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Fort Necessity National Bat...

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APR 2 1990



FORT NECESSITY NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

PENNSYLVANIA

NEWSLETTER • FEBRUARY 1990



United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



FORT NECESSITY NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD
FRIENDSHIP HILL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

The National Pike
RD 2, Box 528
Farmington, Pennsylvania 15437



February 1990

Dear Friend of Fort Necessity,

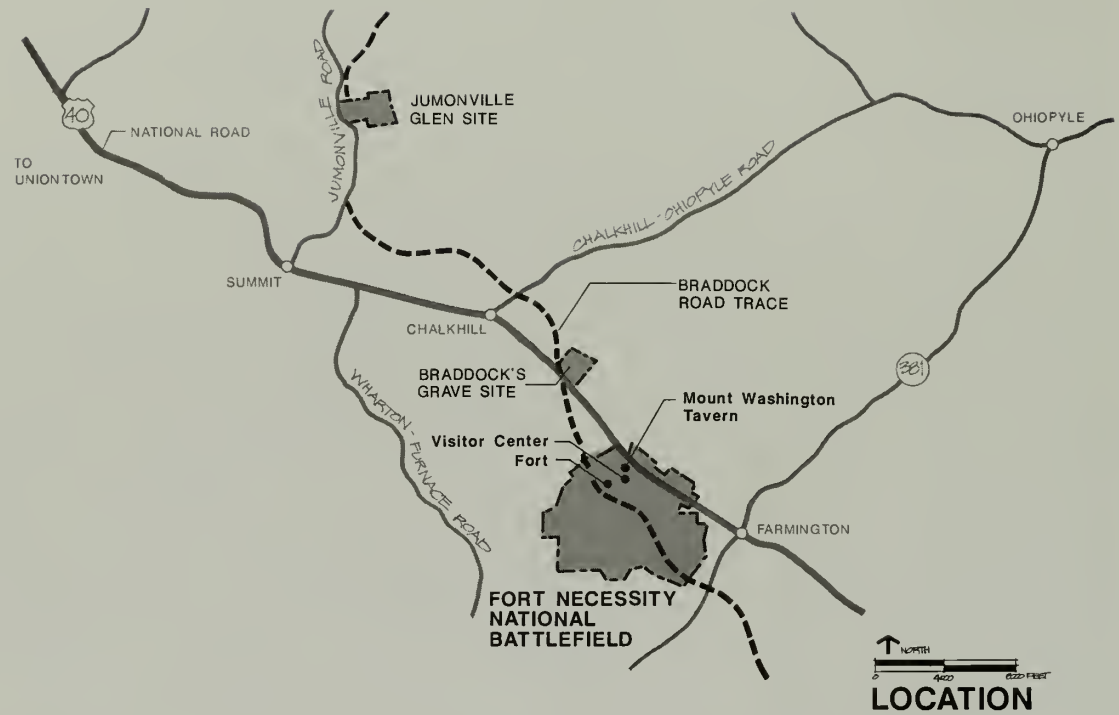
The National Park Service is developing a general management plan (GMP) for Fort Necessity National Battlefield. When it is finished, the plan will guide the future management, visitor use, and interpretation of the park.

In the autumn of 1989 we mailed you our first newsletter, in which we discussed the history of Fort Necessity and highlighted the major planning issues affecting the park. We then asked for your feedback by providing a response sheet that many of you filled out and returned.

The purpose of this second newsletter is to share with you a summary of the comments we received and to present a range of alternative strategies for resolving those park issues. We have provided a response form at the back of this newsletter for your use. We will also hold public workshops to give you additional opportunities to review the alternatives in detail and to comment. The schedule for public meetings is printed at the end of this newsletter.

Thank you for your help. I look forward to hearing from you.

William O. Fink



SUMMARY OF PUBLIC RESPONSES

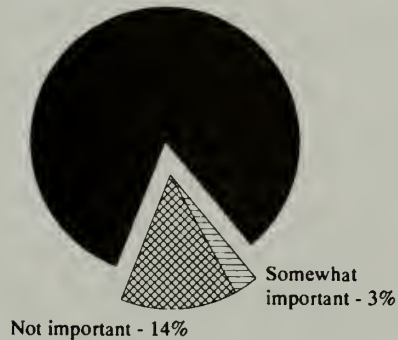
We received 124 responses to the first newsletter. The comments are summarized below. A full copy of all public responses may be seen at the visitor center upon request.

The National Road

The majority of respondents (83 percent) felt that the National Road story is very important to interpretive programs at Fort Necessity.

Importance of the National Road

Very important - 83%



About 60 percent thought the Mount Washington Tavern should be restored as a tavern museum, inside and out. Its use as a National Road visitor center was favored by 31 percent of the commenters. Some written comments suggested that period foods should be served.

The Braddock Road

Perhaps the most striking result of the survey was the nearly unanimous support (98 percent) for using the Braddock Road trace to link Fort Necessity, Braddock's grave, and Jumonville Glen. (The newsletter stated that cooperative agreements with landowners or the purchase of scenic easements could be pursued to create this link rather than the outright purchase of land.)

