they should also be restored for interpretive purposes.

In order to provide onsite interpretation, both interior and exterior restoration of Oakland Plantation would be required. Preservation and stabilization work would also be required on both the exterior and interior of the Badin-Roque House.

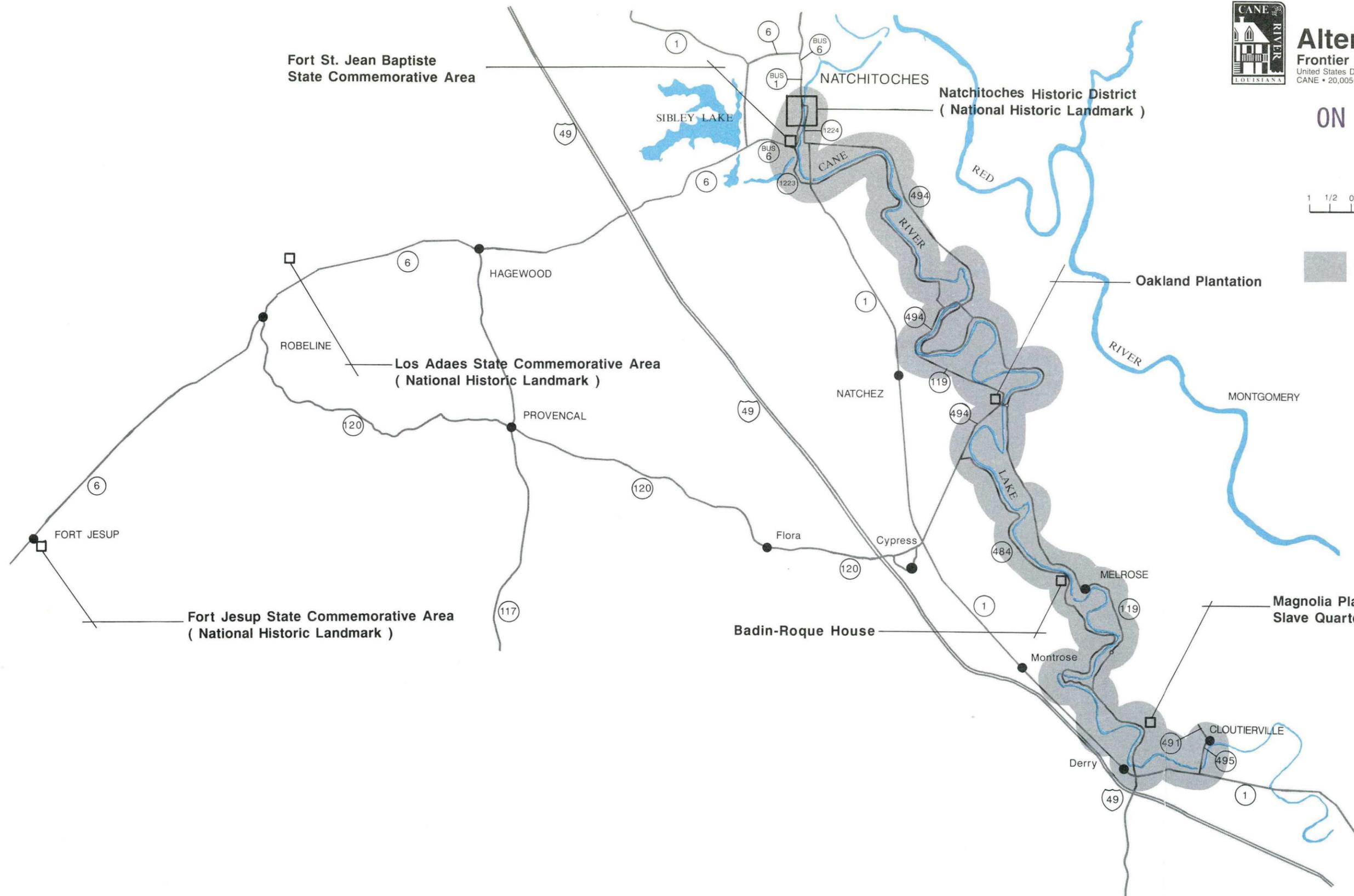


Alternative B
Frontier Story: Historic Viewshed
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CANE RIVER VIEWSHED



Boundary

The boundary would have a northeast-southeast linear configuration along Cane River Lake and Cane River from Natchitoches Historic District to Cloutierville. The east-west boundaries would require sufficient area to preserve the historic viewshed and resources on either side of the river. The managing non-NPS entity could protect boundaries through county/city zoning or scenic easements.

Estimated Costs

No anticipated federal funds would be expended under this alternative.

ALTERNATIVE C – PLANTATION STORY: NPS MANAGEMENT OF TWO SITES

The goal of this alternative would be to interpret those resources along Cane River that focus on the evolution of Creole culture and the plantation system (see Alternative C map).

Management

Under this alternative, a new unit of the national park system would be created. This designation would provide preservation and protection of resources that are vital to interpreting the Creole plantation story — Oakland Plantation and Magnolia Plantation slave quarters and outbuildings. In addition to NPS management of these resources, cooperative agreements would be undertaken with the city of Natchitoches; owners of the Badin-Roque House, Melrose Plantation, Cherokee Plantation, and Beau Fort Plantation; and other entities as needed for coordinating interpretive aspects of the plantation story. The National Park Service would provide limited technical assistance for preservation and interpretation outside the park boundary on a priority basis.

The National Park Service would encourage preservation of the historic scene along the river. This could be accompanied by the purchase of scenic easements by local or regional entities or a nonprofit land trust.

Visitor Use and Interpretation

Visitors would learn how plantations worked and how the introduction of new technology (cotton gin and steamboat) affected profitability. They could experience the physical layout and observe architectural and landscape features of plantation life while learning about social relationships among plantation owners, residents, and slaves.

This alternative would interpret the evolution of Cane River plantation life. The story would begin with the early settlement of the area by Creole planters. The emphasis would be on the frontier aspects of plantation life and the need for self-sufficiency — how new technology allowed the plantations to escape their mere subsistence and become profit-making operations and the effects of this on plantation lifestyles, including those of

Creoles, Creoles of color, and blacks. A key subtheme would be the concentration and quality of Creole plantation homes.

The distinct bousillage architecture and how cultural background and available materials influenced this architecture would be interpreted. The relationship between the hub of Natchitoches and the outlying plantations would also be interpreted. Landscape features and their relationship with Cane River and crop growing would be explained.

Under this alternative, the resources used to interpret the plantation story include Oakland Plantation and Magnolia Plantation outbuildings and slave quarters. Interpretation would also focus on the Natchitoches Historic District, Badin-Roque House, Melrose Plantation, Cherokee Plantation, and Beau Fort Plantation. The Natchitoches Historic District or Oakland Plantation could serve as a location to give the visitor an overview of the interpretive story. Various aspects of the plantation story could be told at all the resources.

The possibility of involving the existing long-standing plantation families in oral histories and interpretive programs should be explored. In addition, another potential project could include integrating the theatrical productions to be put on in the new theater space in Natchitoches into the interpretive program in the area.

Preservation and Development

Oakland Plantation would be adaptively used for orientation/administration; various outbuildings would require preservation work. Structures at Magnolia Plantation that would be preserved and restored include the slave quarters and outbuildings such as the cotton gin-press building and overseer's house. Other sites could receive preservation assistance from the National Park Service. The National Park Service could investigate the possibility of developing a working program with the newly established NPS technical center at Northwestern State University of Louisiana, dedicated to the methods and interpretation of managing historic structures and landscapes.

Boundary

The park unit would consist of two noncontiguous sites with possible additional lands to serve maintenance and administrative needs. The amount of land required for Oakland Plantation would be the main house, outbuildings, and fields. The land required at Magnolia complex would encompass the slave quarters, overseer's house, store, cotton gin-press building, and fields. However, the reconstructed plantation main house is currently being preserved and interpreted, and the only element item necessary is a cooperative agreement with the owners regarding continued preservation and interpretation. The National Park Service could acquire a facade or conservation easement on the house to ensure appropriate preservation and treatment. If property ownership changes, the National Park Service might at that time evaluate the need to purchase that property. Beyond park boundaries, the National Park Service will seek to establish zones of influence through cooperation with other entities in order to protect cultural landscapes.

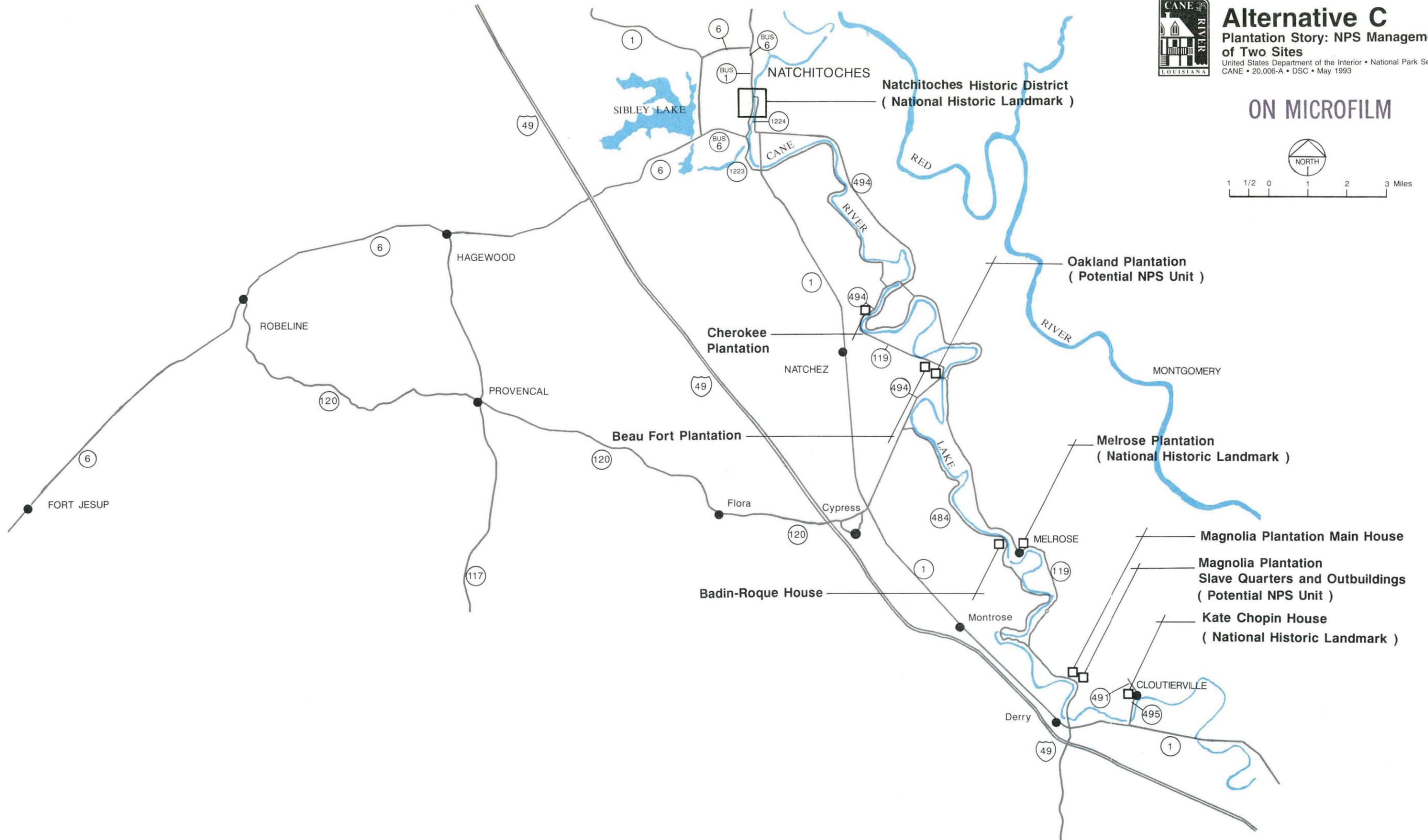
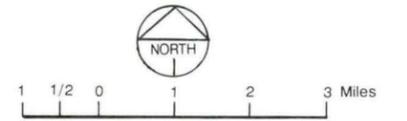


