

# Singing Sands ALMANAC

## Public Review Begins on Three National Lakeshore Reports

Three draft documents are now on public review. These planning reports will guide future development, resource protection, and visitor use in the national lakeshore.

This newsletter is designed to inform the public, organizations, and government agencies about the three draft planning reports, the public review and comment periods, public meetings, and the schedule for revising and finalizing the reports. Detailed summaries of each of the reports

and maps of the alternatives are included on the following pages.

respond to questions, and solicit comments. Detailed maps showing the planning alternatives will be available for review.

### Public Meetings

You are encouraged to attend the public meetings. At these public meetings, the National Park Service will summarize the major points of each of the reports,

The focus of each meeting will vary so that the area of principal interest will be adequately addressed. However, all three reports will be discussed at each meeting. Written comments may be sent using the provided response form or by personal letter.

#### Talk to the National Park Service

*The National Park Service needs your input. On page 7 of this newsletter is a preaddressed form for registering your comments about these planning projects at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. Please take the time to complete the form and send it to the National Park Service. Attach extra sheets if necessary. If you would like to be included on our mailing list, fill out the name and address information block on the comment form.*

Public Meeting Schedule			
Date	Time	Location	Address
Tuesday October 16, 1990	7:00-9:00 pm	Gary City Hall	401 Broadway Gary, IN
Wednesday October 17, 1990	7:00-9:00 pm	Portage City Hall	6070 Central Avenue Portage, IN
Thursday October 18, 1990	7:00-9:00 pm	National Lakeshore Visitor Center	US 12 and Kemil Road Chesterton, IN

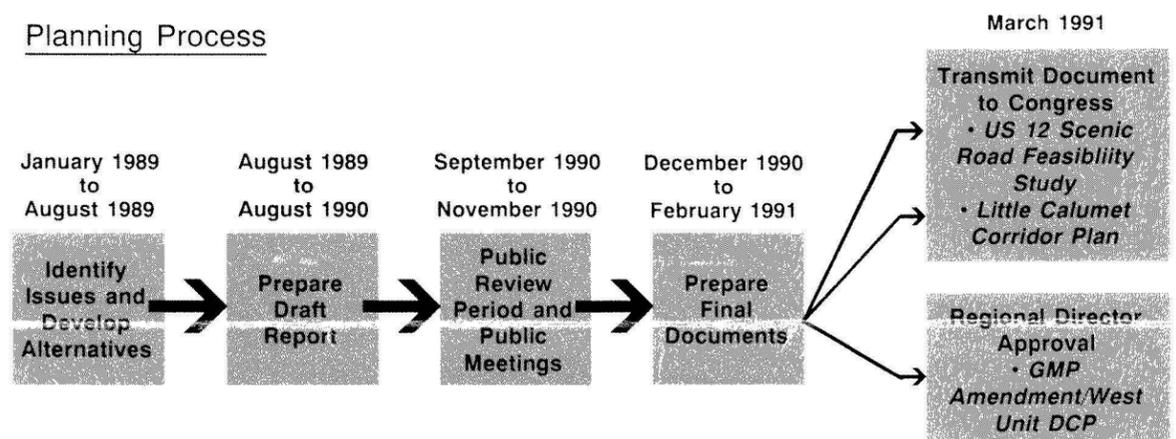
### Planning Process

Planning is a process of analyzing existing conditions and future possibilities and then determining the best course of action. Each of the draft reports was prepared by an interdisciplinary team from the NPS Denver Service Center and national lakeshore staff. In addition, a traffic and transportation engineering consultant provided technical information about traffic patterns and possible road improvements.

The planning process was initiated in January 1989. Public open houses were held in June 1989 to inform people about the study process and to seek input about problems and possible solutions. The National Park Service has worked closely with organizations, businesses, local officials, and public interest groups in northwestern Indiana. To prepare each of the reports, the planning team has compiled information, analyzed data, and developed alternatives.

After the 60-day public review period (September through November 1990), the comments will be analyzed, and the regional director of the NPS Midwest Region, with his support staff, the national lakeshore superintendent, and the planning team, will select the alternative or combination of alternatives for each of the draft reports that will be developed into three final reports. At that time, the regional director will also determine whether or not the proposed actions for the draft *General Management Plan Amendment/Development Concept Plan*

### Planning Process



and the *Little Calumet River Corridor Plan* will have significant impacts on the environment.

The final *Little Calumet River Corridor Plan* and the *US 12 Scenic Road Feasibility Study* will be sent to Congress. The *GMP Amendment/DCP* may be approved by the NPS regional director. The United States Congress will determine if any further action by the National Park Service is required on planning for expanded areas of the Little Calumet River corridor and US 12 as a scenic road.

If you have any questions, or would like to receive a copy of the documents, please contact Raymond Gunn at park headquarters (219) 926-7561.