Establish a Braddock Road Trail

Yes - 98%



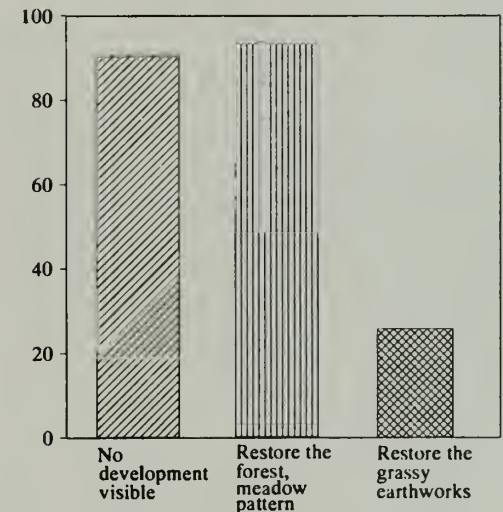
Additional written comments suggested that the road trace be made accessible for physically impaired visitors, that historical markers and informative exhibits be placed along the road, and that guided group tours and living history reenactments be allowed.

Hiking was mentioned as the best use of such a trail by 72 percent of the respondents and biking by 22 percent.

The Historical Landscape

About 80 respondents felt that it is important for the National Park Service to manage the landscapes at the Great Meadows and Jumonville Glen so that modern development inside and outside park boundaries is not visible. The same number of respondents also agreed on the importance of reestablishing the original forest and meadow pattern. Only a small percentage felt it was important to restore the earthworks around the fort to a more historical appearance.

Managing Historical Landscapes



In answer to the question whether it would be appropriate to build another visitor center at a less intrusive site so that it could not be seen from the fort, the responses were almost evenly split. Fifty-five percent supported a new visitor center, and 45 percent did not.

Visitor Center

Build a new visitor center
at less intrusive site
55%



Do not build a new
visitor center
45%

Almost half of the respondents suggested ways to minimize visual intrusions inside and outside the park (such as traffic and traffic noise, utility lines, and residential or commercial development) now and in the future. These included the following (listed in the order of the most frequent suggestions):

- Bury utility lines
- Plant trees and shrubs along US Highway 40 (National Road)

- Restrict or prohibit residential and commercial development
- Purchase a buffer area or easements
- Move the parking area and visitor center away from the fort; provide a shuttle vehicle service
- Cover black asphalt with more natural materials
- Do nothing – good as it is

The Park Interpretive Story

Respondents generally supported updating interpretive programs and exhibits to provide better coverage of the historic events that occurred at Fort Necessity. The media mentioned included film, indoor and outdoor exhibits, park ranger demonstrations, artists' renderings, and commemorative plaques. Additional comments supported living history activities, including reenactments; a scale model or a map of the battle with electric lights to highlight strategic events; taped messages at points of interest; wide-screen monitors; and more involvement with youth groups.

Over 70 suggestions were made about the types of programs that could be offered at the Great Meadows amphitheater and that would relate to the overall visitor experience

at Fort Necessity. Suggestions generally fell into the following categories:

- Historical dramas and musicals
- Battle reenactments
- Lectures on the 1754-55 campaigns
- Ranger demonstrations of period styles and activities
- Children's programs
- Week-long celebrations on the anniversary of the battle

People also suggested that an overhead shelter be provided for the stage and audience and that the park and amphitheater be kept as separate functions.

Park Use and Recreation

Most visitors to Fort Necessity go to the visitor center, the fort, and the tavern. More than 50 percent of the respondents said they visited Jumonville Glen and Braddock's grave.

Most visitors participate in park programs, as well as recreational activities (hiking, walking or jogging, and picnicking). Only small percentages use the park for skiing or group camping.

Your responses to the first newsletter were combined with other information that has been gathered about the park, and three alternatives have been developed that represent a range of planning strategies.

Alternative A would continue present management strategies.

Alternative B would revise the interpretive emphasis to focus on the beginning of the French and Indian War and the activities of George Washington in western Pennsylvania.

Alternative C would considerably expand the scope of interpretation to cover events from 1753 to 1763 and would explain how those events shaped future American history.

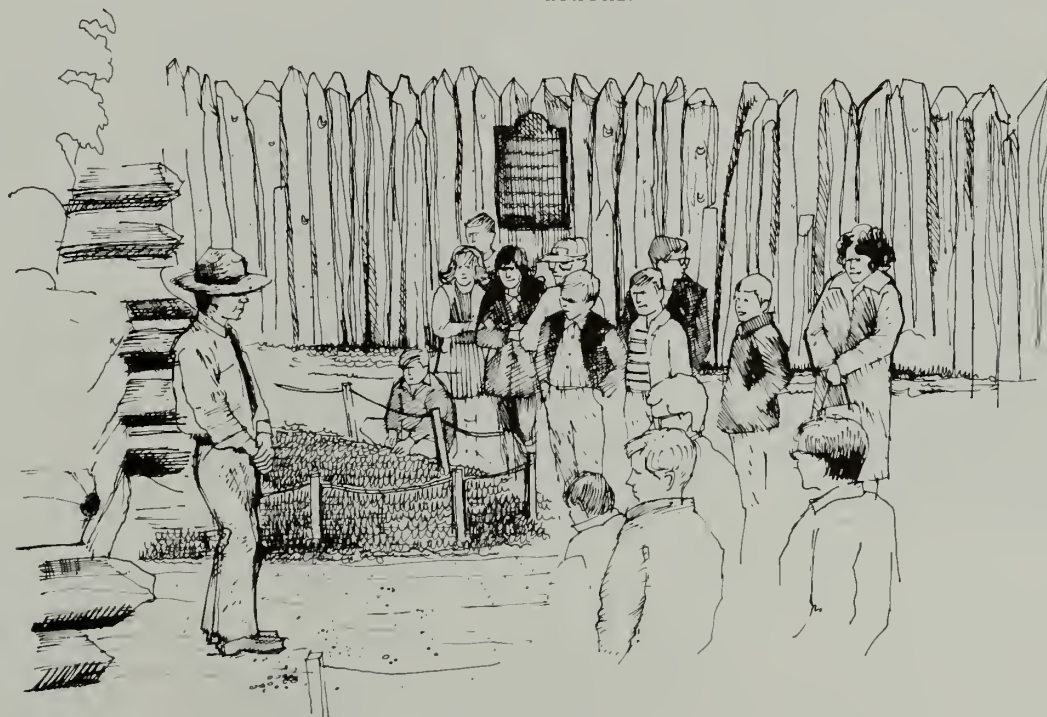
These strategies are based on the park's management objectives, which were presented in the first newsletter, and they look at different ways to resolve major issues. Please take some time to read through the alternatives and once again tell us what you think. Table 1 at the end of this section summarizes the alternatives and allows you to easily compare the various actions.

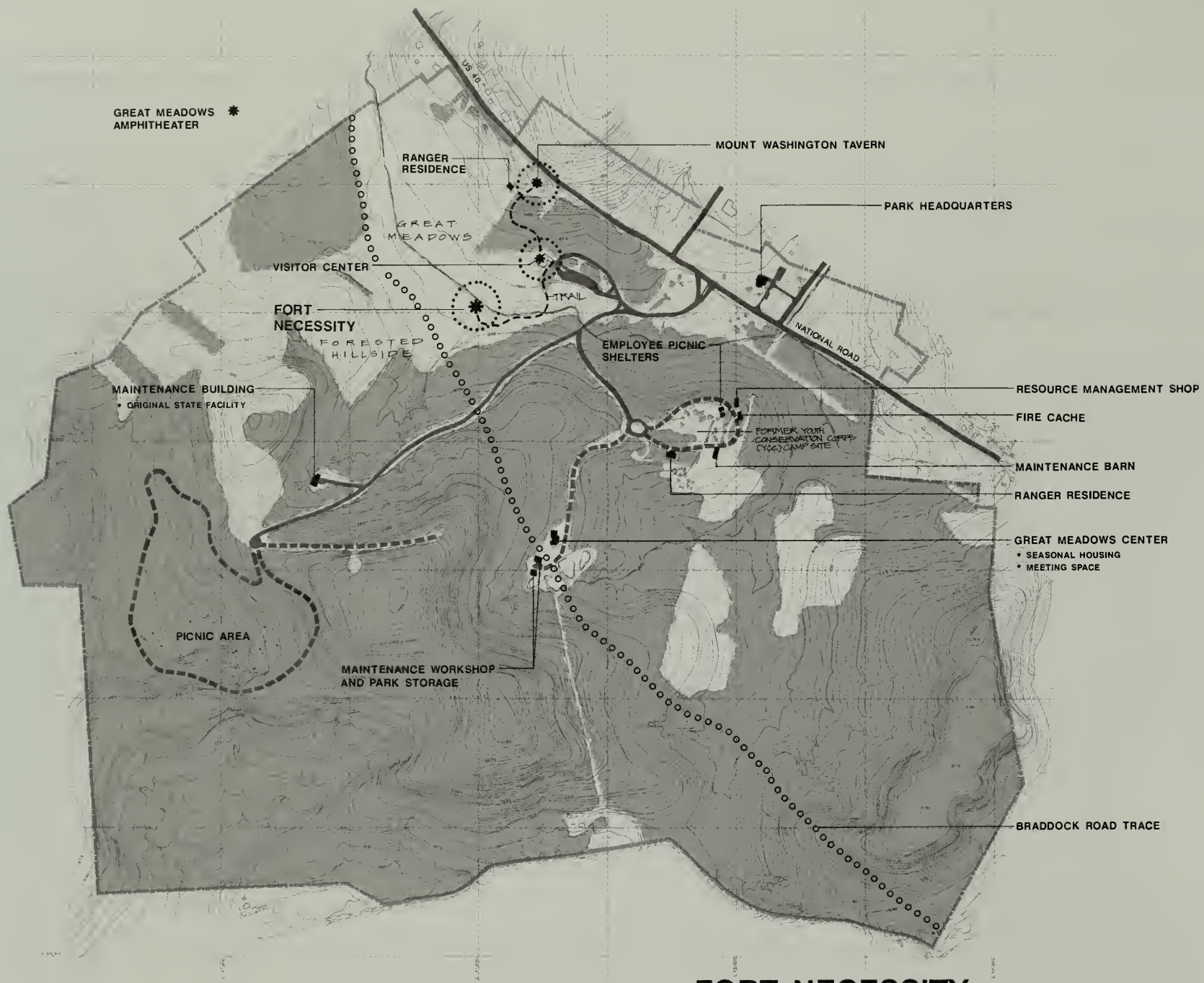
These alternatives are preliminary, and you will have additional opportunities to review and comment on them at the public workshops. Your comments will then be used to develop the NPS preferred alternative and any other alternatives that we may have overlooked. These alternatives will be fully described in a draft general management plan and environmental assessment that is scheduled for release this summer.

ALTERNATIVE A – CONTINUE CURRENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (STATUS QUO)

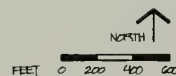
Under the status-quo alternative the park's current management practices would be continued. The issues that have been identified would be addressed on a situation-by-situation basis, as funds were available, and a comprehensive planning document would not be prepared to provide overall direction and to set priorities. This alternative provides a base for comparing the other alternatives, which recommend specific management changes to resolve the issues and accomplish management objectives.

Under existing conditions the following actions would most likely occur over an extended period of time.





FORT NECESSITY NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD



Historic Resources

The historical appearance of the fort and surrounding landscape would be re-established. Research would be continued to determine the original location of the woodland on the east-facing hillside overlooking the fort and the Great Meadows. This research would have to study the entire perimeter of the Great Meadows in the fort's vicinity in order to accurately locate the tree-line at the time of battle.

Natural reforestation processes would be allowed so the forest would eventually resemble its historical appearance. Where natural reforestation efforts failed, vegetation would be planted.

Historic resources would be completely documented to ensure their protection. A park archeological survey would be done, and the historic architecture of the Mount Washington Tavern and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) structures would be documented.

Interpretive Media

Exhibits both inside the visitor center and outside at all the park sites are outdated. A new exhibit plan would be prepared to replace existing displays with those that are more informative and attractive and that better reflect the park's purpose and management objectives.

National Road

The park would work cooperatively with local agencies and organizations to increase the public's understanding of the significance of the National Road. This would most likely be done through special programs at the park or in the community.

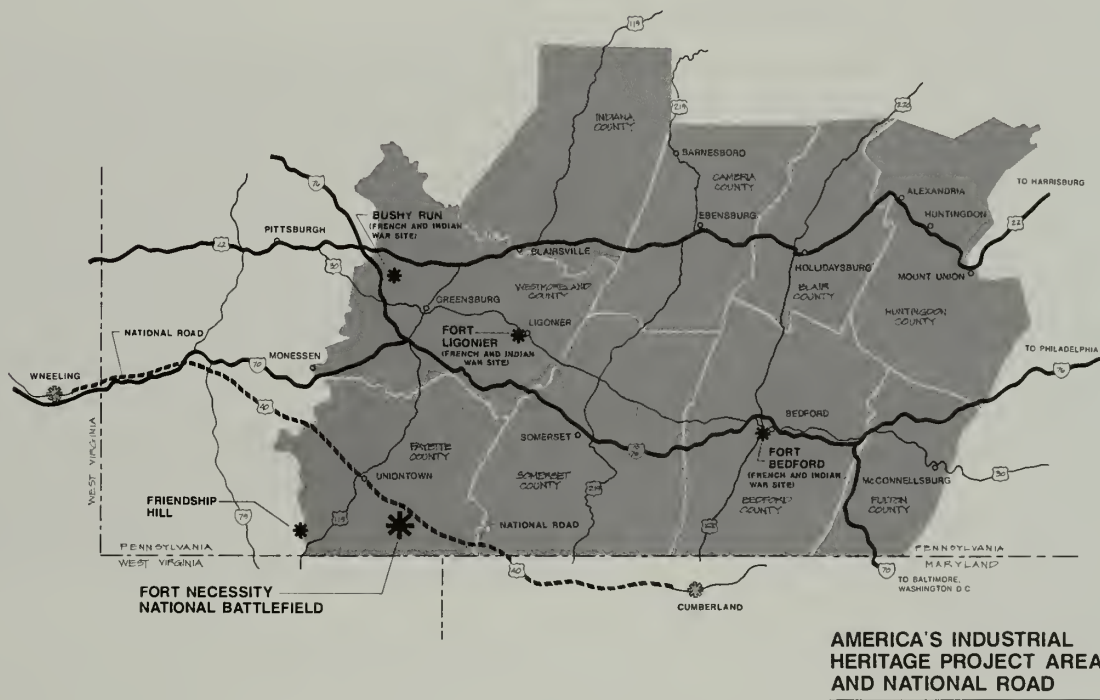
Great Meadows Amphitheater

The proximity of the Great Meadows amphitheater gives performing groups a chance to present programs that are related to interpretive activities at Fort Necessity.

Park staff would continue to work with the county to encourage such programs and to discourage ones that audibly interfere with park visitor programs.

Maintenance Facility

To comply with federal health and safety regulations and guidelines, the park's maintenance building, which occupies the former state maintenance building, may have to be eventually removed or significantly upgraded because of its undersized bays and poor condition.



ALTERNATIVE B – INTERPRET THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR (1753-55), FOCUSING ON THE ROLE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

Alternative B would tell the story of the French and Indian conflict that began to unfold between 1753 and 1755. This approach would focus on George Washington and his experiences in western Pennsylvania. The national and global impact of the war would be secondary and would be used to place events in context.

The National Road would be commemorated as part of the America’s Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), which encompasses nine counties in southwestern Pennsylvania (see map on page 5).

Fort Necessity, Braddock’s Grave, and Jumonville Glen

Priorities would be established for the following actions, and they would be implemented over the next several years. The actions described under alternative A for historic resources, interpretive media, and the Great Meadows amphitheater would also be implemented under this alternative.

Visitor Center. The existing visitor center would be enlarged to accommodate an upgraded and expanded interpretive program on the French and Indian War and the National Road.

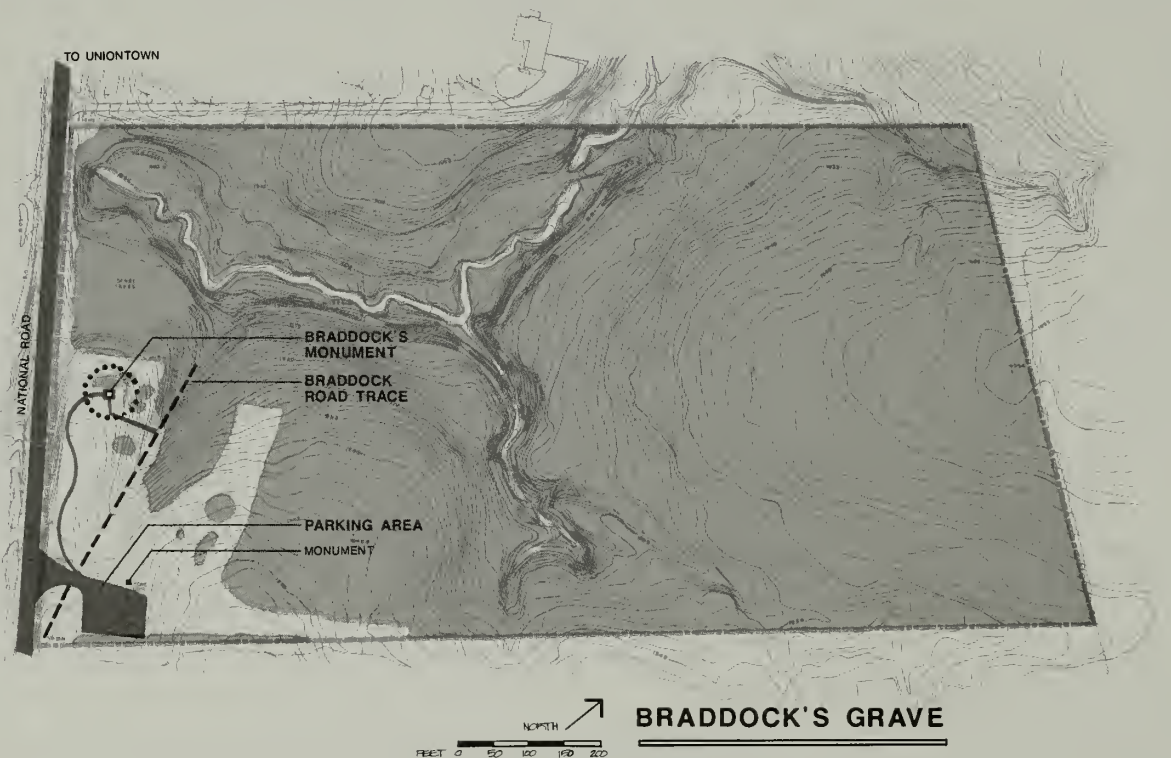
Vegetation would be planted to screen the center from the fort and to substantially diminish the sight of this modern intrusion during the summer months.

Mount Washington Tavern. Access to Mount Washington Tavern from US 40 would be eliminated to reduce traffic movements on that busy highway and to improve visitor orientation to the park. A new access road would be provided off the park entry road.

Maintenance Facility. The park’s maintenance operations would be

consolidated at the old Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) site, which is southwest of the National Road (US 40). The buildings at that site would continue to be used for maintenance and resource management needs. Only enough additional space to replace facilities currently in use elsewhere (such as the former state maintenance facility, and the workshop and storage buildings located near the Great Meadows Center) would be provided.

Headquarters. Park headquarters would remain in its current location.



Picnicking. The existing picnic area would be retained, but the facilities would be redesigned to meet current use levels.

Braddock Road Trail. A 5.5-mile walking trail would be established along the historic Braddock Road to link Fort Necessity, Braddock's grave site, and Jumonville Glen. Where possible, the trail would be located on the original trace. The trail would give visitors opportunities to experience a "wilderness" setting more reminiscent of what the area looked like in 1755. Historic

sites along the way, such as the Braddock campaign encampment sites, would also be interpreted.

Braddock's Grave. The parking area and access to Braddock's grave site would be improved to enhance the site's setting. Visitor services, such as an information kiosk, a comfort station, and summer ranger programs, would be provided.

Jumonville Glen. To preserve Jumonville Glen's wilderness character, the primary

resource area and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the park boundary would be protected. This could entail cooperative agreements with local landowners, scenic easements, fee-title purchase, or a combination of land protection options.

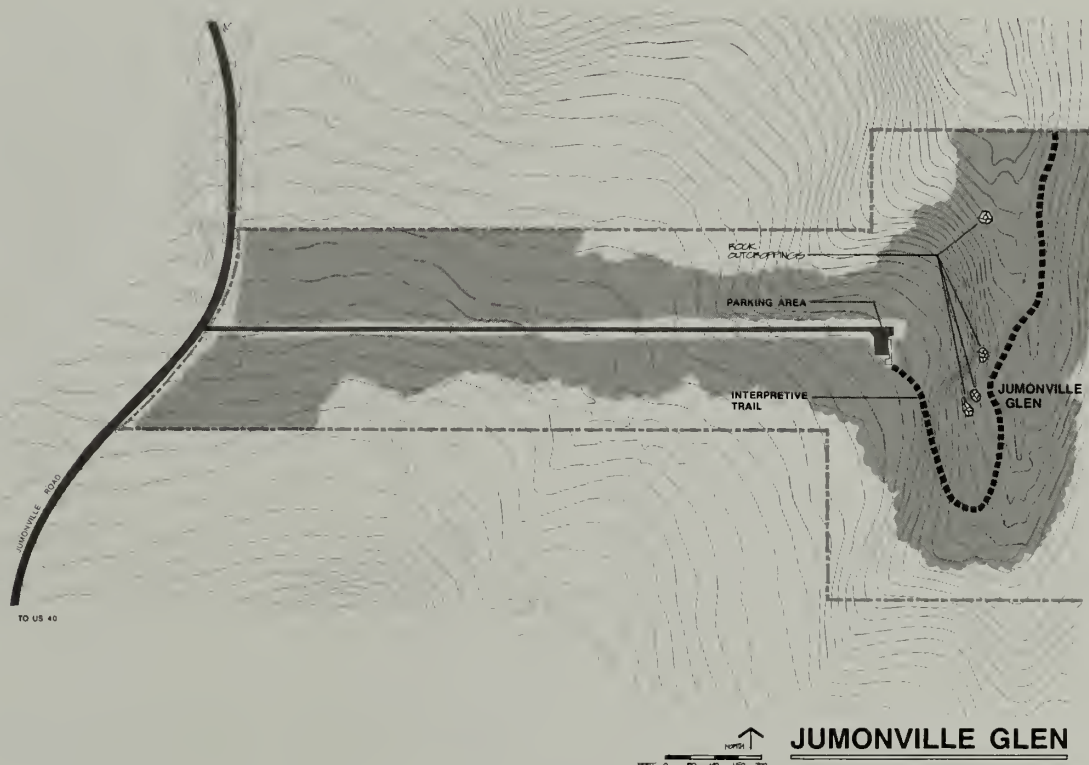
Access to and parking at the glen would be improved to reduce the visual and audible intrusion of vehicles and to make circulation easier.

An information kiosk, comfort station, and summer ranger programs would be provided at the glen.

The National Road

The story of the National Road would be interpreted as part of the AIHP theme dealing with transportation and westward expansion. Within the park the theme "Travel on the National Road" would be interpreted at Mount Washington Tavern. The broader historical relationships would be interpreted at the park visitor center.

NPS staff at Fort Necessity would administer the National Road. The Park Service would work cooperatively with state and county agencies and private groups to protect and promote associated resources in Fayette, Somerset, and Washington counties.



**ALTERNATIVE C – FULLY
INTERPRET THIS PERIOD OF U.S.
HISTORY (1753–1763)**

Under alternative C Fort Necessity would become the key unit in the national park system to tell the story of the French and Indian War and its significance to American history. The period from 1753 to 1763 ultimately helped determine our national culture and language, as well as our political, social, and economic systems. The war's impact on British economic policy toward the colonies eventually led to the American Revolution. The war also signaled the beginning of the demise of eastern American Indian cultures.

As the site of the first major actions that led to these events, Fort Necessity is perhaps the best national park site to tell this story to the public. If implemented, this alternative would expand the park's current legislative mandate, which is to commemorate only the Battle of Fort Necessity on July 3, 1754.

Fort Necessity's proximity to other French and Indian War sites in western Pennsylvania also provides an opportunity to work with state and local agencies in developing additional ways for visitors to learn about this period of U.S. history.

In conjunction with the expanded scope of this alternative, interpretation of the National Road would be broadened to better explain America's westward expansion and

transportation history. The park's present legislation does not provide for recognition of this major resource.

**Fort Necessity, Braddock's Grave, and
Jumonville Glen**

Under this alternative the following major actions would be implemented over the next several years, and priorities would be established. Actions described under alternative A for historic resources, interpretive media, and the Great Meadows amphitheater would also be implemented under this alternative.

Visitor Center. When the visitor center was constructed in the 1960s, it was intended to be a seasonal facility that would be operated spring through fall. It was designed for a smaller park, a less complex interpretive program, and fewer visitors.

However, the park is now open year-round, and the visitor center is too small to handle present levels of visitor use. The center lacks adequate space for park interpreters to present programs to school classes or bus tour groups, and office and storage space are insufficient. Because the visitor center was designed as a seasonal facility, it is poorly insulated and has an inadequate heating system for the cold southwestern Pennsylvania winters.

Also, the visitor center intrudes on the historic setting. The protection of historical landscapes from modern development has been adopted as a long-range goal of park management.

To solve these problems and to meet the space requirements for the expanded interpretive program under this alternative, a new, larger facility would be constructed in an unobtrusive setting. The new location has not been selected, but it would be within reasonable pedestrian access of the fort, and good road access would be provided from US 40.

Mount Washington Tavern. The Mount Washington Tavern would be the focus within the park for interpreting travel on the National Road. This would be accomplished through accurate historic furnishings, interpretive exhibits, and park ranger tours. The broader story of the National Road's history and impact on our nation would be temporarily told at the Fort Necessity visitor center, pending the development of a permanent interpretive facility (see "The National Road" below).

The entrance to the tavern parking area would be relocated, and a short entrance road would be provided. This would improve the sight distance and reduce safety concerns.

Maintenance and Headquarters Site. Park operations, which are now dispersed between

four locations, would be consolidated in a new maintenance/resource management/headquarters complex. This complex would be built at the former YCC site; smaller structures on site would be removed. The present maintenance building (the former state maintenance facility) would be removed, and the site would be converted to a trailhead parking area.

Picnicking. The existing picnic ground just southwest of the fort would be redesigned to better serve users. Better directional signs would be posted, road and trail circulation routes improved, the parking area redesigned, and facilities upgraded.

The Braddock Road Trail. As described for alternative B, a 5.5-mile trail would be established along the historic Braddock Road to link Fort Necessity, Braddock's grave site, and Jumonville Glen.

Braddock's Grave Site. A new, small picnic ground would be established at Braddock's grave site. This location would provide travelers and tourists an easily accessible rest stop and opportunity for picnicking.

Other actions at Braddock's grave site would be the same as alternative B. Access and parking would be improved, and limited visitor services would be provided.

Jumonville Glen. Steps would be taken to preserve Jumonville Glen's wilderness

character, as described for alternative B. Also access to and parking at the glen would be improved.

A moderate level of visitor services, including an information kiosk, comfort station, and summer ranger programs, would be provided. However, the site would retain its current sense of solitude and discovery under this alternative.

The National Road

The National Road is a historic resource that represents an important period in the growth of the United States and the centralization of government. Initially, the story of the road and representative historic resources would be interpreted in cooperation with the AIHP theme of transportation and its role in westward expansion.

But the National Road was a phenomenon that extended beyond southwestern Pennsylvania. To fully assess the significance of National Road resources, a reconnaissance study would be undertaken, and the suitability and feasibility of protecting existing resources would be considered. The scope of the study would encompass at least the section of the National Road from Cumberland, Maryland, to Wheeling, West Virginia.

Possible recommendations from such a study might include establishing either a

commemorative corridor involving the National Park Service, or a cooperative federal, state, and local initiative to protect and interpret the National Road resources. Optimal locations for administrative and interpretive facilities for the National Road would be identified as part of the study.



TABLE 1: COMPARISON OF PLANNING ALTERNATIVES

FORT NECESSITY, BRADDOCK'S GRAVE, AND JUMONVILLE GLEN	ALTERNATIVE A	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C
Interpretive Emphasis	No change.	Focus interpretation on events from 1753 to 1755, including the start of the French and Indian War and the activities of George Washington.	Provide a comprehensive overview of events from 1753 to 1763 and how they affected American history.
Historic Resources	Reestablish the historical appearance of the fort and surrounding landscape; continue research to locate the woodland on the east-facing hillside overlooking the fort and the Great Meadows; allow natural processes to restore the forest to its historical appearance; document historic resources.	Same as alternative A.	Same as alternative A.
Interpretive Media	Prepare a new interpretive exhibit plan to replace outdated exhibits.	Same as alternative A.	Same as alternative A.
Visitor Center	No action.	Enlarge the existing visitor center; plant vegetation to screen views of the center from the fort.	Construct a larger visitor center in an unobtrusive setting and within pedestrian access of the fort.
Mount Washington Tavern	Document the tavern's historic architecture.	Same as alternative A, plus interpret travel on the National Road; to reduce traffic and to improve the visitor experience, eliminate the existing vehicle access from US 40, and provide access from the park entry road.	Same as alternative B, except relocate the entrance to the tavern parking area to another point on US 40 to improve the sight distance and reduce safety concerns.
Maintenance Facility	Remove or upgrade the former state park maintenance facility because of its undersized bays and poor condition.	Consolidate maintenance facilities at the former YCC site; construct only enough additional space to accommodate facilities relocated from elsewhere in the park.	Develop a new maintenance/resource management/headquarters complex at the former YCC site; remove the present maintenance facility.
Headquarters Site	No change.	No change.	Relocate headquarters to the new complex at the former YCC site.
Picnicking	No action.	Redesign the existing picnic area to meet current use levels.	Redesign the existing picnic area, post better directional signs, and improve circulation and parking.

**FORT NECESSITY, BRADDOCK'S GRAVE,
AND JUMONVILLE GLEN**

	ALTERNATIVE A	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C
Great Meadows Amphitheater	Encourage programs related or complementary to the history of Fort Necessity.	Same as alternative A.	Same as alternative A.
Braddock Road Trail	No action.	Establish a 5.5-mile trail to link the fort, Braddock's grave site, and Jumonville Glen.	Same as alternative B.
Braddock's Grave Site	No action.	Develop a new, small picnic area at Braddock's grave site; improve access and parking; provide visitor services.	Same as alternative B.
Jumonville Glen	No action.	Protect the prime resource area and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the park boundary; improve access and parking to reduce intrusions and to make circulation easier; provide a moderate level of visitor services.	Same as alternative B.

THE NATIONAL ROAD

Resource Protection and Interpretive Emphasis	No action.	Interpret the National Road as part of AIHP; administer the road through the park and cooperate with public and private groups to protect and promote associated resources.	Initially interpret the National Road as part of AIHP; conduct a reconnaissance study of National Road resources from Cumberland, Maryland, to Wheeling, West Virginia; determine the level and method of resource protection; identify locations for administrative and interpretive facilities.
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WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

We would appreciate your comments on the alternatives in this newsletter, along with your ideas about other possible approaches to managing Fort Necessity National Battlefield. Please use the attached response form. Also, we will be holding public workshops in your area, and you are invited to attend.

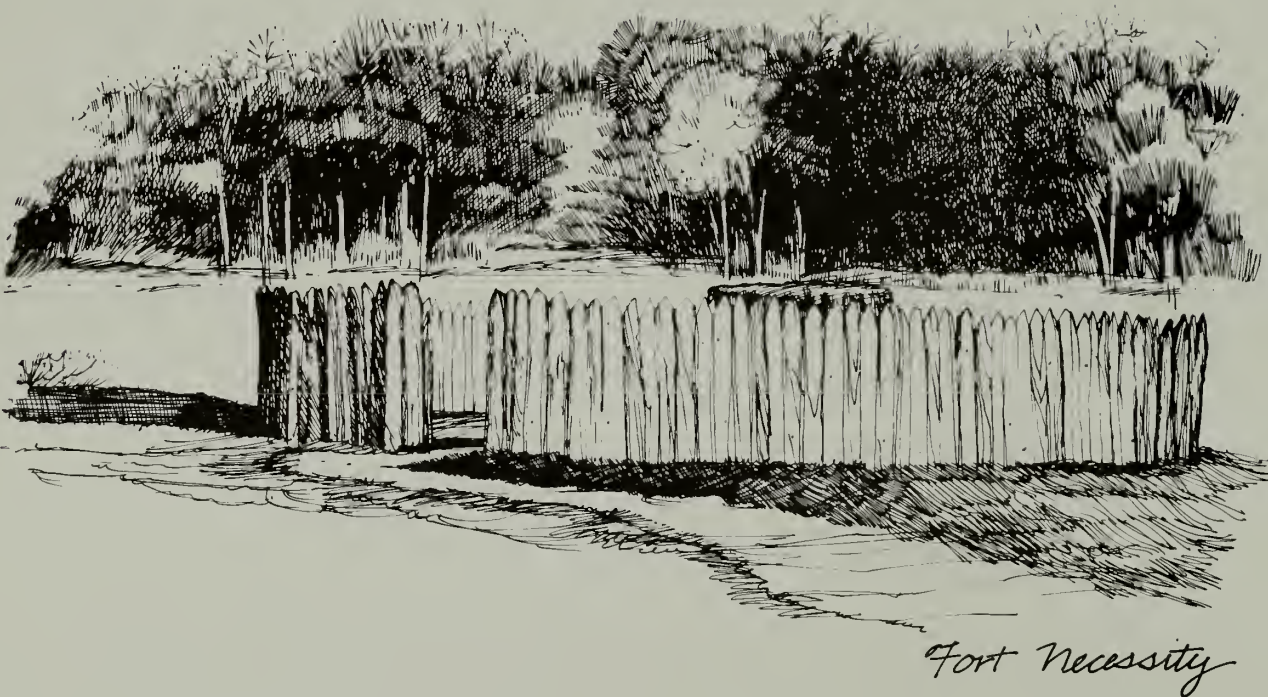
Once your comments on the alternatives have been received and analyzed, a draft general management plan/environmental assessment will be prepared. That document will present in detail the alternative concept proposed for adoption by the National Park Service. It will also discuss the other alternatives being considered, along with the probable impacts of implementing the proposal and alternatives. The draft plan will be available for public comment this summer.

Based on public and agency review comments, a final general management plan will be prepared, possibly using elements from one or more alternatives. The final plan will guide the park's resource management, visitor use, interpretation, and facility development for the next 10 years or longer.

FORT NECESSITY PLANNING
WORKSHOPS

March 6, 1990
A. J. McMullen Middle School Auditorium
Route 40
Markleysburg, Pennsylvania
Time: 7:00-9:00 p.m.

March 7, 1990
Penn State, Fayette Campus, Auditorium
Route 119 North
Uniontown, Pennsylvania
Time: 7:00-9:00 p.m.



RESPONSE SHEET

We would appreciate your returning this form by March 30, 1990. After you write down your comments, fold the form in half, tape it closed, and mail it back to us. No postage is needed. Thank you.

Which alternative do you prefer and why?

Would you prefer to see a combination of two or more of these alternatives? What combination?

Other comments or concerns?

Would you like to receive a copy of the draft general management plan and environmental assessment when it is published?

_____ Yes _____ No

Would you be interested in the formation of a "Friends of Fort Necessity" organization? _____ Yes _____ No

If we do not have your correct address, please write it in below:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, and Zip Code: _____

If you know someone who would like to receive a copy of this newsletter or the draft plan, please write down their name and address.

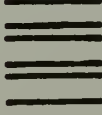
Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, and Zip Code: _____

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