

THE
FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Cane River Creole National Historical Park

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: CARI

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

The Centennial Vision for Cane River Creole National Historical Park

The unique resources of Cane River Creole National Historical Park illustrate how the process of Creolization influenced a diversity of people, and provide a wealth of insight into contemporary cultural identities and relationships.

The park's vernacular agrarian architecture and landscapes reflect the convergence of French Colonial, Spanish Colonial, African, and American Indian cultures. These people adapted to each other and to the New World; together they also adapted to a successful of agriculture and labor systems, changing technology, and evolving social practices over the next three centuries.

Cane River Creole maintains a strong and congressionally-mandated relationship with the Cane River National Heritage Area. In addition, the park provides technical assistance to a broad range of public and private landowners and organizations.

The Centennial vision for the park and its partners is to improve the condition of area resources and cultural landscapes through active historic preservation efforts and/or retrieval of scientific and ethnographic material, which will better inform management decisions. Professional excellence will be achieved through striving to become a recognized leader in various aspects of cultural conservation.

Public stewardship of park resources will be promoted through participatory activities, partnerships with educational entities, development of non-personal media, and formal programming. Recreational experiences will be enhanced in ways that are appropriate and relevant to the park mission.

By focusing on our Centennial vision, we will ensure that a new generation of potential park stewards is given the opportunities to understand and appreciate the park's inherent values and vibrancy.

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Laura Soulliere Gates, Superintendent

Site: CARI

STEWARDSHIP

Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Cane River Creole National Historical Park will continue its progress in making park facilities safely accessible to all populations. The completion of lifts into historic structures, and the completion of additional sections of the accessible trail will allow all visitors additional access as the park develops. To increase understanding of park resources and their significance, the park will enhance its signage in a manner consistent with the National Historic Landmark status of the two park units. In addition the park will develop cooperative agreements and other management tools with park neighbors to develop visual and auditory buffers between park sites and adjacent lands.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: CARI

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Rehabilitate high-priority historic buildings to good condition, and help communities to preserve their history through programs like Preserve America.

Cane River Creole National Historical Park will work annually to improve the status of its historic structures so that all of the park's vernacular French Creole structures are in good condition by 2016. The park will continue to provide technical assistance for historic properties within Cane River National Heritage area to local governments, nonprofits, and private owners, as directed in park legislation. The technical assistance will enhance the level of preservation efforts in the local community.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Improve high-priority assets to acceptable condition, as measured by the Facility Condition Index.

As the park continues development, staff will work to retain a Facility Condition Index in which the park's National Historic Landmark structures are maintained in good condition.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Complete all cultural resource inventories for designated priority resources.

Obtain certification of Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) data so that the conditions of the park's two cultural landscapes, which are contributing features to National Historic Landmarks, are in good condition.

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Site: CARI

STEWARDSHIP

Assure that no compelling chapter in the American heritage experience remains untold and that strategically important landscapes are acquired, as authorized by Congress.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Cane River Creole National Historical Park and its partners including the Cane River National Heritage Area Commission, the Creole Heritage Center, and the African American Experience Fund of the National Park Foundation, will continue to foster interpretation and education on the diverse cultural groups of the Cane River region. The park will sponsor its annual African American history and culture symposium for the public. The national park, working with the Louisiana State Parks, will develop a networking meeting and roundtable of publicly and privately owned Louisiana plantation sites to focus on best practices in the interpretation of slavery and other difficult topics. The network also will developing best practices in increasing the numbers of African American visitors to these sites.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: CARI

STEWARDSHIP

Encourage children to be future conservationists.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Through the development of a Junior Ranger program and its availability on-line, Cane River Creole National Historical Park will encourage new generations of conservationists to be good stewards of the resources of our country.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: CARI

ENVIRONMENT

Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.

Reduce the environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality.

The park will encourage the General Services Administration to purchase alternative fuel vehicles for park use.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Cane River Creole National Historical Park will partner with local landowners, the Cane River National Heritage Area Commission, and the Louisiana Division of Environmental Quality to enhance environmental awareness and support sustainable agricultural practices on lands within Cane River National Heritage Area. On a smaller scale the park staff will employ sustainable practices including replacement of incandescent lightbulbs with compact fluorescents, recycling computer printer paper, recycling newsprint for use in janitorial functions, and buying "green" whenever possible. Also the park will work toward developing an energy efficient contact station within the existing entrance pavilion by 2016.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: CARI

ENVIRONMENT

Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

Demonstrate environmental excellence through increased use of alternative energy and fuels at every park.

Through the gradual replacements of incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents and thorough encouraging the use and development of alternative fuels in the region, the park hopes to lead by example.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: CARI

ENVIRONMENT

Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Through partnering with the Cane River National Heritage Area Commission, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality and local landowners, the park will work to enhance environmental awareness and sustainable agricultural practices in the region. The park will actively work as a member of the land conservation commission to encourage the preservation of agricultural lands and the rural cultural landscape within Cane River National Heritage Area.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: CARI

RECREATION

Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

Rehabilitate over 2,000 miles of trails within or connected to national parks, including trails accessible to those with disabilities.