### How to Get Copies of the Documents

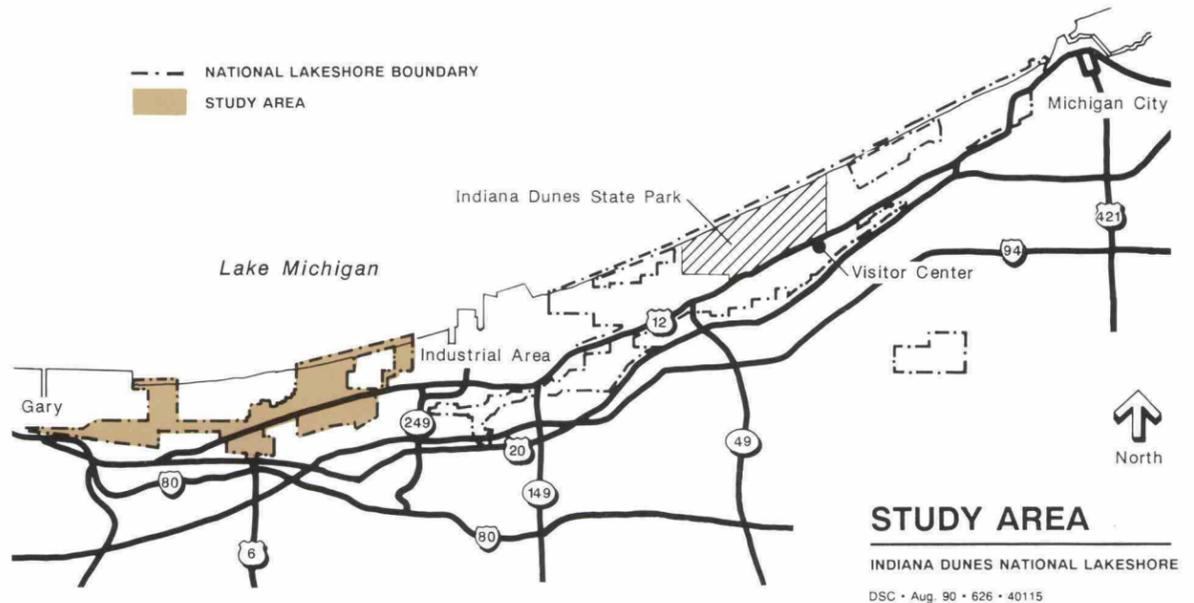
The draft reports are available for review at town, city, and county offices as well as area libraries and the national lakeshore visitor center and headquarters.

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# General Management Plan Amendment Development Concept Plan Environmental Assessment

The purpose of this *General Management Plan Amendment/ Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment* is to update the 1980 GMP considering the full range of issues that will affect the West Unit through the year 2000. These management issues include access to West Beach, the West Unit transit center and parking area, use of shuttle bus systems, impacts of traffic on adjacent communities, additional hiking/biking trails, boundary adjustments, and use of lands adjacent to the Portage/Burns Waterway and those lands between the Paul H. Douglas Environmental Education Center and Broadway in Gary.



## Alternative 1

Access to West Beach in alternative 1 is basically the 1980 GMP recommended access route. This route would extend the roadway from the intersection of State Route 51 (IN 51) and US Highway 20 (US 20), north with a bridge over the access road connecting the shopping centers, and a second bridge over the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad tracks and returning to grade. The route would then turn west to just south of US 12 where a third grade separation would begin. The third bridge would span US 12 and the railroad tracks while curving around the west end of the Long Lake wetland, and then eastward on the abandoned Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) railroad right-of-way to the West Beach parking area.

A spur road following the IHB to the west would connect with the Paul H. Douglas Environmental Education Center parking lot. A separate bicycle path and hiking trail would follow the general alignment of the new access road. Montgomery Street would be connected to the new access route by a 1,000-foot road segment. Montgomery Street widening and pavement improvements would be required.

The West Unit transit center and an 800-vehicle parking area would be located northeast of the access road bridge over the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad tracks in the Tolleston Dunes. The capacity of the existing West Beach parking area would

be reduced by 50 percent to 300 cars. When the West Beach parking area is full, visitors would be required to park their cars at the transit center and take the shuttle to West Beach.

### General Development

Hiking and biking trails would be developed to connect the various subunits of the West Unit including the area from the Douglas Center to Broadway in Gary, Miller Woods, Inland Marsh, and West Beach. The abandoned IHB right-of-way would be the primary hike/bike trail route through the West Unit extending from Broadway in Gary to the east side of West Beach. A new trail would continue to Hillcrest Road and US 12 in Ogden Dunes. From this point the trail would connect to a new access road to Inland Marsh, to future access to Lake Michigan, and to the US 12 bicycle route and the Little Calumet River Corridor hike/bike trail system.

