master plan
may 1975

OREGON CAVES
NATIONAL MONUMENT / OREGON
RECOMMENDED:

Glenn O. Hendrix
Manager, Denver Service Center
12/12/74

John R. Miele
Superintendent, Oregon Caves National Monument
12/9/74

Ernest J. Borgman
General Superintendent, Klamath Falls Group
12/9/74

APPROVED:

John A. Rutter
Regional Director, Pacific Northwest Region
3/4/75

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service
OREGON CAVES
NATIONAL MONUMENT / MASTER PLAN
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The following statement by the superintendent of Oregon Caves National Monument reflects park management's needs and goals relative to this master plan.

PURPOSE

To preserve the marble cavern of Oregon Caves so that the visitor may always enjoy exploring the variety of subterranean rooms and narrow passageways; and to interpret the cave so that visitors may understand both the geological and ecological processes by which the cavern evolved, and the natural systems operating in the cave today.

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY

Natural.
OBJECTIVES

To accomplish the purpose of Oregon Caves National Monument, the National Park Service will:

General Management
Manage Oregon Caves National Monument as a unit under the group concept, with administrative functions and management coordination provided by the Klamath Falls office.

Develop a long-range program aimed eventually at a concept of day use.

Provide National Park Service housing away from the immediate cave area, consistent with terrain limitations.

Provide for year-round visitor services in the monument.

Maintain acceptable standards of overall management and administration, encouraging participation of the concessioner.

Continue to upgrade, but not expand, overnight accommodations.

Develop a controlled-access program to relieve automobile congestion in the cave vicinity.

Resource Management
Manage the resources of the monument to minimize any alterations of the existing ecosystems and geologic features.

Commensurate with existing policies and regulations concerning preservation of cultural resources, remove signs of human intrusion not directly associated with the natural environmental presentation and maintain the area in natural condition.

Visitor Use
Permit only those facilities and services necessary for appropriate visitor use and safety within the monument.

Present to the visitor, through appropriate interpretive means and methods, the interpretive theme of the environmental forces that created the caverns and the ecological evolutionary forces present in the cave today.

Provide for the safety of visitors and Government property, as well as protect the natural resources.
SUMMARY

Since 1962, interest in Oregon Caves has increased to the extent that more people desire to visit the monument than are now being accommodated. This is largely a result of the uneven nature of public demand, and of inadequate services and facilities. Because of these factors, the cave operates below its optimum visitor carrying capacity, even though there is congestion during peak periods of the day. The number of guides is insufficient to handle the quantity of people the cave can properly accommodate, and the main parking area is not large enough to provide for even current parking demand.

The recommended solution requires adequate staffing of concessioner and Park Service personnel; the elimination of facilities not essential to the purpose of the monument; the construction of new, and modification of present facilities where needed; and the limitation of future visitation to 2,350 visitors a day. The quality of the visitor's experience will be heightened greatly by the elimination of congested automobile conditions in the monument, and by a modern and informative interpretive program. Continued teamwork between the Park Service and the concessioner will assure the success of this master plan.
THE REGION

Oregon Caves National Monument is a 480-acre enclave lying within the detached southeast portion of the 1,150,000-acre Siskiyou National Forest. It is situated in Josephine County in the southwest corner of Oregon, 7 miles north of the California/Oregon boundary and 40 miles east of the Pacific coast.

The region in California and Oregon surrounding the monument is an outstanding recreation area, with a picturesque coast and scenic mountains. National forests, Crater Lake National Park, and State, county, and city parks in the vicinity provide every type of outdoor activity. State park development in California and Oregon is most intense along the ocean. The Forest Service and other agencies have constructed campgrounds in the mountains. A large motel/hotel industry has grown in response to the numerous visitors seeking recreation.

Oregon Caves is the most widely known developed cave in the area. It is probably the greatest single local visitor attraction. The cave is only 20 miles from the heavily traveled vacation route U.S. 199 and thus is readily accessible.