Alternative C

Plantation Story: NPS Management of Two Sites

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Estimated Costs

In alternative C, implementation costs for preservation, rehabilitation, facility development, and interpretation are estimated to total \$14.3 million — approximately \$10.5 million for Oakland and Magnolia and \$3.8 million for interpretation and support facilities. The estimate does not include land costs because precise boundaries have not been determined, more detailed planning would be needed to determine land protection needs, and a variety of protection options such as viewshed easements, cooperative agreements, and zoning would affect the accuracy of that cost. If a new unit of the national park system was authorized by Congress, a number of additional planning efforts would also require funding. These could include a general management plan, development concept plans, a cultural landscape report, historic structure reports, and other documents required by NPS *Management Policies* (see "Future Studied Required" section). Park staffing and operating costs could range from \$550,000 to \$800,000 annually. The breakdown of implementation costs for alternative C is shown below.

Plantations*		
Oakland	\$5.44 M	
Magnolia	<u>4.98 M</u>	\$10.42 M
Interpretation		
Exhibits, A/V, and waysides		\$ 2.34 M
Support Facilities		
Headquarters	1.09 M	
Maintenance	.45 M	
		<u>\$ 1.54 M</u>
	Total (Gross)	\$14.30 M**

* Includes rehabilitation of existing structures; new comfort/contact structures, parking areas, and trails; landscaping; and furnishings.

** Includes NET rehabilitation and new construction costs; (a) construction supervision, (b) WASO contingencies, and (c) project planning and design costs. (NET x 15% (a) + 16% (b) + 25% (c) = GROSS)

ALTERNATIVE D – COMPREHENSIVE STORY: HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP

This alternative would establish a Cane River heritage partnership that would comprehensively interpret the entire area by incorporating and expanding on the frontier and plantation stories outlined in alternatives B and C (see Alternative D map). Broad assistance could be provided through a variety of management tools to preserve and interpret the area's evolution from its frontier beginnings to its plantation heyday.

Management

At the present time most of the resources in the area are managed by either state, local, federal, nonprofit, or private entities. Since these entities operate independently of each other, there is no coordinated effort to provide interpretation in the area.

This alternative would require a series of cooperative agreements among a variety of private, local, state, and federal entities who currently manage resources within the proposed heritage partnership area. NPS involvement would be as the start-up coordinator, providing technical assistance for general planning, cultural resource management, and interpretation. The National Park Service would also provide assistance in establishing a commission to oversee the coordination of all visitor opportunities in the area. This commission would be composed of representatives from private, state, federal, and local entities working cooperatively to guide and direct the development of the heritage partnership area. The NPS role would be phased out after 10 years, and another entity would take responsibility for planning, coordination, and assistance. Overall implementation of this alternative would be the responsibility of others, not the National Park Service. There would be no direct NPS ownership or management involved. Funds to assist in implementation of this alternative would be appropriated by Congress.

Visitor Use and Interpretation

In-depth interpretation of the frontier, the establishment of plantations, the architecture, the institution of slavery, and the story of the Creoles of color would be related to the public. The Cane River and how it strongly influenced architecture, customs, and daily living in the entire area would also be interpreted. As in alternatives B and C, the possibility of involving the existing long-standing plantation families in oral histories and interpretive programs, as well as integrating the proposed Natchitoches theatrical productions into the interpretive program in the area would be explored.

Visitors would be educated about the origins and development of the unique Cane River region whose geography and cultural blending fostered a distinct lifeway found only in this area. Brochures and maps orienting visitors to many educational opportunities would be made available throughout the heritage partnership area at strategic locations. Visitors could select a particular area of interest and spend a small amount of time in the region, or enjoy the corridor's in-depth interpretation at their leisure.

Under this alternative, the resources needed for comprehensive interpretation include Fort Jesup, Los Adaes, and Fort St. Jean Baptiste state commemorative areas; Natchitoches