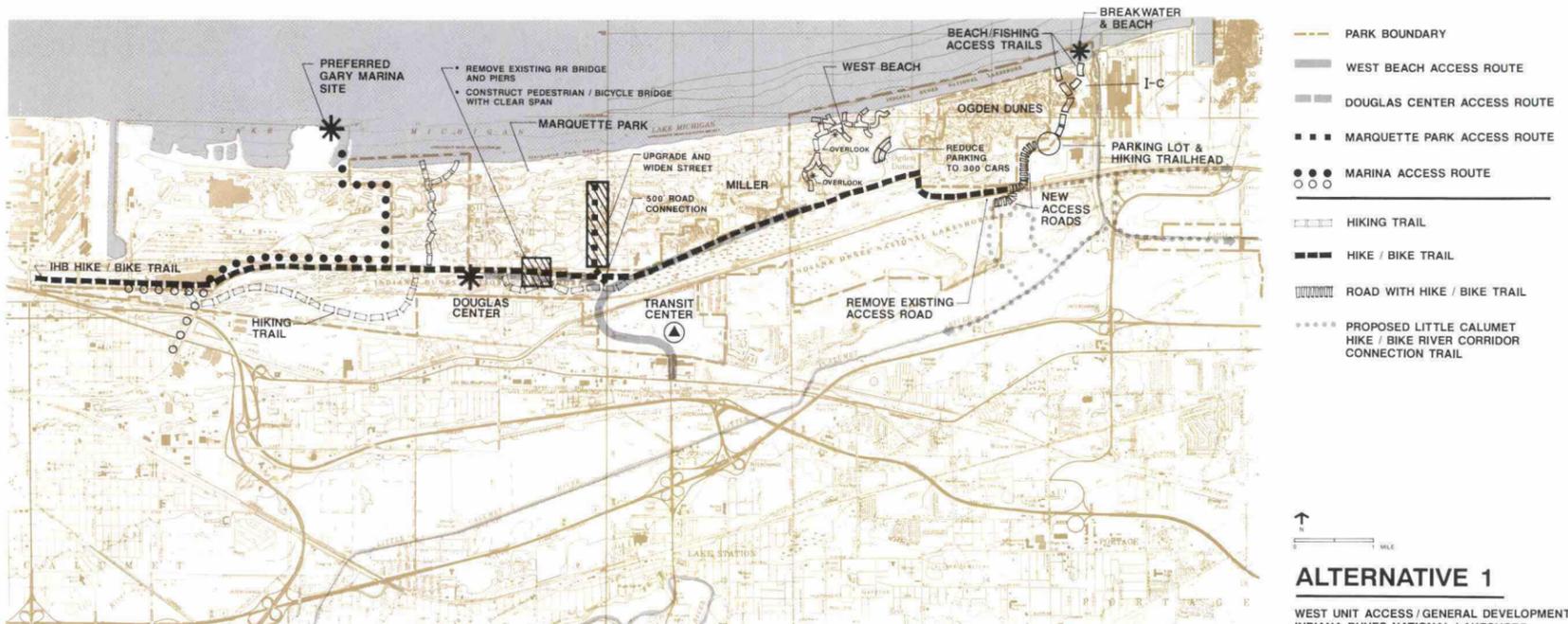
Federally owned lands on the western half of a land parcel located between Ogden Dunes and the Portage/Burns Waterway (known as Unit 1-C) would generally be maintained in a natural condition. Development would include a 1/2-mile access road to a 20-car parking lot and a 1/2-mile-long hiking trail to Lake Michigan. This trail would provide access to both the

beach and the Portage/Burns Waterway breakwater, which has been designed to accommodate fishing. The eastern half of this parcel, currently owned by National Steel Corporation, is being reclaimed after years of use for hazardous waste disposal. The National Park Service cannot acquire these lands unless National Steel is willing to sell and it can be demonstrated that no hazardous wastes remain on the site. If the National Park Service acquires the site, the access road from Ogden Dunes would be extended east to the access road that parallels the waterway, and then follow that road north to Lake Michigan, the beach, and the breakwater. A 20-car parking lot would be developed at the northern terminus of the access road.

Hiking and biking trails would be developed between the Douglas Center and Broadway in Gary. In addition, a hiking trail system would be developed south of the IHB and north through Miller Woods to Lake Michigan. Additional hiking trails would be developed in the Edgewater area as reservation of use permits expire.

### Boundary Adjustments

Boundary adjustments are recommended to provide for the protection of natural resource values and visitor use facilities.





## Alternative 2 – Preferred Alternative

Access to West Beach in this alternative (preferred alternative) would use the two existing routes that are currently used by visitors to West Beach - from I-94 to IN 51, US 20, and County Line Road; and from I-90 (the toll road) to I-65, US 12 and 20, to US 12 and County Line Road. These routes would be improved by adding signs directing visitors to West Beach and improving selected intersections. A new bridge would be constructed on County Line Road over US 12 and the railroad tracks to eliminate the safety hazards and traffic congestion at this intersection as well as the at-grade railroad crossing. Retaining walls would be used to contain the fill for the bridge approaches, minimizing the impact on wetlands.

Interim improvements for the Lake/Porter County Line Road and US 12 intersection would consist of widening all four approaches to provide left-turn lanes and converting the four-way stop signals to traffic signals operating in a vehicle and railroad actuated manner. Road improvements would be made to Hobart Road to facilitate access to Grand Boulevard and Marquette Park.

When the West Beach parking area is full, special signs would be used south of US 12 on County Line Road and on the east approach to County Line Road on US 12. Visitors could then be directed to East Unit beaches if space is available or west on US 12 to Marquette Park via an improved connection from US 12 to Hobart Road and Grand Boulevard. Signs would also be

located on IN 51 just south of the intersection of IN 51 and US 20 and on US 12 just west of the Hobart Road overpass.

### Transit Center and Shuttle Bus System

Development of the West Unit transit center and shuttle bus system would be deferred until there is more demand and the system feasibility is proven for operation in the West Unit. Some of the factors that make the transit center and shuttle bus system infeasible at this time are (1) the convenience and desire of West Beach users to use private automobiles, (2) capacity of the existing West Beach parking area, which is full 10-25 days per year, and (3) no private sector response to the 1988 request for proposal to operate the shuttle bus system, indicating that the shuttle bus system is not economically feasible at this time.

As economic and sociological conditions change, it may become feasible to operate a shuttle bus system to West Beach. In this alternative, future transit center locations would be either between the Zayre parking area and Lake/Porter County Line Road on US 20 or at the truck terminal site near the US 12 and Hobart Road overpass. Conditions that would justify the development of a West Unit shuttle bus system are (1) a significant, sustained increase in the price of gasoline, (2) natural resource management needs to reclaim the existing

West Beach parking area, and (3) other economic factors that indicate changing conditions that would make a shuttle bus system feasible.