In 1973, there were 167,000 visitors to the monument. Although this represents a decrease from the record 200,000 visitors in 1972, it also represents an increase of 100 percent over the 80,000 visitors recorded in 1956. Visitation to the monument has not followed a consistent pattern. The number of visitors has increased each year until 1972, but visitation during 1973 dropped to virtually the same as in 1970. This fluctuation can be attributed to the gasoline shortage of 1973. With gasoline supplies restored and a return to pre-1973 visitation trends, approximately
317,000 visitors will tour Oregon Caves by 1977. An automobile license check during 1968 revealed that 55 percent of the visitors were from California; 27 percent from Oregon; 9 percent from Washington; and 9 percent from all other states, Canada, and foreign countries.

ACCESS

Interstate Highway 5 is the main north/south artery of the west coast from Mexico to Canada, and passes 50 miles to the east of Oregon Caves.

Northbound tourists from California desiring to visit Oregon Caves and Redwood National Park will turn west from Interstate 5 at Redding and connect with U.S. 101 on the coast at Eureka. From Eureka, they will travel to Redwood National Park, and on to Crescent City. Motorists can then follow the coast highway north into Oregon or turn northeast at Crescent City to U.S. 199. Passing Cave Junction on this highway, they could then join Interstate 5 at Grants Pass, or visit Crater Lake National Park some 90 miles to the east.

Southbound travelers along the Oregon coast will bypass Oregon Caves unless an easterly detour is taken. From Crater Lake National Park or Interstate 5 heading south, anyone with Redwood National Park and the California coast as a destination will take U.S. 199 at Grants Pass through Cave Junction to Crescent City. From Crescent City and Redwood National Park, the visitor will take U.S. 101 south along the coast to Eureka. Here he can follow 101 south to San Francisco, or turn east to Redding and Interstate 5, with the alternative of continuing east to Lassen Volcanic National Park.

Westbound interstate highways bring travelers to San Francisco, California, or to Portland, Oregon, from which they turn north and south, respectively, to visit Oregon Caves.

At Cave Junction, the junction of U.S. 199 and Oregon 46, highway 46 winds 20 miles in an easterly direction to terminate in the Oregon Caves National Monument parking lot. Departing motorists return along this same road.

CIRCULATION

Vehicles used by the general public are limited to the established parking areas. The cave entrance is a walk of 0.1 mile from the parking area. Individuals staying overnight at the Chateau are permitted to park near the building. There is also a small parking area for Park Service vehicles.
There are a few minor nature trails in the monument, and a hiking trail connects with other trails in the Siskiyou National Forest.

**POPULATION**

Resident population in the immediate vicinity of Oregon Caves is sparse. Cave Junction, the nearest town, has a population of 530. Within 50 miles of the monument, the only town with more than 600 residents is Grants Pass, with 14,900.

Population in the area is increasing rapidly at the rate of 6½ to 7 percent per year, which is well above the national and State average. A large percentage of these people are retirees seeking the relatively mild climate and unspoiled environment. The population within 300 miles of the monument is over 2 million; by 1976 this figure will exceed 2.5 million.

**PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES**

Oregon Caves National Monument is one of nearly 1,200 outdoor-recreation areas within the State. Along the northern California and southern Oregon coast, there are approximately 650 campsites and 240 picnic sites in State parks. Other National Park Service areas within the vicinity are Crater Lake National Park, 140 miles northeast; Lava Beds National Monument, 180 miles east; Lassen Volcanic National Park, 280 miles southeast; and Redwood National Park, 50 miles southwest.

There are proposals for additional campgrounds nearby that will affect the monument visitation. A small campground is situated downstream from the monument, along Cave Creek near mile 16. Further on down is Grayback Campground, along highway 46, in the forest at the junction of Grayback Creek and Sucker Creek.

The Siskiyou National Forest in the vicinity of the cave contains about 52 campsites and numerous picnic sites.

**SURROUNDING AND EXISTING USE**

Siskiyou National Forest is managed for multiple use of its resources. The landscape is characterized by heavily forested, steep-sided mountains. Active logging is engaged in adjacent to and within sight of the monument. Medford, Grants Pass, and other communities in the region have a large number of sawmills supported by forest-cutting operations. A small amount of farming is done in some of the flat river valleys near the monument, but it is of minor economic value to the area. Lumbering and recreation/tourism are the two most important income producers.
THE RESOURCE

RESOURCE EVALUATION

The cave is believed to be the largest in the vicinity, and has gained wide recognition through publicity efforts and public opinion over a period of years. Compared to other well-known caves in the Country, it is small, and appears incapable of accommodating large numbers of visitors.

Despite its relative lack of significance among the Country's developed caves, Oregon Caves does have the advantage of being accessible and well known, and there are no comparable developments for the interpretation of limestone-cave geology in the region. Consequently, the cave is a major regional resource, providing an educational and recreational experience that otherwise would be lacking, except for Lake Shasta Caverns—a newly developed cave near Lake Shasta in California, which is receiving a small but steadily growing visitation.

In addition to its speleological feature, the monument preserves an example of the Siskiyou range's primeval forest. The native vegetation and fauna may become increasingly important for sightseeing and scientific studies as the surrounding lands are harvested for timber or utilized in other ways. The vegetation provides a delightful setting for the cave.

RESOURCE DESCRIPTION

Natural History

Geology: During the Triassic period, 200 million years ago, volcanism started the series of processes that led to the formation of Oregon Caves. The interbedding of volcanic and sedimentary materials is evident today. The mixed deposits of volcanic material and ocean sediments created an imbalance that caused folding and, thus, tremendous pressures. These pressures caused shales to become slate, sandstone to become quartzite, and limestone to become marble.

An uplift of a general plains area caused the rivers to cut and erode, forming today's Siskiyou and Klamath Mountains. The cave lies within the Siskiyou Mountains in a belt of marble measuring up to 400 feet in thickness and nearly 4 miles in length.

The cave angles upward 218 feet from the entrance to the exit through a continuous series of passageways and rooms. Although only approximately 0.6 of a mile is included in the present cave tour, there are an estimated 3 miles of total passageways and rooms. The largest room, the Ghost Room, is 40 feet high, 50 feet wide, and 300 feet long. There are approximately 25 other rooms of lesser size. Of the three known openings to the cave, two are natural, and one is a manmade exit. With the exception
noted above, rooms are small (16 persons comprise a crowd), and many passages are narrow and restricted. Some passages have been artificially enlarged and one is manmade, although only the exit tunnel is an obvious unnatural change in the cave system. Temperature in the cave remains at 41 degrees Fahrenheit. Speleothems include growth, rimstone, stalagmites, stalactites, soda straws, flowstones, and columns. A stream draining the cavern attests to the active condition of the cave. Natural bridges, domepits, marble with varying degrees of impurities, a Douglas-fir tree root, and a clastic dyke are also seen in the cave.

Vegetation: A mixed-conifer forest, with Douglas-fir dominant, blankets the monument. An extensive variety of hardwood trees and shrubs is found along the stream and in the cave area. Flowering plants show their appealing colors during spring and summer. Fern growth is luxuriant in these moist habitats.

The monument preserves an example of the surrounding forest that is currently being logged. The composition of the associated species of the monument and surrounding area is of particular interest because of the overlapping ranges. Many plant species find the southern limit of their range in this area, while other species, otherwise limited to California, thrive this far north.

Animal Life: A variety of birds and other animals characteristic of the habitat, such as the racoon, fox, deer, porcupine, and western gray squirrel, are found throughout the monument. Certain animals, including birds and squirrels, concentrate in the developed area because of visitors feeding them.

The cave fauna is limited, but includes woodrats, mice, spotted skunks, ring-tailed cats, insects, and eight species of bats. Most animals do not penetrate far into the cave, although the Pacific giant salamander and frogs are occasionally found deep inside the cavern.

FACTORS AFFECTING RESOURCES AND THEIR USE

Legal Factors
On August 12, 1907, by order of the Secretary of the Interior, sections 9, 10, 15, and 16 of unsurveyed township 40 S. - Range 6W, Oregon, were withdrawn from mineral entry for the purpose of establishing a proposed national monument.

On July 12, 1909, President William H. Taft signed a proclamation establishing Oregon Caves as a national monument within the Siskiyou National Forest, to be administered by the Forest Service. On June 10, 1933, an Executive order was signed, transferring the administration of the monument to the National Park Service, which maintains proprietary jurisdiction of the area. In 1923, 10 years before the
Executive order, the Forest Service granted a concession contract to the Oregon Caves Company — the same company that conducts the present concession operation.

Land Status
Federal: 480 acres.
There are no inholdings or mineral reservations in the monument.

Park residence and related facilities are situated within an 80-acre tract of Forest Service land, approximately 1 mile north of the monument. A cooperative agreement with the Forest Service provides for improving, maintaining, and using a permanent park ranger residence, together with necessary related facilities, and constructing, improving, maintaining, and using other proper facilities such as seasonal quarters and supporting utilities.

Climate
Weather at the monument is moderate; the average annual temperature is 46 degrees Fahrenheit, with a high of 85 degrees Fahrenheit, and a low of 16 degrees Fahrenheit. The average annual rainfall measures about 50 inches, and the average annual snowfall, 160 inches. Roads are sometimes temporarily closed by snow during heavy storms. Prevailing wind is from the southwest, and during storms it sometimes gusts to 70 miles per hour. The developed area has flooded during exceptionally heavy rainstorms.

Special Conditions
Two special conditions need to be considered in future development plans for the monument: one is the troublesome soil creep above the public parking, to the northeast, that extends under the fill; the other is the brief but damaging floods, due to heavy rains after a snowfall of several feet, that descend the canyon where the Chateau is situated. Apparently, snow dams form in the upper canyon and break to release a torrent of water.

Fire History
Though the monument lies within a large forest that contains tall trees and heavy undergrowth, only two small fires have occurred during National Park Service administration of the area. The Forest Service provides fire protection, with support from the National Park Service.

Terrain
The elevation of the monument varies from 3,700 to 5,450 feet in a steep and rugged part of the Siskiyou Mountains. The primary drainage is Cave Creek, which originates in the cave and emerges near the Chateau to flow in a steep canyon westward out of the monument, to Sucker Creek. The steepness of canyon walls near the cave leaves little space for development.
The soil is a loam type, with outcrops of marble and other metamorphic bedrocks, especially in the cave area.

VISITOR USE

Most visitors take the cave tour and spend an average of 2½ hours in the monument, leaving promptly after the tour. A few visitors hike the nature trails in addition to exploring the cave, and a small percentage of summer visitors stay overnight at the Chateau. The curio store, coffee shop, and dining room are well patronized. During the winter season, mid-September through May, there are no overnight accommodations, but light refreshments are available part of this time. Approximately 80 percent of visits occur during June, July, and August.

The 20-mile drive from Cave Junction takes 30 to 40 minutes and ends at the parking area, where a short walk leads to the ticket booth and cave entrance. A concessioner-operated booth in Cave Junction offers general information, as well as information concerning travel and tour times and possible delays between ticket purchase and cave tour. Most visitors, however, do not stop for this information.

Visitation is heaviest near midday, and after a possible wait of 30 minutes to enter the parking area, visitors may encounter a 3-hour delay in touring the cave — the maximum time people seem willing to wait.

Visitors concentrate in the developed area during the waiting period and patronize the curio shop; watch the squirrels, chipmunks, and birds; and relax in the sun while enjoying the forest scene and the relative coolness of the mountains. Few visitors walk any of the trails, though the majority read the interpretive panels explaining cave geology.

After being called over the public-address system, groups of up to 16 persons assemble around a concessioner guide outside the cave entrance. A tour lasting approximately 1 hour through 0.6 mile of passages and rooms brings the group to an artificial exit higher up the mountain, where an exterior trail leads 0.25 mile back to the Chateau. The tour, along a narrow trail, up and down ladders and stairs, and through narrow and low passageways, requires considerable exertion.

Concessioner guides who conduct parties through the cave are responsible for assisting the Park Service in ensuring visitor safety, protection of the cave, and quality cave interpretation. Inside the cave, where visitors view many features illustrating cave geology, the opportunities for interpretation are obvious.
THE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This master plan envisions the perpetuation of dominant assets that give Oregon Caves its character — the maze of narrow passageways and intimate rooms and the weathered-redwood Chateau in a tall-tree mountainous setting. Visitor capacity and future development will be regulated to ensure visitor enjoyment and appreciation.