Cane River Creole National Historical Park will continue to develop its trail system so that more of the park is easily accessible to persons with disabilities. The park will work to achieve signage and trail guide projects to enhance the walking experience throughout the park.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Through its place on the Cane River National Heritage Area Commission, the park will work with partners including the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, the City of Natchitoches, and Natchitoches Parish to develop regional biking and walking trails.

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Site: CARI

RECREATION

- Establish "volun-tourism" excursions to national parks for volunteers to help achieve natural and cultural resource protection goals.
- Increase annual volunteer hours by 100 percent, from 5.2 million hours to 10.4 million hours.

Cane River Creole National Historical Park, a small park, will work to maintain its high volume of volunteer hours through a dedicated volunteer recruitment program.

- The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: CARI

RECREATION

- Expand partnerships with schools and boys and girls associations to show how national park experiences can improve children's lives.
- Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Cane River Creole National Historical Park will continue its support of youth programs and its partnerships with boys' and girls' associations. The park will continue its annual Youth Conservation Corps programs to offer summer jobs and a national park experience to local youths.

- The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: CARI

RECREATION

- Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.
- Increase visitation by 25 percent at lesser-known parks through a national tourism effort aimed at helping people to discover the breadth of parks and experiences.

The park will continually update its website to provide accurate and relevant information to the growing number of virtual park visitors.

- The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

- Increase the number of visitors that attend ranger-facilitated programs such as campfire talks, hikes, and school programs.

Cane River Creole National Historical Park intends to expand its offerings of tours, walks and school programs when staffing levels and funding allow.

- The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: CARI

EDUCATION

Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Cane River Creole National Historical Park proposes to develop education curricula and post these online.

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Site: CARI

EDUCATION

Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

Cane River Creole National Historical Park proposes to develop its Junior Ranger program and post it online, so that young virtual visitors may take advantage of the learning experiences the resources provide.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: CARI

EDUCATION

Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.

Enroll an additional two million children in the Junior Ranger program.

By developing and posting the park's Junior Ranger program online, and making the program available to local and regional schools, the park intends to expand the numbers of Junior Rangers and children interested in national parks.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: CARI

EDUCATION

Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.

Cane River Creole National Historical Park intends to maintain its high levels of visitor satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of this national park. Park staff also will be trained in the NPS vision to inspire visitors to greater understanding of the mission of the service.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: CARI

PROFESSIONALISM

Be one of the top 10 places to work in America.

Meet 100 percent of diversity recruitment goals by employing people who reflect the face of America.

Cane River Creole National Historical Park will strive to cast the widest nets possible in its recruitment practices to increase the number of diverse applicants, thereby increasing the likelihood of recruitment of diverse candidates. The park will continue its participation in job fairs at a nearby university. The park will continue its present, successful recruitment practices at local high schools for Youth Conservation Corps workers, which have resulted in very diverse representation. Often these Youth Conservation Corps workers move into STEP positions at the park, which begins longer-term work with the National Park Service.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Attain the highest employee satisfaction rate of all federal agencies, as measured by Office of Personnel Management surveys.

Cane River Creole National Historical Park will strive to provide a quality work environment for all employees through providing training opportunities, including cross-training assignments within the park and at other national parks and external training within available funds.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Cane River Creole National Historical Park will ensure that comprehensive mission-oriented training such as NPS fundamentals is made available to all permanent employees. The park staff also will ensure that the mission-oriented vision is communicated to and reinforced with all park employees and park volunteers.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: CARI

PROFESSIONALISM

Use strategic planning to promote management excellence.

Establish a structured professional development curriculum to provide park managers with the skills to apply best business practices and superior leadership.

The superintendent of Cane River Creole National Historical Park will continue working as a facilitator for Core Operations Analyses at national parks throughout the Southeast Region.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

In 2008 Cane River Creole National Historical Park will review and rework its strategic management plan to better address the needs of the future

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Site: CARI

PROFESSIONALISM

Promote a safety and health culture for all employees and visitors.

Reduce the number of employee lost-time incidents and serious visitor injuries by 20 percent.

Cane River Creole National Historical Park will continue to promote its culture of safety through its annual training in First Aid, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, and the use of Automatic Electronic Defibrillators so that all employees retain these skills. In addition park staff will reinforce the culture of safety through documented tailgate safety sessions.

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Site: CARI

PROFESSIONALISM

Model what it means to work in partnership.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Cane River Creole National Historical Park will continue its close working partnership with Cane River National Heritage Area through shared projects and programs, shared decision-making when appropriate, and close staff interactions to benefit both heritage area and national park resources. The park and the heritage area will continue to serve as a model for this public/private partnership, as it has done in the past.

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Site: CARI

PROFESSIONALISM

Make national parks the first choice in philanthropic giving among those concerned about environmental, cultural, and recreational values.

Improve communications and marketing capacity to increase public understanding of our mission, opportunities, and benefits.

Cane River Creole National Historical Park staff will continue providing formal programs to service organizations throughout central and northwestern Louisiana. The park will remain actively involved with formal partners who are promoting heritage tourism for the region.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS