environmental assessment
development concept study

CANYON RIM / FAYETTE STATION

NEW RIVER GORGE

NATIONAL RIVER / WEST VIRGINIA

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
for a
DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT STUDY

CANYON RIM / FAYETTE STATION
NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER
West Virginia

U.S. Department of the Interior / National Park Service

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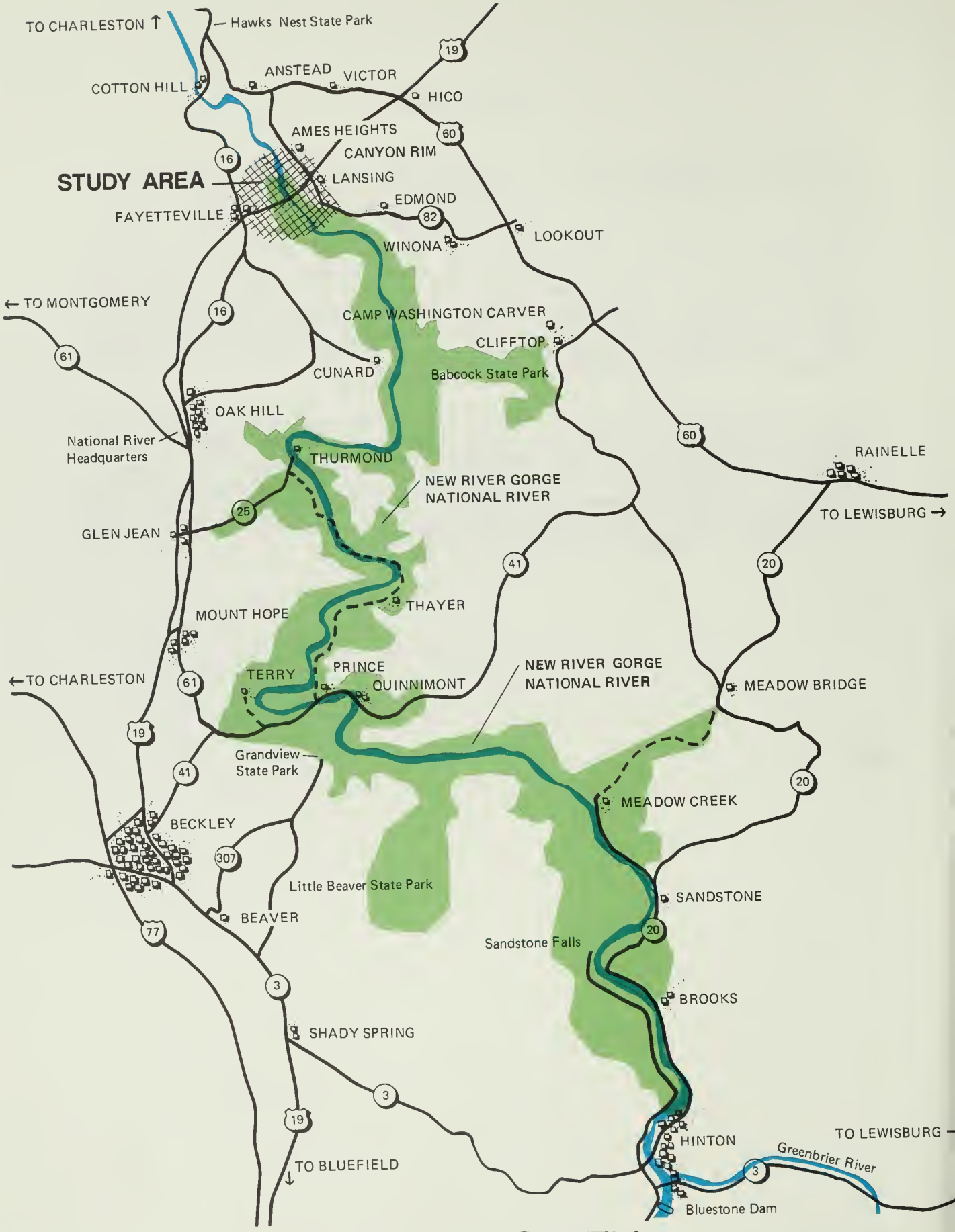
INTRODUCTION

The General Management Plan for the New River Gorge National River was approved in November 1982. It identified the Canyon Rim site adjacent to US 19 on the east side of the gorge as the major location point of visitor contact for interpretation and information. Since early 1983, a prefabricated facility has served as a temporary visitor contact station. The purpose of this planning effort is to elaborate on the concepts and proposals for this study area that were made in the General Management Plan and the River Management Plan. Specific locations are identified for park facilities and visitor use activities. Alternatives to recommendations made in the General Management Plan are identified where new information or changing conditions warrant their consideration.

Not all lands considered for use in this study are under National Park Service jurisdiction. And until those areas are acquired, portions of the alternatives discussed in this document cannot be implemented. Because of the uncertainties of this situation, a preferred alternative is not identified. However, once land status is resolved, a plan of action can be selected from the alternatives outlined, and the more detailed (comprehensive) design phase begun at that time.



VICINITY

Canyon Rim / Fayette Station

New River Gorge National River

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

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DSC	June 87

DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

This planning project includes a cross-sectional area at the northernmost end of the national river. The study area comprises land on the rim of the gorge as well as the canyon slopes and riverbanks at the bottom on both sides of the river. Both the setting and visitor use differ dramatically at these locations.

The upland landscape on the rim is a rolling topography dotted with scattered houses and small commercial buildings located in forest clearings. Small tributary streams subdivide the landscape into a pattern of ravines and field or forest. This gentle landform drops abruptly at sheer rock cliffs, or at steep slopes of 40 to 70 percent that meet the river 1,000 feet below.

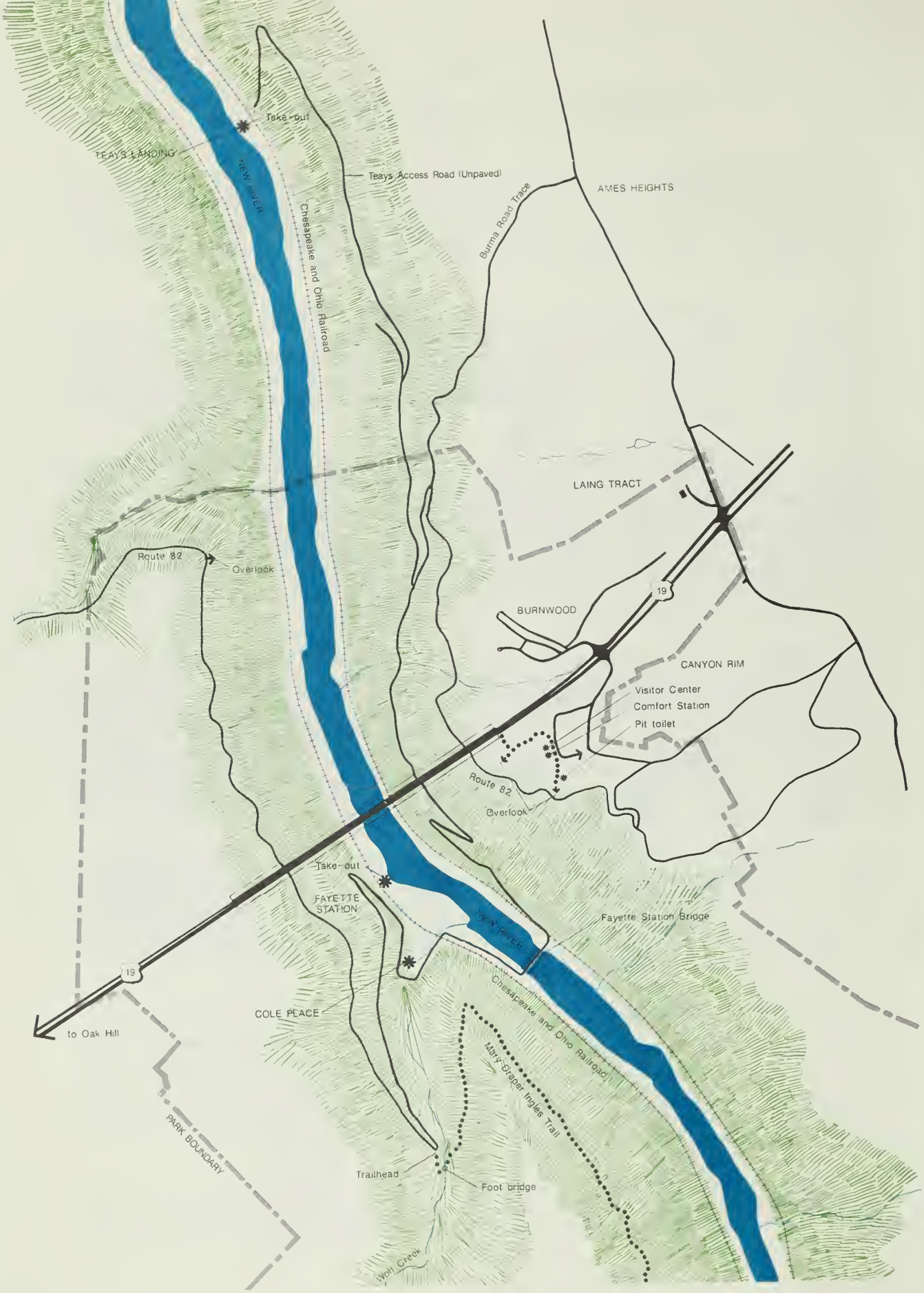
The US 19 bridge--the world's largest single arch steel span bridge--crosses the canyon at this site, and has become a popular scenic attraction. It stands in dramatic contrast to the historic river crossing at the Fayette Station Bridge visible below at the bottom of the gorge. Interestingly, the same company, U.S. Steel, built both bridges. One of Fayette County's major annual events is "Bridge Day," held the second Saturday in October. As many as 100,000 people cross the bridge on foot to participate in the festivities.

The National Park Service operates a visitor contact station at the site of the former West Virginia Highway Department bridge overlook. The two prefabricated octagonal buildings house a small visitor center in one and restrooms in the other. The site has three overlook platforms from which visitors can view the river gorge and the high bridge. The contact station site is approximately 2½ acres, with little room for expansion of existing facilities. The visitor center can comfortably accommodate about 23 people in the auditorium and 40 in the reception/exhibit area.

Across US 19 from the visitor contact facilities are 45 acres of rim land within the proposed park boundary that have been acquired by the National Park Service. A portion of this land was the former Burnwood Campground--a relatively undeveloped, privately operated campground. Although the site is the location of a former settlement, no visible physical evidence of that history remains.

Where the land slopes toward the canyon there is more mature vegetation than is found on the uplands where second-growth hardwoods prevail. Mixed pine forest or hemlock stands vegetate the stream valleys that drain the area. Adjacent to the Burnwood property on the northeast side is a narrow ridgetop--half pasture and half woodland. This pastoral setting is undisturbed by the visual distraction of commercial facilities and has an appealing mix of upland and ravine vegetation.

The canyon slopes can only be classified as very steep to vertical. Route 82, a narrow mountain road, winds its way down either side of the gorge and is interrupted at the river where the condemned old Fayette Station



STUDY AREA

Canyon Rim / Fayette Station

New River Gorge National River
United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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Bridge terminates its continuity. The open slopes are heavily vegetated primarily with mixed hardwood vegetation, or with occasional clusters of conifers except where rock outcrops provide a dramatic change of texture. The natural features are also punctuated by an occasional mine, spoil bank, or remnant mine structure. The steep gradient and abundance of rock outcrops and boulders create dramatic tumbling waterfalls after rainfalls where small streams cascade down the hollows to the New River below.

Railroad tracks of the CSX Corporation are perched above the riverbank on either side of the river in this section of the gorge. The railroad is an important element in New River history and is key to both the coal mining and transportation stories in the park. It offers modern rail passengers a unique opportunity to see the gorge and river without getting wet, as an AMTRAK train winds through the canyon. However, the presence of fast-moving trains poses a serious threat to people who may be tempted to walk along the tracks.

Route 82, known as the Fayette Station Road, tunnels under the railroad tracks on the west side, providing safe access to the shoreline and privately owned boat landing areas below the Fayette Station rapid. The new culvert underpass at Teays Landing (Ames) on the east side provides similar safe access to the riverbank on that side of the river. The Teays area is not within the existing park boundary, but the commercial outfitters that own the land have been quite cooperative in allowing private paddlers to use it as a takeout point.

Although the Teays side of the river has more level land on benches above the river, the South Fayette side is much more appealing and accommodating for shoreline recreation such as picnicking, fishing, or watching rafters coming through the rapids. Both sides are used by commercial rafting companies as takeout points.

Until the completion of the US 19 bridge in 1977, the Fayette Station Bridge at the bottom of the gorge was the only vehicular river crossing between Thurmond and Cotton Hill. This iron truss bridge, which was built in 1889, was closed to public use in 1977 due to serious structural problems. Although vehicular crossings are no longer permitted, it could offer pedestrians a unique vantage point for viewing the river and for watching boaters running the Fayette Station rapid. Many individuals choose to ignore the posted warnings and climb through the access barriers to do just that. The bridge has historical significance to the area, and the story of the advance of transportation and construction technology can be easily told here.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE STUDY

CANYON RIM

The General Management Plan for the New River Gorge National River foresaw the need for visitor orientation and information at the north entry to the park. Consistent with the plan the National Park Service has installed and operated an interim visitor contact facility at Canyon Rim since 1983. However, the facilities are limited in size and do not adequately serve park purposes.

The visitor contact station at Canyon Rim is primarily intended to intercept and inform travelers passing through the area on US 19. Access needs to be simple, safe, and relatively direct. The park message should be introductory and orientational in scope. The visitor center setting should be transitional in that it signals to visitors that they are entering a unit of the national park system, not merely stopping at a highway rest area. Existing facilities do not fulfill these requirements.

The three overlooks are primarily needed to feature the New River Gorge and the river below. Features and landforms visible from the viewpoints can complement and visually support many of the park interpretive themes introduced inside the visitor center portion of the facility. To best serve that purpose, the viewing platforms should be integrally connected to the visitor center.

Utility services--specifically water and sewage treatment--pose problems that must be solved in order for the facility to operate effectively and to handle peak visitor use. Water is currently hauled into the site for sanitary uses. The existing system has a capacity of 6,000 gallons per day.

RIVERBANK (EAST SIDE)

The Canyon Rim contact station is on the east side of the gorge; therefore, it would seem logical to locate shoreline activities on the same side of the river. Unfortunately, the east shoreline is less usable and not as safely accessible as the west shoreline. Furthermore, the only good access point for shoreline activity is at Teays Landing (Ames), which is outside the present park boundary. Even if the site were added to the park, recreational use would be limited because of the riverbank's steepness. The site is excellent for boat takeouts, however, and is heavily used for that purpose by the rafting companies that own the property.

Route 82 is a scenic mountain road offering a unique driving experience for visiting motorists from flatland areas of the country. It is also a dangerous, constricted accessway for the large trucks and buses used by commercial outfitters to transport their equipment and customers. The old Burma Road trace has been identified as a possible alternate route for

commercial traffic that would separate it from visitor traffic on most of Route 82. One problem with the Burma Road, though, is that it has been used for generations for dumping discarded materials, vehicles, appliances, and other junk. Removing the accumulated trash from the ravines and steep slopes would be a monumental task--difficult and expensive, but probably not impossible.

At the terminus of Route 82 on the east side of the river, one encounters an at-grade railroad crossing and very limited space to turn around or park. This is another site where the railroad tracks become an "attractive nuisance" as an easy place to walk along the river. The CSX Corporation has posted the right-of-way against trespassing. The National Park Service must be careful not to invite people to sites where the likelihood of unsafe use is extremely high.

FAYETTE STATION BRIDGE

On May 26, 1986, as part of this planning project, Lew Gridley, civil engineer with the Denver Service Center, National Park Service, conducted a brief inspection of the Fayette Station Bridge. Notes and photographs taken at that time were compared with the 1977 bridge inspection report done by the West Virginia Department of Highways. Comparing the 1986 photographs to the ones in the 1977 inspection report, the following is obvious:

> The bridge and abutments are still moving. Bridge pier #1 was stabilized by the West Virginia Department of Transportation in 1968. The 1977 inspection report on pier #1 indicates that 2½ inches of movement have occurred since 1968, or the pier is a total of 16 inches out of plumb; also, there is deformation of channels and stringers on the cable guy system.
>
> On pier #2, upstream side, one additional roller is exposed in the roller nest. This alone indicates an additional 3-4 inches of movement since the 1977 inspection.
>
> The cracks in abutment #1 appear larger by field observation than shown in the 1977 inspection report.
>
> The sole plate rotation on pier #1, span #2, appears greater than the 1 inch established in the 1977 inspection report. This would indicate additional rotation of pier #1 concrete cap from pier movement.
>
> Additional loss of section has taken place from oxidation. Bare metal has been exposed since 1977.
>
> Additional deformation has taken place on the supporting channels and stringers used in the cable support system. At least one nut on the tension rod has sheared away.

In short, the condition of the bridge has gotten worse, and it is probably more unsafe than it was in 1977. Even the barricades installed at each end of the bridge do not deter people from climbing onto the bridge to take photographs or simply to take advantage of this unique viewpoint. The state of West Virginia plans to announce that due to the unstable condition of the old bridge, it will be taken down. Public sentiment may yet affect the decision. Stabilization costs have been estimated at $1.5 million. Demolition of the bridge is estimated to cost $350,000.

SOUTH FAYETTE (WEST SIDE)

South Fayette, on the west side of the canyon, is also accessible from US 19 and the rim via old Route 82. Roughly halfway to the bottom the road intersects Wolf Creek and the trail to the Kaymoor Historic Site. At present, trailhead parking is limited to only a few cars, and occasionally the cars are parked too close to the curve where the road switches back, making it difficult for large rafting company vehicles to negotiate the bend.

Closer to the river the roadway tunnels under the railroad tracks providing safe access to the shoreline. Site conditions on this side of the river are much more conducive to recreational use than on the east side. Wolf Creek has created a delta of accessible gently sloping land next to the river. The boulder-strewn banks are attractive for climbing and sitting on, and they provide vantage points for watching the river and boaters running the rapids. They also possess the potential for accidents (e.g., twisted ankles, etc.). This site has been mentioned for fee acquisition in the General Management Plan and in the Land Protection Plan for the national river. If the site is not acquired, it would be difficult to establish usable visitor facilities on this side of the river.

PLANNING OBJECTIVES

The following planning objectives were identified during preliminary scoping sessions with the New River park staff. Methods for achieving these objectives are addressed in this document.

CANYON RIM

Identify the best location for a permanent visitor contact facility, with parking for 150 cars and 10 buses, on the rim of the New River Gorge near the US 19 bridge.

Ensure that adequate space is provided for North District ranger and interpretation offices; informational services, literature sales, and storage; exhibits and audiovisual presentations of introductory park themes; and for more active, participatory programs in the permanent visitor contact facility.

Include at Canyon Rim facilities for on-site maintenance operations--including janitorial space and grounds maintenance equipment storage required for a maintenance foreman and two workers.

Locate a shaded picnic area (5-10 sites) near the visitor contact station. The site should be close enough to the contact station so that separate restroom facilities are not required.

Determine potential uses for the Burnwood Campground site.

Study the potential for additional overlooks at the rim.

Locate a reliable permanent water source to serve the rim development. (Note: The National Park Service's Water Resources Division has undertaken a $30,000 study to locate a water source for the visitor center complex at Canyon River.)

Identify the most effective and environmentally suitable sewage treatment system for the rim site.

Determine ways to make access to (and from) the visitor contact station from US 19 as safe as possible, and to announce the NPS presence with appropriate signing.

RIVERBANK (EAST SIDE)

Identify methods to allow park use of the privately owned Teays (Ames) site for a river takeout point for private paddlers and for use by shoreline recreationists.

Identify opportunities for shoreline recreation on the east side of the river (watching rafters, fishing, hiking, picnicking) that do not require dangerous trespass on railroad property.

Explore the possibility of separating commercial rafting vehicles from private vehicle traffic on Route 82.

Retain access to the water source below the Teays (Ames) access road junction on Route 82 for local residents.

FAYETTE STATION BRIDGE

Recommend ways to eliminate the hazardous conditions that pose threats to public safety.

Retain opportunities for viewing the river and watching rafting activity from the vantage point now offered by the bridge.

Resolve the safety problem created by the uncontrolled at-grade railroad crossing on the east side access to the bridge.

FAYETTE AREA (WEST SIDE)

Identify ways to improve traffic safety on the Route 82 access road.

Determine a more efficient vehicle circulation and parking pattern for commercial outfitters, shoreline recreationists, and trail users.

Provide interpretation in the Fayette area.

Determine ways to provide more adequate toilet facilities and trash collection.

ALTERNATIVES

Three preliminary draft alternatives, including a no-action alternative, were developed for the Canyon Rim/Fayette Station area, and they are presented in this section. A comparison of cost estimates for the alternatives is also included.

DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

Site	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (No Action)
Canyon Rim (existing facilities)	Replace existing facilities with new, more comprehensive facilities. Pump water to the site from Ames or Ajax mines. Retain comfort station and convert existing visitor center to a picnic/interpretive shelter. Use composting toilets in the new visitor center to conserve water. Remove the "bridge deck" overlook, and plant more trees to buffer highway noise and to provide more shaded sites for light picnicking. Establish 5-10 picnic sites in the area. Locate the new contact station building at the edge of the escarpment as an integral part of a new overlook platform. Create a direct trail (boardwalk) linkage from this facility to the existing bridge and canyon overlook. Install wayside exhibits along this trail. Redesign the parking area to accommodate more vehicles with specific spots provided for buses and large recreational vehicles.	Retain existing contact facilities, but expand capacity by adding more octagonal structures to accommodate needs. Drill deep well for water supply. Remove the "bridge deck" overlook and make parking and landscape improvements as noted in alternative 1.	No change in facilities. If public utility district is created, use those services for sewer and water.
Burnwood	Fee acquisition. Retain existing access from US 19. Use of the site to be by permit only for either special events and/or environmental education camps. Construct activity center building to support the environmental programs near the designated camping site, and build a large shelter/gazebo to serve as the focal point of the special events area. Provide comfort stations at each site, and continue to pump water from the Ajax mine to this site. Establish pedestrian access between Burnwood and the existing Canyon Rim boardwalk by constructing a trail under the US 19 bridge.	Fee acquisition. Close entry from US 19 and establish access through Laing tract. Develop site for destination picnicking by installing picnic tables, comfort stations, and several picnic shelters. Allow use of site for special events but not for camping. Establish short loop trails to complement the picnicking activity.	Scenic easement.
Laing Tract	Fee acquisition/life tenancy. Use portions of property for interpretive trails and interpretive program sites, such as fire rings or small amphitheaters.	Fee acquisition. Develop entry road to Burnwood site. Use existing residence for quarters.	Scenic easement.
Teays Landing	Include within park boundary and acquire an agreement to allow use of the site for major commercial and private paddler river takeout point.	Include in park boundary and acquire for use as takeout and picnic site. Pave road from Route 82 to Teays and provide parking area.	Retain status quo/private ownership. No boundary change.
Burma Road	Rebuild road to accommodate one-way commercial outfitter traffic. Clean up trash dumps.	Rebuild road to accommodate one-way commercial outfitter traffic. Clean up trash dumps.	No change; road to remain closed.
Route 82 (east side)	No change.	Close beyond Teays access (allow local residents to get water at Canyon Rim).	No change; all traffic to continue use of Route 82.

Site	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (No Action)
Wolf Creek Trailhead (Mary Draper Ingles Trail)	Create parking for 10 cars along the shoulder above the switchback curve. Construct a new footbridge over the creek.	Create parking for 10 cars along the shoulder above the switchback curve. Construct a new footbridge over the creek.	No change; retain limited parking at present location.
Cole Place (C&O RR property)	Fee acquisition/life tenancy as caretaker for Mr. Cole. Establish parking area, comfort station, and wayside shelter.	Fee acquisition/life tenancy as caretaker for Mr. Cole. Establish parking area, comfort station, and wayside shelter.	No acquisition. Do not encourage visitor use on the west side. No NPS facilities beyond Wolf Creek trailhead.
Fayette Station	Fee acquisition. Improve shoreline access for fishing and casual picnicking, sunbathing, and river-watching. Continue as commercial takeout point.	No acquisition. Direct visitors to use Upper Sand Bar area and bridge.	No acquisition.
Fayette Station Bridge	Remove bridge deck and superstructure; leave piers and abutments.	If piers and abutments can be stabilized, repair bridge for pedestrian use as overlook. Install benches and consider for use as a platform for seasonal picnic shelters. Establish safe at-grade crossing and vehicle turnaround on the east side. Develop and install interpretive waysides to tell the transportation story associated with this site.	Remove bridge deck; leave piers, abutments, and superstructure.

ALTERNATIVE 1
Canyon Rim / Fayette Station

New River Gorge National River
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ALTERNATIVE 2

Canyon Rim / Fayette Station

New River Gorge National River

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

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ALTERNATIVE 3 (NO ACTION)

Canyon Rim / Fayette Station

New River Gorge National River
United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service

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COST COMPARISON
(Class C estimates in thousands of dollars)

Site	Alternative 1		Alternative 2		Alternative 3 (No Action)	
Canyon Rim	New visitor center (2,500 sf)	$ 500	Visitor center additions (2 new octagonal structures)	$ 150		
	Overlook deck (1,000 sf)	30				
	Boardwalk (675' x 5')	50				
	New parking area (150 cars)	195	New parking area (150 cars)	195		
	Water system (Ajax mine source)	156	Water system (deep well)	283		
	Landscaping	50	Landscaping	20		
	Subtotal	$ 981	Subtotal	$ 648		
Burnwood	Activity center	$ 300				
	Shelter/gazebo	15	Picnic shelters	$ 75		
	Comfort stations (2)	170	Comfort station (1)	85		
	Water system	20	Water system	20		
	Roads (.5 mi asphalt)	250	Roads	250		
	Trails (1 mile)	20	Trails (1 mile)	20		
	Subtotal	$ 775	Subtotal	$ 450		
Laing Tract	Trails (included above)		Trails (included above)			
			Entry road (.5 mi)	$ 250		
	Subtotal	$ 0	Subtotal	$ 250		
Teays Landing			Road paving (1.3 mi)	$ 650		
			Parking area	65		
	Subtotal	$ 0	Subtotal	$ 715		
Burma Road	Road construction (.75 mile)	$ 380	Road construction (.75 mile)	$ 380		
	Trash cleanup	25	Trash cleanup	25		
	Subtotal	$ 405	Subtotal	$ 405		
Route 82 (east side)			Barricade/signs	$ 5		
	Subtotal	$ 0	Subtotal	$ 5		
Wolf Creek Trailhead	Parking	$ 15	Parking	$ 15		
	Footbridge	18	Footbridge	18		
	Subtotal	$ 33	Subtotal	$ 33		
Cole Place (C&O RR Property)	Parking	$ 350	Parking	$ 350		
	Comfort station	85	Comfort station	85		
	Shelter	10	Shelter	10		
	Subtotal	$ 445	Subtotal	$ 445		
Fayette Station	Misc. improvements	$ 10				
	Subtotal	$ 10	Subtotal	$ 0		
Fayette Station Bridge	Bridge deck and superstructure removal	$ 350	Bridge repair	$1,500	Bridge deck removal	$ 20
			Benches/shelters	40		
			East side turnaround	20		
	Subtotal	$	Subtotal	$1,560	Subtotal	$ 20
(Gross Development Cost)	TOTAL	$2,999	TOTAL	$4,511	TOTAL	$ 20

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The environmental impacts and other consequences of the alternatives previously described are summarized on the accompanying chart.

COMPARISON OF IMPACTS

Site	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (No Action)
Canyon Rim (existing facilities)	Developments at Canyon Rim were proposed and assessed in the DGMP/EA (August 1982).	Same as alternative 1.	Lack of water and sewage facilities would continue to affect operations at Canyon Rim.
	Use of water from mines (if usable) would be a positive water source; development of water and sewage facilities would improve operation of the visitor contact center.	Use of water from wells (if usable) would be a positive water source; development of water and sewage facilities would improve operation of the visitor contact center.	The GMP indicates this area would be developed; no-action alternative would be contrary to approved actions.
	Contact station at the edge of the the gorge would allow visitors an all-weather visual experience of the gorge.	Development of octagonal structures would improve visitor contact operations, but would not have the visual impact of a gorge edge overlook.	Chances of creating a public utility district for Canyon Rim and adjacent residential areas are remote.
	New parking area would be more efficient, with improved safety for motorists and pedestrians; could be designed to decrease vandalism and theft (include signs).	Same as alternative 1.	
	Trees would not reduce highway noise that much; would require a soil/concrete/wood barrier structure.	Same as alternative 1.	
Burnwood	Fee acquisition would be most expensive.	Same as alternative 1.	A scenic easement for this area would put limitations on development opportunities or use.
		Closing entry from US 19 would require fee acquisition or easement across Laing tract.	Facilities would have to be improved to NPS standards, or area would be a primitive picnicking/camping area.
	Environmental education/special events/camping area would improve visitor use/interpretation of the gorge area; however, this would be mainly for local use and not for visitors traveling through on US 19.	Same as alternative 1, except that camping would not be allowed.	
	Comfort stations at these locations could have similar problems as those that exist at contact station.		
	The edge of the gorge could have some safety hazards for youth groups or handicapped people.		
	Existing entry to site has traffic noise and congestion problems.	An entry through the Laing tract would reduce noise (and possibly congestion of US 19). However, this access would be more difficult to find (access would be outside the park boundary).	
Laing Tract	Fee acquisition of this tract would expand the opportunities for development/interpretation/use of Burnwood.	Same as alternative 1.	A scenic easement for this area would put limitations on development opportunities/use.
	Life tenancy could limit the opportunities to develop this area for the period of the life tenancy.	NPS presence and use of the existing residence would provide protection and information/orientation for the park.	

Site	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (No Action)
Teays Landing	Development of Teays Landing would require a park boundary change and preparation of agreement; National Park Service would be responsible for maintenance of the road.	Same; acquisition at the area would increase costs; National Park Service would be responsible for maintenance of road.	Acquisition of the road was proposed and assessed in the GMP/EA.
	The area below the railroad grade is in the floodplain; this would require signs warning the public and the preparation of an evacuation plan. Road would provide improved access to the river for emergency services.	Same as alternative 1.	
	Development of the site could increase interpretation and visitor use.	Same as alternative 1.	
	Vehicle access to river could result in greater numbers of visitors using hazardous areas along the C&O railroad tracks		Same as alternative 1.
Burma Road	Development of road would reduce use (by commercial outfitters) on Route 82, and would improve traffic and safety conditions for park visitors; National Park Service would be responsible for maintenance of road.	Same as alternative 1.	The road would remain closed.
	Development or road would provide better access to river for commercial outfitters and for emergency services.	Same as alternative 1.	
	Cleaning up trash would improve the area environmentally.	Same as alternative 1.	
	Some acquisition of property would be necessary.	Same as alternative 1.	
Route 82 (east side)	Road would continue to be narrow with switchbacks; scenic qualities would remain the same.	Closing road at Teays access would reduce use of road to river including hazardous areas along C&O railroad tracks and on bridge.	Same as alternative 1.
	Road would continue to provide access to river for emergency services.	Closing road at Teays access would restrict use for emergency services.	Same as alternative 1.
	Vehicle access to river would allow continued use of hazardous areas along the C&O railroad tracks and on the old bridge.		Same as alternative 1.
	Parking at end of road would continue to be congested.	Closing road at Teays access would provide residents access to water areas.	Same as alternative 1.
Wolf Creek Trailhead (Kaymoor Trail)	Formalizing parking would reduce traffic congestion on the access road and improve safety conditions.	Same as alternative 1.	Parking would remain congested with safety considerations at the switchback curve.
	New footbridge over Wolf Creek would provide safer access to the trail.	Same as alternative 1.	
Cole Place (C&O RR property)	The GMP proposes acquisition of the Cole property to develop parking and other visitor facilities.	Same as alternative 1.	Lack of public access would continue t restrict visitor use; restrictions of parking areas would continue traffic congestion (and safety) at old highway approach to the bridge.
	Acquisition of the property with life tenancy for Mr. Cole (as caretaker) would put some time restrictions on site development.		Visitors would continue to park at bridge approach and use the bridge even as it continues to deteriorate.
	Complies with GMP.		

Site	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (No Action)
Fayette Station	Acquisition and improvement of the area would reduce congestion and improve visitor safety. Area is in the floodplain; would require mitigation actions of development on floodplains and warnings of high water and evacuation plans in the event of flooding.	Area is in the floodplain; would require mitigation actions of development on floodplains and warnings of high water and evacuation plans in the event of flooding.	Lack of public access restricts visitor use; restrictions of parking areas would continue traffic congestion (and safety) at old highway approach to the bridge. Visitor would continue to park at bridge approach, and use the bridge even as it continues to deteriorate.
Fayette Station Bridge	Removal of bridge would give site a more natural appearance, except for the piers and abutments. Removal of the bridge would prohibit crossing the river at this site. Interpretation of the river/gorge would be lost. Presence of the piers and abutments would still be hazardous to visitors and others climbing on them.	Repair and stabilization of bridge would provide the most use and interpretation of the river and gorge. East approach to the bridge would be improved for safety (railroad crossing). Use of the bridge for picnicking would be unique. Bridge is in the floodplain; use mitigations would have to be developed to provide for visitor safety--warnings of high water, evacuation plans, etc.	Same as alternative 1. Same as alternative 1. Same as alternative 1. Same as alternative 1.

LEGAL COMPLIANCE

New River Gorge National River is operating under a 1982 General Management Plan, which was approved for the purposes of the programmatic memorandum of agreement concluded between the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, and the National Park Service. Actions discussed in the 1982 plan can be implemented subsequent to preparation of an XXX form ("Assessment of Effect") outlining project effects on cultural resources. No further consultation with the state historic preservation officer or the Advisory Council is required for such actions.

The national river was surveyed for archeological and historic properties in compliance with Executive Order 11593. All known archeological sites (i.e., those located during the parkwide archeological survey) will be avoided by construction. All areas proposed for ground disturbance will require a site-specific archeological evaluation to ensure that archeological sites of National Register significance are not inadvertently destroyed by construction.

The Kaymoor Mine Site, which is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, will be indirectly affected by development of a trail to the mine from the Wolf Creek trailhead. An XXX form outlining the effects will be prepared.

The Fayette Station bridge belongs to the state of West Virginia. However, should it be transferred to NPS ownership, it would then be evaluated for placement on the National Register prior to any implementation of actions affecting it.

Because the Burnwood Campground site was not discussed in the general management plan--it was not expected to be acquired--special care will be taken to ensure that historic and archeological resources are identified and evaluated. Should the site contain resources eligible for the National Register, development will be redesigned to avoid the resources, if possible. If not, compliance with requirements of section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act will be initiated.

PLANNING TEAM

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Lew Gridley, Civil Engineer
Larry Reynolds, Structural Engineer
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NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER

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Gene Cox, Chief of Interpretation (until June 1986)
Jason Houck, Chief Ranger
Bob Schenck, Chief of Maintenance
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☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1987—773-038/40,049 REGION NO. 8

As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities to protect and conserve our land and water, energy and minerals, fish and wildlife, parks and recreation areas, and to ensure the wise use of all these resources. The department also has major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

Publication services were provided by the graphics and editorial staffs of the Denver Service Center. NPS D-17 July 1987