When some combination of the above factors determines that the shuttle bus system should be implemented, a trial shuttle bus system would be developed with a minimum investment of public funds. When the trial shuttle bus system is shown to be successful, the West Unit transit center and parking area should be built.

### General Development

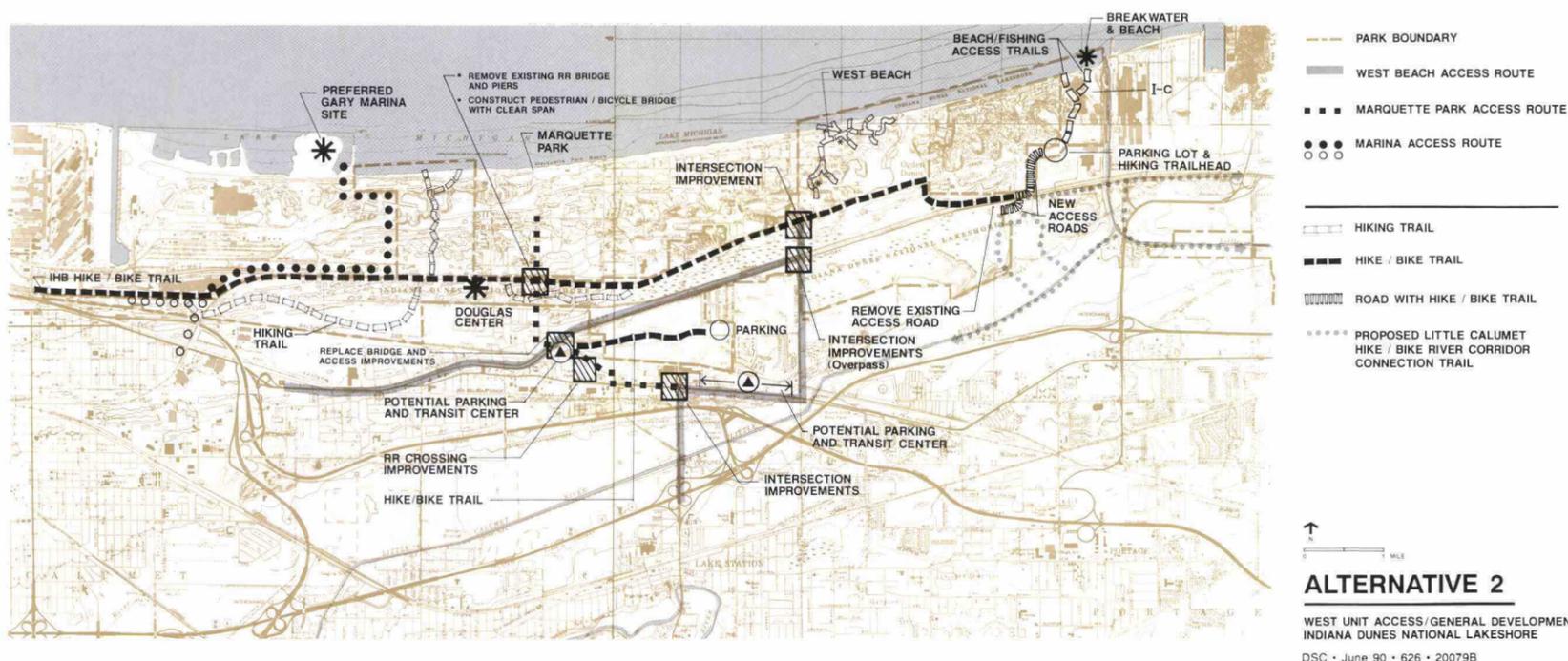
General development would be the same as alternative 1 except for trail and trailhead parking in Tolleston Dunes.

### Boundary Adjustments

Boundary adjustments would be the same as alternative 1.

### Environmental Assessment

An environmental assessment has been prepared that includes potential impacts of the two alternatives on the natural and cultural resources, visitor use, and socioeconomic environment. Special attention is given to endangered species and wetlands that could be affected by proposed development actions.



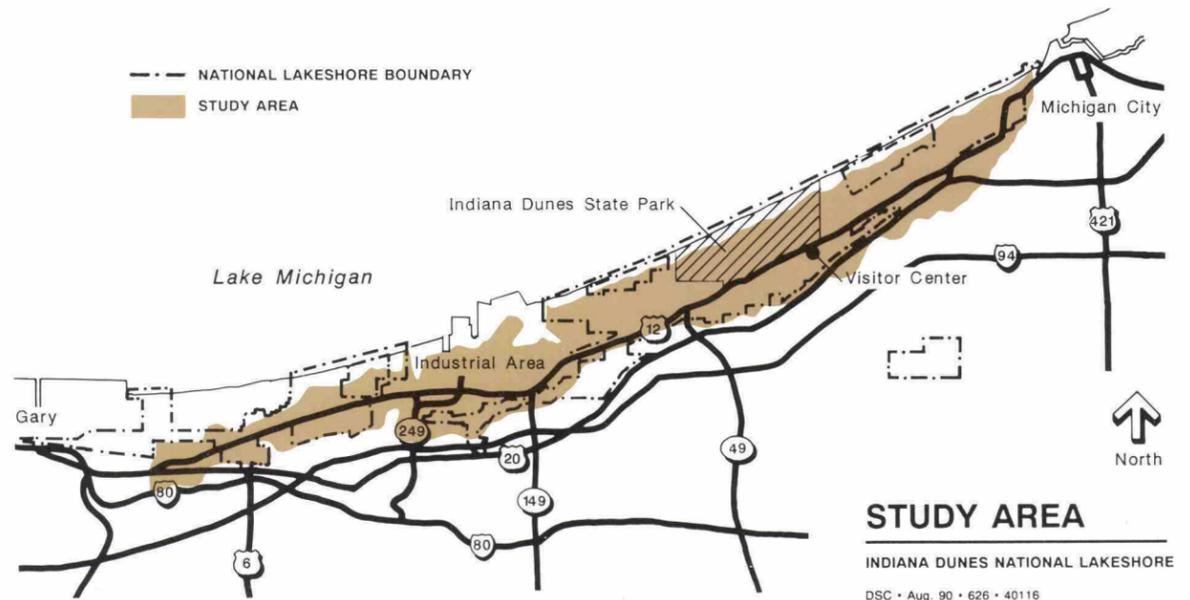
**ALTERNATIVE 2**  
WEST UNIT ACCESS/GENERAL DEVELOPMENT  
INDIANA DUNES NATIONAL LAKESHORE  
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The purpose of the *US 12 Scenic Road Feasibility Study* is to determine the feasibility of establishing a parkway or scenic roadway managed by the NPS using the existing US 12 highway corridor and portions of other existing roads in the national lakeshore area.

The existing US 12 corridor does not qualify as a national parkway for two reasons – the US 12 corridor does not have sufficient merit and character to make it a national attraction, and there are many uncontrolled highway access points. Portions of the corridor clearly have high quality scenic views as well as historical significance. The corridor is more a connecting route between recreational, historic, and natural areas than it is a destination by itself.

However, according to criteria that have been adopted by many states, including Indiana, the US 12 corridor does qualify as a scenic road. These criteria include:

- outstanding scenic vistas and recreation facilities
- diversity of recreational experiences and activities
- changes in terrain and landscape
- connects scenic, historic, natural, and recreational areas



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## Scenic Road Alternatives

This study describes one no-action and three action scenic road segment and alignment alternatives as well as four management options for establishing the Dunes Highway scenic road. Design modifications for the scenic road are also addressed in the study.

The three action alternatives would prohibit through trucks from using the scenic road. Interpretive pull-offs and information kiosks would be developed in each of the alternatives. The National Park Service would work with federal, state, and local authorities to improve intersections so that truck, recreational, and local traffic can move through and around the scenic corridor safely and efficiently. The maximum speed permitted on the scenic road would be 35-45 mph (less near recreational areas and major intersections or for safety reasons). A bike lane or bike path would be established along or near the Dunes Highway (see draft *Little Calumet River Corridor Plan* for a discussion of bike lanes and paths).

Depending on which segment alternative and which management option are selected, boundary adjustments could be made for rights-of-way and scenic corridors. These adjustments, which would include the scenic road within the national lakeshore boundary under the three action alternatives, would be necessary for law enforcement and maintenance of the US

12 corridor after its designation as the Dunes Highway scenic road.

### Segment Alternatives

Alternative 1 includes the east end of US 12 with Beverly Drive. Alternative 2 encompasses the entire length of US 12, including the Burns Harbor industrial segment where the northern two lanes would function as an industrial service or frontage road and the southern two lanes would be part of the designated scenic route. Alternative 3 is similar to alternative 2 except that the Burns Harbor industrial segment is excluded and scenic loop routes would be designated in the town of Beverly Shores. In each of the alternatives US 20 would be redesignated US 12/20 for portions that parallel scenic road segments of US 12.

### Management Options

Designation of any of the alternatives as a scenic road would still leave one important consideration – that of managing the scenic highway. Several approaches to management of the highway were considered.

Under management option 1, the National Park Service would acquire ownership of the right-of-way and assume management responsibility for the Dunes Highway. The

Park Service would work with adjacent communities to develop voluntary design standards that could be adopted by the communities along the Dunes Highway. Existing zoning ordinances that regulate the type and density of land use would remain in effect.

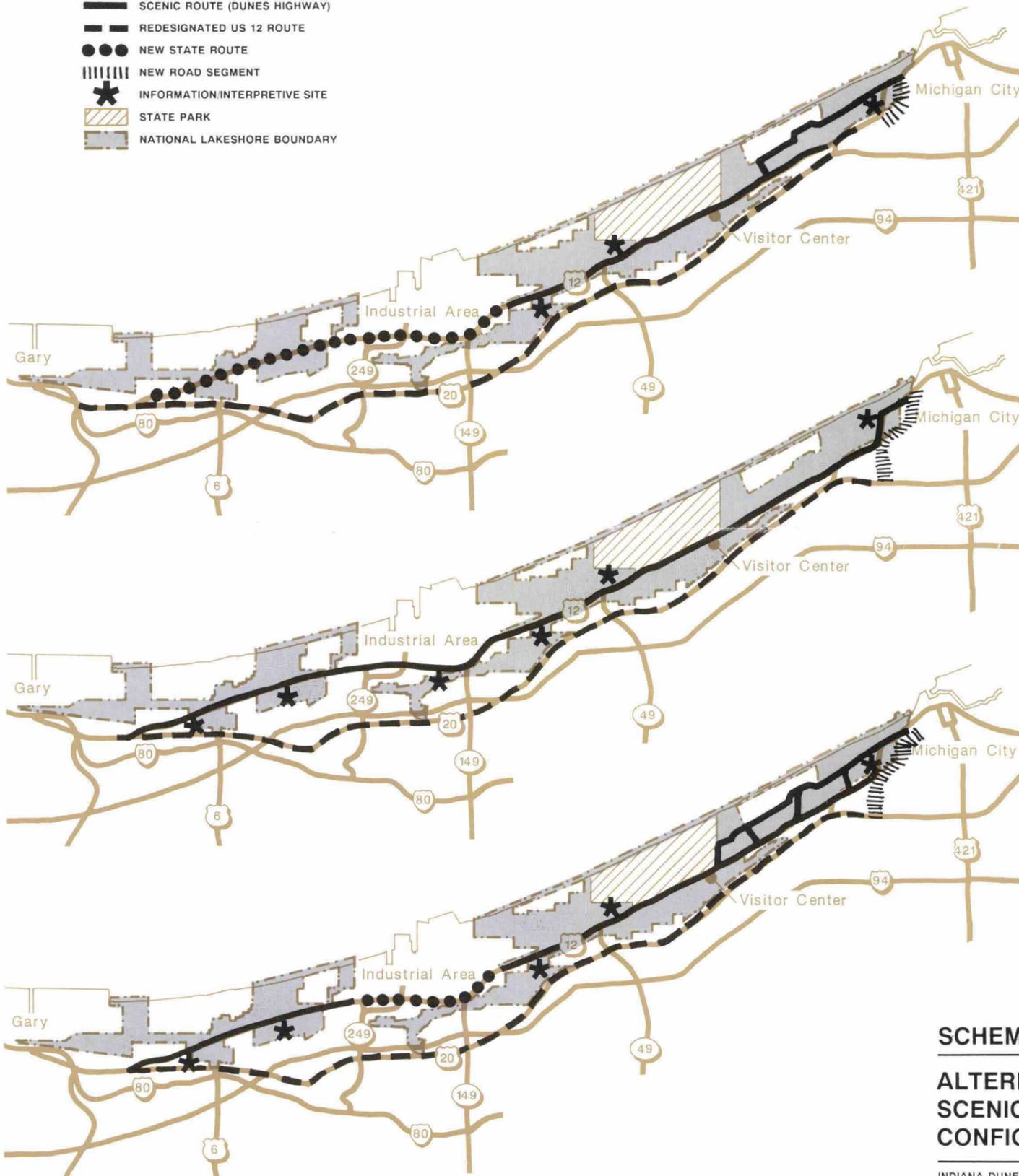
Under management option 2, the Park Service would acquire all lands within the potential scenic corridor in addition to the US 12 right-of-way. This approach would allow the Park Service to manage all lands that can currently be seen from US 12 or have the potential to be seen in the future.

Management option 3 is a combination of management options 1 and 2, with NPS management of the scenic highway right-of-way and portions of the scenic corridor. The Park Service would acquire through scenic easements or other means only those parcels that are critical to maintaining the integrity of scenic views from the scenic highway.

Management option 4 provides for interagency and intergovernmental management of the scenic road. Intergovernmental management of a scenic road would distribute management, funding, and development responsibilities among the participating federal, state, county, and local agencies.



- SCENIC ROUTE (DUNES HIGHWAY)
- REDESIGNATED US 12 ROUTE
- NEW STATE ROUTE
- NEW ROAD SEGMENT
- INFORMATION/INTERPRETIVE SITE
- STATE PARK
- NATIONAL LAKESHORE BOUNDARY



Alternative 1

Alternative 2

Alternative 3



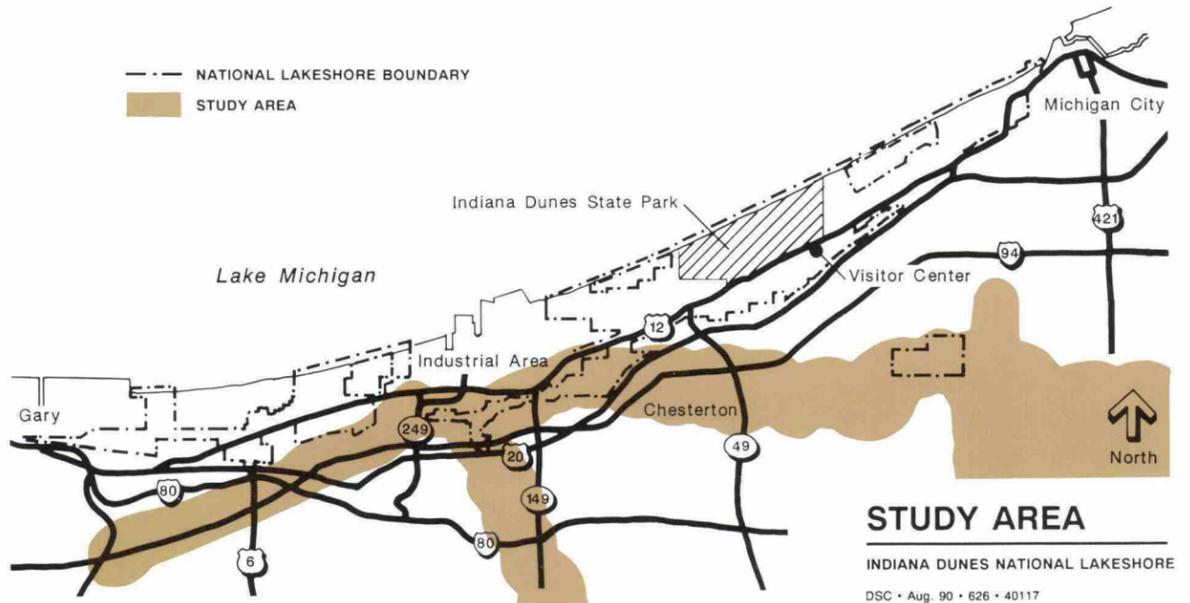
**SCHEMATIC COMPARISON**

**ALTERNATIVE  
SCENIC ROAD  
CONFIGURATIONS**

INDIANA DUNES NATIONAL LAKESHORE  
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The *Little Calumet River Corridor Plan and Environmental Assessment* presents methods to connect the East and West units of the national lakeshore and to provide better river access, parking, and recreational opportunities by way of the Burns Ditch and the east branch of the Little Calumet River. Other issues that are addressed are resource protection issues upstream along the Little Calumet River and Salt Creek.



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## Hike/Bike Trails

Methods to connect the diverse existing national lakeshore trails into one comprehensive trail system are provided in this plan. Five new trail components would be established to accomplish this comprehensive trail network:

- the east-west connection routes (routes A, B, and C)
- the east branch Little Calumet River hike/bike path
- the river hiking trail
- the US 12 hike/bike path
- the east end bike route

Three east-west connection routes (routes A, B, and C) would connect the proposed West Unit hike/bike trail at Hillcrest Road in Ogden Dunes (proposed in the *General Management Plan Amendment/Development Concept Plan* for the West Unit) with the proposed east branch Little Calumet River hike/bike path at Old Crisman Road (proposed in this corridor plan).

The east branch Little Calumet River hike/bike path would extend east from the Old Crisman Road bridge to Goodfellow

Camp, following the banks of the east branch Little Calumet River. The river hiking trail would be developed from the east branch Little Calumet River hike/bike path at the Samuelson Road bridge eastward to the Indiana Highway 149 river access and parking lot. The US 12 hike/bike path would be developed along the south side of the US 12 right-of-way, extending from the Indiana Highway 249 intersection with US 12 eastward to Indiana Highway 149 and Oak Hill Road. The east end bike route would provide a 13-mile designated bike route that would connect the East Unit of the national lakeshore with the Bailly Unit, using existing streets and rights-of-way.

access, Shadyside river access, and Burns Ditch river access.

## Connections to Other Recreational Facilities

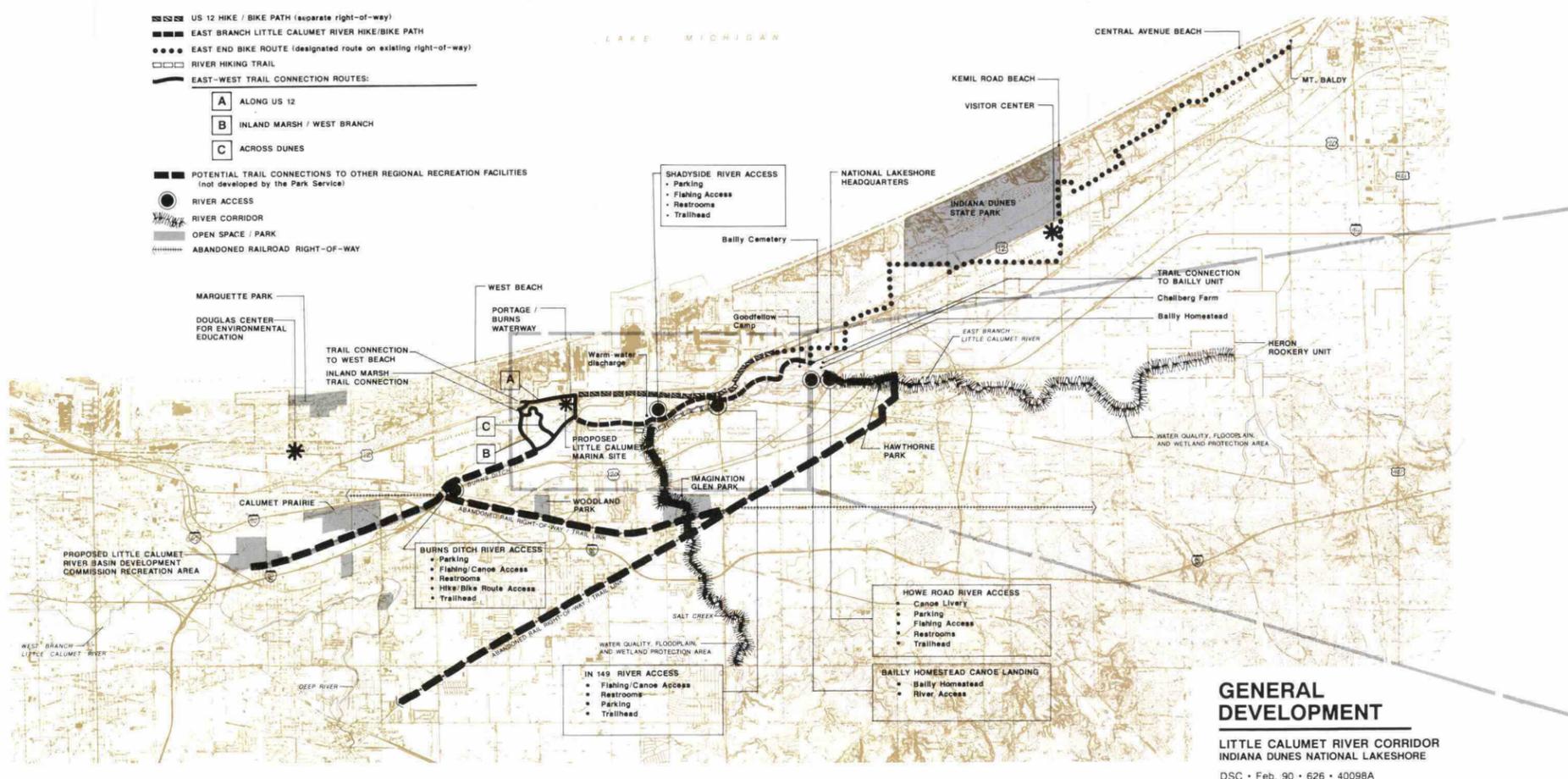
Future trail links are identified that may be developed to connect the national lakeshore with local, county, and state parks throughout northwestern Indiana by way of stream corridors and abandoned railroad rights-of-way. These potential trail links would follow along the Burns Ditch, the abandoned rights-of-way of the Norfolk and Southern and the Elgin, Joliet, and Eastern railroads and the Salt Creek corridor.

## River Access Sites

This corridor plan also recommends five new river access sites to provide better river access, parking, and recreational opportunities. These access points would have parking, toilet, and trash facilities, as well as connections to trail systems and recreation sites along the Little Calumet River. These five sites would be at Howe Road river access, Bailly Homestead canoe landing, Indiana Highway 149 river

## River and Land Use Management

The National Park Service has no jurisdiction over lands upstream of the national lakeshore boundary. However, stream corridor protection measures that could be used to help protect vacant lands have been identified.



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COMMENT SHEET

Please comment below. If there is not enough space, please add an extra sheet. When you are finished, fold this page so that the address to the National Park Service shows, tape it, and drop it in the mail. Postage is prepaid. Thank you.

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US 12 SCENIC ROAD FEASIBILITY STUDY: \_\_\_\_\_

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LITTLE CALUMET RIVER CORRIDOR PLAN: \_\_\_\_\_

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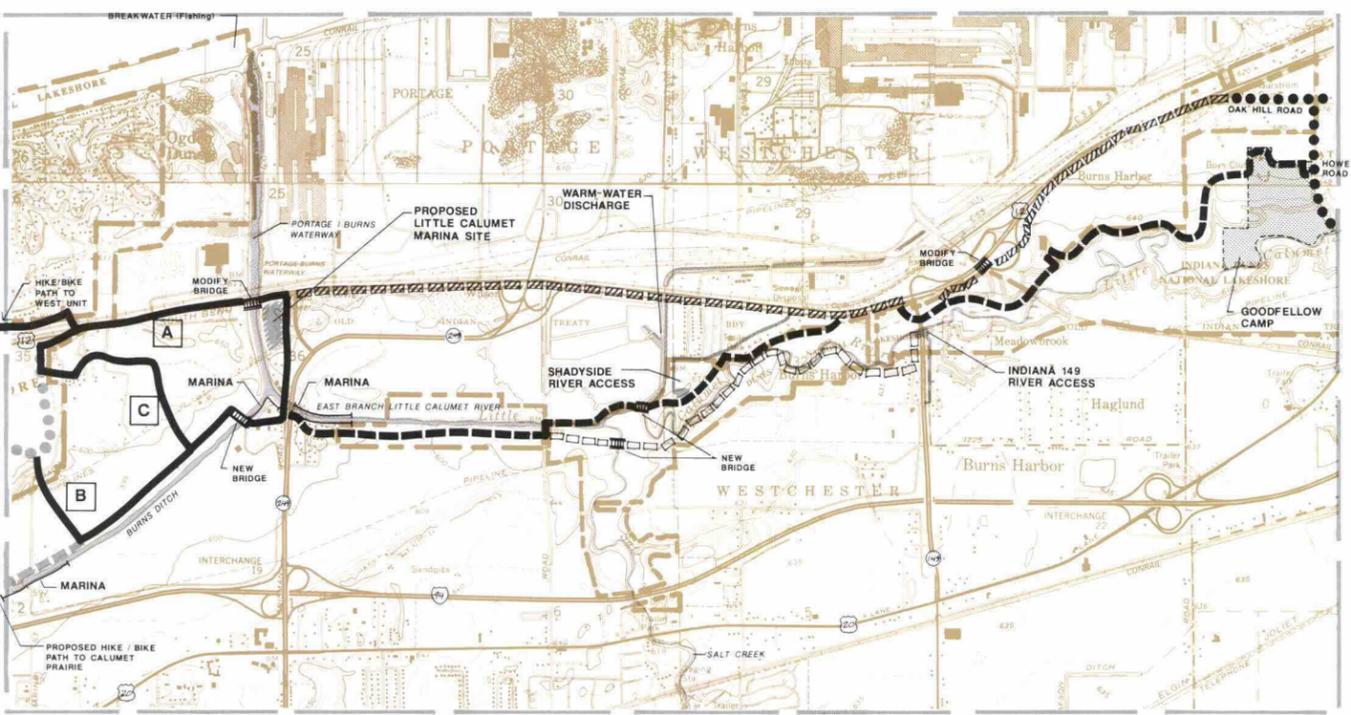
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(DETAIL)  
**GENERAL DEVELOPMENT**  
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