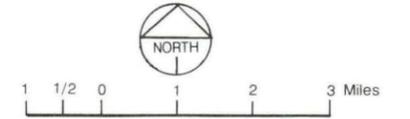


Alternative D

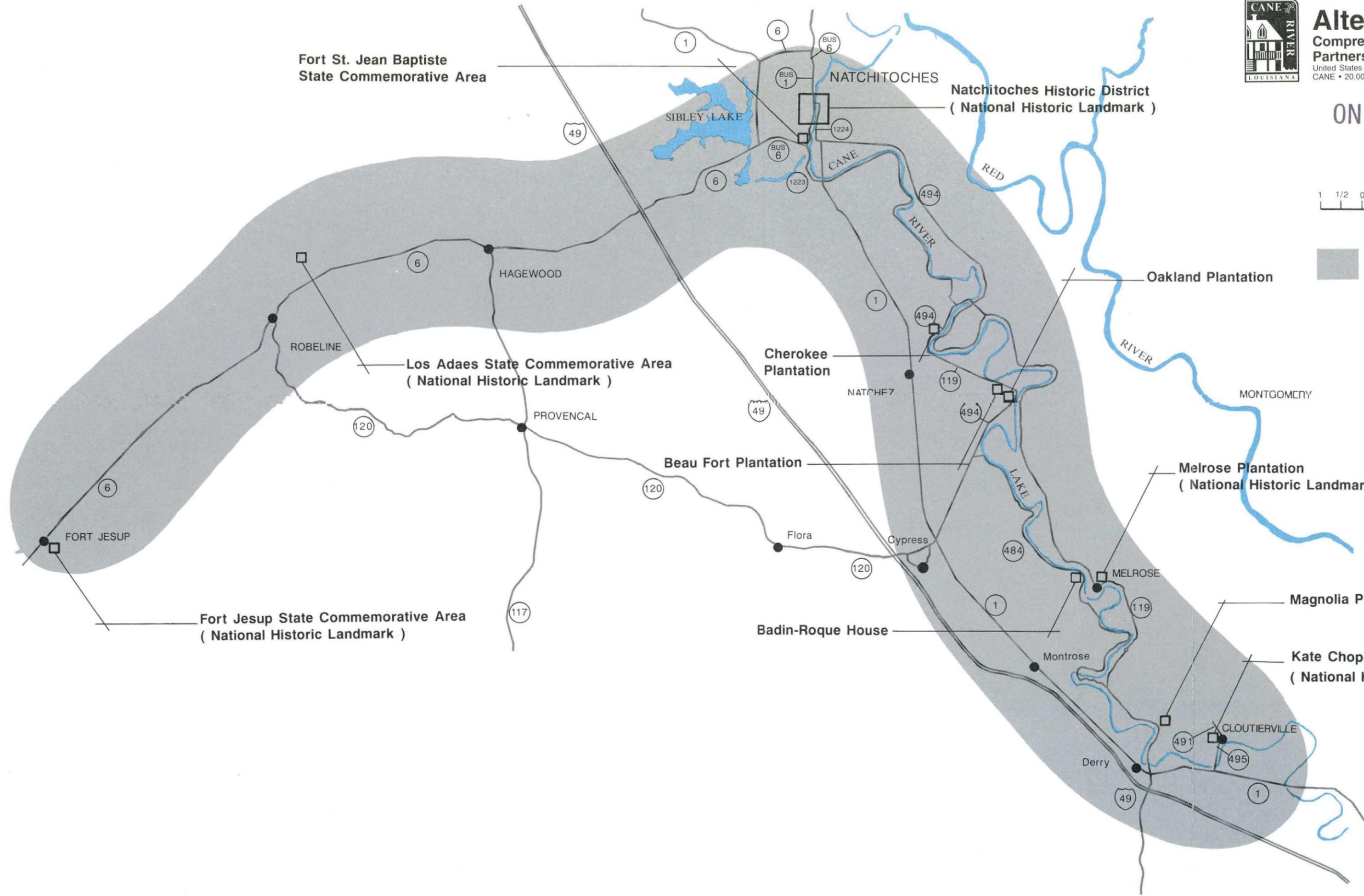
Comprehensive Story: Heritage Partnership

United States Department of the Interior • National Park Service
CANE • 20,007-A • DSC • May 1993

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 POTENTIAL CANE RIVER HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP AREA



Historic District; Kate Chopin House; Cherokee, Beau Fort, Oakland, Melrose, and Magnolia plantations; Badin-Roque House; and possibly other resources within the Cane River area.

Preservation and Development

Preservation and development within the heritage partnership area would encompass a coordinated effort between all entities. The National Park Service could offer technical assistance, assist in establishing cooperative agreements, or provide guidance in obtaining federal aid.

Boundary

The somewhat diagonal, linear nature of the area would be anchored by three primary interpretive sites — Fort Jesup on the northwest, Natchitoches in the center, and Cloutierville on the southeast. This boundary would encompass a substantial portion of Natchitoches Parish south of the community of Natchitoches and a small portion of Sabine Parish.

Estimated Costs

Under alternative D, implementation costs are estimated at \$7 million — \$5.5 million for technical assistance and \$1.5 million for project management. This funding would be needed over a 10-year period.

FURTHER STUDIES REQUIRED

Alternative B

A transportation study would be necessary to determine if the road system within the area requires upgrading or improvement. A lake tour feasibility study would be necessary to evaluate using Cane River Lake for giving tours. A viewshed analysis would be necessary to define historic viewsheds.

Alternative C

If Congress passed legislation to create a new unit of the national park system, a more detailed study would be necessary to determine the most appropriate and reasonable boundary for the designated unit.

A land protection plan is needed to identify alternative land protection methods that would provide for the protection of resources, for visitor use, and for development; identify the minimum interests necessary for those purposes; and establish priorities for acquisition of land or interest in land.

General management plans, development concept plans, and interpretive and resource management plans are required for all new NPS areas to determine specific management and development needs. In addition, other documents such as a cultural landscape report and historic structure reports are required by *NPS Management Policies*.

A viewshed analysis would be necessary to define historic viewsheds.

Alternative D

A priority study should be implemented to identify those resources that would require immediate technical, funding, or interpretive assistance. An action plan needs to be formulated in order to establish precise development needs. Other studies that could be undertaken to implement the alternative include historic structure reports, historic resource studies, and a cultural landscape report.

Alternatives B, C, and D

Since these alternatives relate to various living cultures, it is important that an ethnographic survey and assessment be undertaken to identify those ethnic and American Indian groups that are associated or use the area's natural and cultural resources. This study would seek to determine how these groups would like to see these resources managed in the future. In addition, this study should evaluate how the implementation of the selected alternative would affect these groups and define what steps would be necessary to protect these cultures.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This section generally analyzes the impacts that could result from implementation of the alternative concepts described in this study. Impact topics include visitors (visitor experience and educational potential), natural environment (floodplains, wetlands, prime and unique farmlands, and threatened and endangered species), cultural environment (historic sites and structures), and socioeconomic environment (local economy and local communities). The four alternative concepts are compared under each impact topic.

IMPACTS ON VISITORS

Alternative A

Interpretation would continue on a piecemeal basis with no unified thematic approach; thus, visitors would not get the complete story of significant events, and most importantly, themes featuring the area's past.

Alternative B

A more comprehensive and coherent story would be presented because of coordination among the preservation entities presenting programs and interpretation.

New interpretive programs would be available to visitors.

The one or more sites included under the coordinating entity would receive balanced interpretation.

Creation of an interpretive committee within the coordinating entity could divert resources from other projects.

Alternative C

The two sites included in the national park system would receive complementary interpretation. However, this interpretation would not be broad in scope.

Scholarly knowledge would be increased as a result of NPS research conducted to further interpretation and preservation goals for the new park area. A working program with the newly established NPS technical center at Northwestern State University of Louisiana could possibly be developed.

Alternative D

Implementation of a heritage partnership area would offer visitors a broad, comprehensive program of important educational and recreational opportunities.

IMPACTS ON NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Alternative A

Present impacts on natural resources would remain unchanged.

Alternative B

Restoration and adaptive use of structures would not have a long-term impact on natural resources. Development of new structures may have an impact on natural resources.

Alternative C

Development and construction of a maintenance area and structure would have an effect on natural resources; compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act would be required.

Adaptive use and restoration of structures would not have a long-term impact on natural resources.

If new visitor facilities were developed, construction could include both temporary and permanent soil disturbance, displacement, compaction, and soil erosion.

General development would have impacts on existing vegetation.

Construction activities and removal of vegetation would temporarily displace resident bird, small mammal, amphibian, and reptile populations. Some small ground-dwelling species might be permanently displaced, but this condition would not be significantly affected by facility development, construction, and use.

Alternative D

Proposed development and construction actions within the heritage partnership area may have an impact on natural resources. These impacts would be evaluated, and compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and other applicable regulations may be necessary for federal or federally assisted actions. Identified impacts would be avoided or mitigated.

If new visitor facilities were developed, construction could include both temporary and permanent soil disturbance, displacement, compaction, and soil erosion.

Construction activities and removal of vegetation would temporarily displace resident bird, small mammal, amphibian, and reptile populations. Some small ground-dwelling species might be permanently displaced, but this condition would not be significantly affected by facility development, construction, and use.

Damage to resources might result from increased visibility and interest.

IMPACTS ON CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

Alternative A

Current funding might not permit proper administration of historic sites. The lack of an "umbrella" organization to guide and increase preservation activities would continue to hinder efforts to preserve and interpret cultural resources.

Without federal funding, there would be less opportunity to ensure that cultural resources are preserved and maintained to a high standard. Impacts on cultural resources, because of a possible lack of sustained revenue, would include limited archeological and historical research. This would result in insufficient information to preserve and interpret Cane River's past.

Despite local ordinances and land use controls, pressures might emerge to permit large-scale, incompatible commercial or housing development to enhance tax base. Local preservation bodies might not have the financial or human resources to stem future deleterious developmental pressures.

Alternative B

The one or more sites included under the coordinating entity would receive balanced preservation and research.

Some significant sites would be preserved and protected.

Creation of a preservation committee within the coordinating entity could divert resources from other projects.

Alternative C

The two new sites included in the national park system would receive complementary preservation and research. However, this preservation and research would not be broad in scope.

Only two sites would be preserved and protected to NPS standards, while a number of other sites would receive some NPS preservation assistance.

Alternative D

Damage to resources might result from increased visibility and interest.

Because federal involvement would be minimal under this alternative, there would be less resource protection. Resource protection and management by state and local governments and by private individuals and organizations could increase.

IMPACTS ON SOCIOECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Alternative A

No properties would be removed from the local tax rolls, and no private property owners would be displaced.

Community resources have been strained by the preservation, development, and operation of significant resources. Further outside assistance is uncertain at this time.

There would be minimal impact on the socioeconomic environment under existing management.

Tourism would probably grow as traffic volume increases on I-49.

Alternative B

New visitor programs would be created and may compete with existing programs.

Tourism would increase, resulting in some benefits (additional jobs, money, and recognition) and some drawbacks (increased vandalism, litter, use of local facilities).

There would be no federal acquisition of private properties.

Some acquisition (i.e., scenic easements) may be required by local, state, or county entities.

Alternative C

New visitor programs would be created and might compete with existing programs.

There would be a permanent commitment of federal funds for operation, and short-term federal expenditures for acquisition and construction.

Private citizens and local agencies would be involved in the new area, which could result in the diversion of local funds from other projects.

Two or more occupants would be displaced, and the properties would be removed from local tax rolls, with payment-in-lieu-of-taxes from the National Park Service.

Increased tourism could result in some benefits (additional jobs, money, and recognition) and some drawbacks (increased vandalism, litter, use of local facilities).

Alternative D

Landownership, current land uses, and the local property tax base would remain unchanged. Local ownership and control would receive federal assistance. Increased visibility, interest, and therefore increased public use would have both positive (support, public understanding) and negative (resource deterioration) impacts.

Recreational use of the heritage partnership area would probably increase over time. This may slightly increase state and local expenditures for visitor services.

The identification of recreation or interpretive resources on private lands could result in a loss of privacy for some landowners.

Use of existing facilities for visitor contact and interpretation would lessen costs associated with this alternative. Development would be responsive to local needs, but coordination of many interested parties over time would be costly.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The planning team for the Cane River *Special Resource Study* met during April 29 through May 3, 1991, with representatives of the Kisatchie National Forest, Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office, Louisiana State Parks Program, Natchitoches Parish and city officials, community leaders, and property owners of all plantations and sites considered in the study. Property owners included individual owners, charitable organizations (i.e., Service League of Natchitoches), preservation organizations (i.e., Association of Natchitoches Women for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches, and groups representing interests of the Creoles of color (St. Augustine Historical Society). In addition, news releases were carried in local area newspapers, which described the study and listed the name and address of the study team for further information or comment.

Responses from these meetings and the nearly 20 written responses indicated that there was strong support within the community for national recognition of the resources along Cane River. And, there was some desire to have limited federal government involvement in the preservation and interpretation of resources in Natchitoches Parish. However, many property owners would like the federal role limited to one of providing technical assistance in preservation and interpretation and, possibly, having only a small landownership presence in the parish. Five of the responses questioned the validity of the study and recommended that the entire state of Louisiana should be evaluated or, at least, the entire length of the Red River.

In early January 1993, the study team mailed a *Public Involvement Summary* document to those on the mailing list for the project. In addition, 100 copies of the document were delivered to, and distributed by, the Northwestern State University. An additional 100 copies of the document were distributed to individuals who attended the public involvement meeting on January 25, 1993. Approximately 33 written responses were received and analyzed. Results of these written comments are outlined below.

Two public involvement meetings were held January 25, 1993. One of these, held at 2:00 P.M., was designed to answer the questions of plantation owners. Approximately 30 plantation owners attended. The atmosphere at this meeting was genial, with one member of the audience publicly thanking the National Park Service for its undertaking of the study. The other meeting, held at 7:00 P.M., was designed to answer the questions and concerns of the general public. Over 75 people attended. Many attendees requested further explanations on implementation procedures for different alternatives, and what would be the next steps in the study process.

During the 30-day comment period, 33 written responses were received. Five responders favored alternative A, no action. All other responders wanted one of the preservation alternatives implemented. Eighteen favored alternative C, a national park system unit, stating that this alternative would best guarantee some preservation action and assistance in telling the area's story. The following summarizes written public comments.

Alternative A – No Action. Five individuals favored the "no action" alternative, while two were against it. Some comments mentioned an inappropriate expenditure of federal

funds at this time, the ability of local organizations to more accurately interpret the area's history, and a desire to remain free of government restrictions. The two comments against alternative A expressed concern that no action would result in the loss of important sites.

Alternative B – Frontier Story: Historic Viewshed. Only one individual specifically commented against alternative B, stating that the frontier story was not as significant as the plantation story in alternative C. However, general comments expressed concern that without NPS assistance this alternative would not be successfully implemented, emphasized that there are no local funds available for establishing a coordinating entity, and questioned the political expediency of a coordinating entity.

Alternative C – Plantation Story (NPS Management of Two Sites). This alternative was the most favored: 18 comments were for a new national park system unit; two were against. Three individuals want Badin-Roque included in alternative C, expressing concern about its deterioration. Three individuals also expressed concern that the National Park Service needed to act quickly in order to prevent further deterioration. One responder would like Melrose Plantation included. Other responders suggested that the Park Service coordinate with the National Center for Preservation Techniques, create interpretation training at other sites, and provide funds for maintaining the archives pertaining to Cane River history at Northwestern State University. Of the two comments against alternative C, one felt the interpretive focus was too narrow, and the other mentioned financial gain of owners.

Alternative D – Comprehensive Story (Heritage Partnership). Three individuals favored alternative D. Responders felt this alternative told the most inclusive story and liked the partnership approach. One responder mentioned that Melrose Plantation should be included in this alternative. Only one responder was against alternative D, saying it was too ambitious.

Combining Alternatives C and D. Four individuals suggested implementing alternative C, and adding elements of alternative D such as coordinating interpretation with other sites, properly documenting the area's history, and saving many other important sites.

Suggested New Alternative. One responder suggested establishing a "communication-settlement corridor/trail," which would interpret the area's network of mule-horse-cattle-buffalo trails.

**APPENDIX A: IDENTIFIED RARE SPECIES - NATCHITOCHE PARISH
LOUISIANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM**

Key to Ranking:

- 1 = Critically imperiled in state because of extreme rarity (five or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals or acres) or because of some factor(s) making it especially vulnerable to extirpation from the state.
- 2 = Imperiled in state because of rarity (6 to 100 occurrences or few remaining individuals or acres) or because of some factor(s) making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the state.
- 3 = Rare or uncommon in state (on the order of 21 to 100 occurrences).
- H = Of historical occurrence in the state but no recent records; may still exist. Upon verification of an extant occurrence, H-ranked elements would typically receive a 1 rank.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Rank
ANIMALS		
Southern redback salamander	<i>Plethodon serratus</i>	1
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	2
Big brown bat	<i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>	2
Louisiana pine snake	<i>Pituophis melanoleucus ruthveni</i>	3
PLANTS		
Yellow pimpernell	<i>Taenidia integerrima</i>	2
Louisiana blue star	<i>Amsonia ludoviciana</i>	3
Green milkweed	<i>Asclepias hirtella</i>	1
Purple coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	1
Three-lobed coneflower	<i>Rudbeckia triloba</i>	1
Drummond nailwort	<i>Paronychia drummondii</i>	1
Large clammy-weed	<i>Polynasia erosa</i>	2
Perfoliate tinker's-weed	<i>Triosteum perfoliatum</i>	1
Ground-plum	<i>Astragalus crassicaarpus</i>	1
Awl-shaped scarf-pea	<i>Psoralea subalata</i>	1
Phacelia	<i>Phacelia strictifolia</i>	1
Pale umbrella-wort	<i>Mirabilis albida</i>	1
Many-flowered wild-buckwheat	<i>Erogonum multiflorum</i>	2
Jointweed	<i>Polygonella polygama</i>	1
Small-flowered flame-flower	<i>Talinum parviflorum</i>	1

Common Name	Scientific Name	Rank
PLANTS (CONT.)		
Common shooting star	<i>Dodecatheon meadia</i>	2
Culver's root	<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>	H
An umbrella sedge	<i>Cyperus grayoides</i>	1
Beak rush	<i>Rhynchospora macra</i>	1
Wild hyacinth	<i>Camassia scilloides</i>	2
Fairy wand	<i>Chamaelirium luteum</i>	2
Sessile-leaved bellwort	<i>Uvularia sessilifolia</i>	2
Bearded grass-pink	<i>Calopogon barbatus</i>	1
Southern lady's slipper	<i>Cypripedium kentuckiense</i>	1
Large whorled pogonia	<i>Isotria verticillata</i>	2
Yellow fringeless orchid	<i>Platanthera integra</i>	2
Shadow-witch orchid	<i>Ponthieva racemosa</i>	2
Nodding pogonia	<i>Triphora trianthophora</i>	1
Southeastern panic grass	<i>Panicum tenerum</i>	1
A panic grass	<i>Panicum filipes</i>	1
Drummond's yellow-eyed grass	<i>Xyris drummondii</i>	1
Hairy lipfern	<i>Cheilanthes lanosa</i>	1
Staghorn clubmoss	<i>Lycopodium cernuum</i>	2
Riddell's spike cross	<i>Selaginella arenicola ssp riddellii</i>	2

APPENDIX B: SOCIOECONOMIC DATA TABLES

**TABLE 1: SELECTED SOCIOECONOMIC DATA FOR LOUISIANA AND NATCHITOCHE PARISH
(1986 data unless otherwise noted)**

Category	Louisiana	Natchitoches Parish
Population	4,501,000	39,900
Land Area (Square Miles) ¹	44,521 sq. mi.	1,264 sq. mi.
People per Square Mile	101.1	31.6
Civilian Labor Force	1,988,000	17,569
Unemployed	261,000	2,161
Unemployment Rate	13.1%	12.3%
Per Capita Personal Income ²	\$10,741	\$7,838
Land Area in Farms ³	9,520.3 sq. mi.	384.4 sq. mi.
Percent of Total Land Area in Farms ⁴	21.4%	30.4%

¹ 1980 data, ² 1984 data, ³ 1982 data, ⁴ 1982 data

SOURCE: Louisiana Bureau of Economic Analysis and Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce

TABLE 2: PERCENT OF POPULATION BY AGE GROUPS - NATCHITOCHE PARISH (1984 DATA)

Age Group	Percent of Population
Less than 5 years	9.0
5 to 14	16.2
15 to 24	20.5
25 to 34	14.7
35 to 44	11.6
45 to 54	7.4
55 to 64	7.8
65 to 74	7.7
Greater or equal to 75 years	5.2

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *County and City Data Book, 1988*.

TABLE 3: PERCENT OF POPULATION BY RACE - NATCHITOCHEES COUNTY (1984)

Race	Percent of Population
White	60.78
Black	39.22

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *County and City Data Book, 1988*.

TABLE 4: PERCENT OF OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS - NATCHITOCHEES COUNTY (1980)

Group	Percent of Population
American, Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut	0.31
Asian and Pacific Islander	0.23
Hispanic	1.89

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *County and City Data Book, 1988*.

TABLE 5: EARNINGS BY ECONOMIC SECTOR FOR NATCHITOCHEES PARISH (1988 DATA)

Economic Sector	Earnings (millions of dollars)	Percent of Total Earnings
Mining & Construction	16.1	7.2%
Manufacturing	35.2	15.6
Retail Trade	28.6	12.7
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	8.7	3.9
Services	40.2	17.9
Government	59.3	26.3
Agricultural Services, Forestry, Fisheries, Transportation, & Public Utilities	16.9	7.5
Farming	20.0	8.9
Total	\$225.0	100.0%

SOURCE: Louisiana Bureau of Economic Analysis and Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce

TABLE 6: EARNINGS BY ECONOMIC SECTOR FOR LOUISIANA AND NATCHITOCHES PARISH (1984 DATA)

Economic Sector	Earnings (millions of dollars)		Percent of Total Earnings	
	Louisiana	Natchitoches Parish	Louisiana	Natchitoches Parish
Mining & Construction	\$5,719.7	\$12.8	16.4%	6.7%
Manufacturing	5,301.2	31.0	15.2	16.2
Retail Trade	3,522.4	21.5	10.1	11.2
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,778.7	6.9	5.1	3.6
Services	6,666.4	24.7	19.1	12.9
Government	5,894.1	55.6	16.9	29.0
Agricultural Services, Forestry, Fisheries, Transportation, & Public Utilities	5,684.8	22.6	16.3	11.8
Farming	313.9	16.5	0.9	8.6
Total	\$34,876.2	\$191.6	100.0%	100.0%

SOURCE: Louisiana Bureau of Economic Analysis and Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce

TABLE 7: MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN NATCHITOCHES PARISH - JANUARY 1991

Employer	Product or Service	Number of Employees
Acme Cement Products	Cement Products	16
City of Natchitoches	Municipal Government	188
Con Agra Broiler Co.	Food Manufacturing	950
K & M Construction Co.	General Contractor	35
Natchitoches Parish Hospital	Hospital	360
Natchitoches Parish Police Jury	Parish Government	175
Natchitoches Parish School Board	Public Education	981
Northwestern State University	Higher Education	607
Southern Cotton Oil Co.	Cottonseed Products	26
Valley Electric Membership Co.	Utility Service	170
Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co.	Natural Gas Transmission	29
Trans Louisiana Gas	Gas Utility	26
Trus-Joist Corporation	Laminated Wood	107
Willamette Industries	Linerboard Paper	296
The Natchitoches Times	Biweekly Newspaper	29

SOURCE: Natchitoches Area Chamber of Commerce

**TABLE 8: 1990 RECREATIONAL USE OF THE KISATCHIE RANGER DISTRICT
OF KISATCHIE NATIONAL FOREST**

Activity Grouping	Recreation Visitor Days¹
Camping, picnicking, and swimming	7,200
Mechanized travel and viewing scenery	9,300
Hiking, horseback riding, and water travel	1,800
Hunting	19,200
Fishing	200
Nonconsumptive fish and wildlife use	300
Other recreational activities	6,800
Total	44,800

¹ Recreation Visitor Day = 12 hours of participation in an activity by a single individual
SOURCE: Kisatchie National Forest, U.S. Forest Service

**TABLE 9: NATCHITOCHEES PARISH TOURISM COMMISSION
VISITATION STATISTICS BY YEAR**

Year	Guest book	Foreign Visitors	Tour Groups	Conventions¹	Total Number of Visitors
1990	14,241	684	10,555	14,196	39,676
1989	9,617	492	8,150	10,122	28,381
1988	11,621	443	9,775	12,885	34,724
1987	10,617	414	8,262	17,723	37,016
1986	9,056	270	9,027	4,777	23,130
1985	6,656	214	0	7,384	19,668 ²
1984	6,254	216	0	NA ³	15,060 ²
1983	5,086	153	0	4,444	9,683
1982	6,980	117	0	6,602	13,699
1981	6,276	223	0	4,980	11,479
1980	3,980	122	0	0	4,102

¹ Includes conventions, conferences, seminars, and reunions.

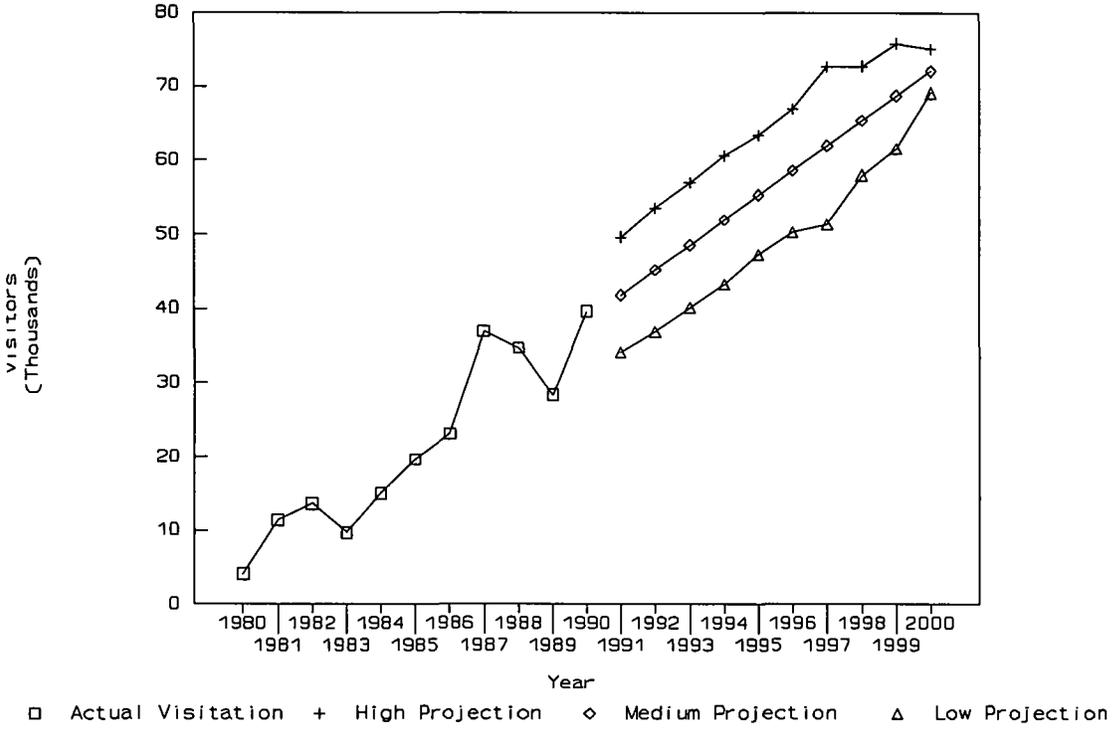
² Sum of figures in row do not add up to total due to missing data.

³ Not available

SOURCE: Natchitoches Parish Tourism Commission

Natchitoches Parish

Visitation and Projected Visitation



SOURCE: Natchitoches Parish Tourism Commission and National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Central Team, Branch of Planning

APPENDIX C: CRITERIA OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS

The quality of national significance is ascribed to districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States in history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture, and that possess a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and

- that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to, and are identified with, or that outstandingly represent, the broad national patterns of United States history and from which an understanding and appreciation of those patterns may be gained; or
- that are associated importantly with the lives of persons nationally significant in the history of the United States; or
- that represent some great idea or ideal of the American people; or
- that embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen exceptionally valuable for a study of a period, style, or method of construction, or that represent a significant, distinctive, and exceptional entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- that are composed of integral parts of the environment not sufficiently significant by reason of historical association or artistic merit to warrant individual recognition but collectively compose an entity of exceptional historical or artistic significance, or outstandingly commemorate or illustrate a way of life or culture; or
- that have yielded or may be likely to yield information of major scientific importance by revealing new cultures, or by shedding light upon periods of occupation over large areas of the United States. Such sites are those that have yielded, or that may reasonably be expected to yield, data affecting theories, concepts, and ideas to a major degree.

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STUDY TEAM AND CONSULTANTS

STUDY TEAM

Denver Service Center, Central Team, Branch of Planning

John Paige, Team Captain/Cultural Resource Planner
Roberta McDougall, Interpretation Planner
William Schreier, Natural Resource Specialist
Ron Treants, Historical Architect
Richard Lichtkoppler, Resource Economist
Mary McVeigh, Planning Technician

Southwest Region

Jill Cowley, Landscape Architect/SWRO Liaison

CONSULTANTS

Ron Johnson, Section Chief, Branch of Planning, Central Team, DSC
Joel Kussman, Chief, Branch of Planning, Central Team, DSC
Doug Faris, Assistant Regional Director, Planning, SWRO
Mary Gibson, Deputy Assistant Regional Director, SWRO
Neil Mangum, Regional Historian, SWRO
Ron Ice, Chief, Division of Anthropology, SWRO
Warren Brown, Chief, Division of Park Planning and Protection/WASO Liaison
Roy Eugene Graham, AIA, and Associates, Austin, Texas
Staff, U.S. Forest Service, Kisatchie National Forest
Staff, Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism
Staff, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Natural Heritage Program
Staff, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources
Staff, Louisiana Department of Water Resources
Staff, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
Staff, Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry
Staff, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
Staff, Soil Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Staff, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Staff, U.S. Geological Survey

PUBLICATION SERVICES

Linda Russo, Writer-Editor
Robert Todd, Cartographic Technician



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