Four dominant concerns at Oregon Caves are:

- The automobile congestion in the main parking area.
- The pedestrian/auto conflict in the Chateau area.
- The increased visitation to the monument.
- The quality of cave-tour interpretation.

Maximum visitor enjoyment could be realized by:

- Establishing an optimum cave capacity.
- Providing and managing public parking.
- Regulating traffic flow.
- Operating intensive visitor-information facilities at Cave Junction.
- Providing National Park Service interpretive training to all cave-tour guides.
These changes in operation will provide the visitor with a pleasant and adventurous recreational experience. To ensure this and to protect the cave resources, an optimum visitor capacity for the cave must be established.

CAPACITY

National Park Service studies have determined that a maximum of 16 visitors and a guide can enter the cave every 6 minutes without impairing the visitor experience or the cave resources. With 10 trips each hour and 16 visitors per tour, 1,760 people can tour the cave during an 11-hour day (8 a.m. to 7 p.m.). Studies also indicate that one out of four visitors entering the monument do not tour the cave. (Children under 6 years of age are not permitted in the cave.) Therefore, at any given time, the optimum cave capacity is 432 persons; with the additional 108 visitors not taking the tour at that time, the total area capacity related to the visitors and the parking area is 540 visitors. At four visitors per car, 135 parking spaces can accommodate this theoretical visitor load. Excess visitors who are willing to wait up to 3 hours for a cave tour, must be accommodated elsewhere until parking is possible.

PARKING

The following recommendations derive from the above cave and parking capacities:

The main parking area should be retained as the principal public-parking facility within the monument. The 108 parking spaces approach the 135 theoretical capacity by private automobile.

Public parking behind the Chateau should be reserved for overnight guests of the lodge and for accommodating overflow vehicles from the main parking area during periods of peak–traffic volume. Such traffic should be carefully regulated to avoid conflict with pedestrians.

Additional visitors exceeding the parking-area capacity should be accommodated in the Cave Junction area where various services are available, including cave tour and interpretive information. Vehicular congestion would be relieved if visitor trailers could be stored in Cave Junction.

DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE MONUMENT

Chateau and Chalet
Overnight accommodations will be continued until such time as they require major rehabilitation.
TO CAVE JUNCT. 20 MILES

SISKIYOU N. F. MONUMENT BOUNDARY

ENTRANCE

RIGNODE TRAIL LOOP

PARKING AREA
108 CARS

INFORMATION BUILDING

TEMPORARY OFFICE

WATER RESERVOIR

EMPLOYEE DORM

CHATEAU

CAVE ENTRANCE

GUEST COTTAGES

NPS RESIDENCE

NORTH

1. PUBLIC OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS
   LIMITED FOOD SERVICE - GIFT SHOP

2. MAIN PARKING AREA TO REMAIN AT ITS PRESENT CAPACITY OF 108-CAR PARKING

3. PARKING BEHIND CHATEAU WILL BE FOR EMPLOYEES, OVERNIGHT VISITORS AND PUBLIC OVERFLOW AS NEEDED

4. INFORMATION BUILDING IS TO BE RECONSTRUCTED TO INCLUDE ORIENTATION AND OFFICE SPACE

5. CHALET FUNCTIONS AS A CONCESSIONER-OPERATED FACILITY, INCLUDING A GIFT SHOP, CHILDREN'S NURSERY, CAVE TOUR TICKET SALES AND EMPLOYEE HOUSING

6. GARAGE FOR WINTER STORAGE OF EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES

LEGEND

PROPOSED BUILDING
BUILDINGS TO REMAIN
BUILDINGS TO BE OBLITERATED
TRAILS
CAVE SYSTEM

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT
INSIDE MONUMENT

OREGON CAVES NATIONAL MONUMENT, OREGON
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

SCALE 0 100 200 400 FEET

DRAWN 20-09-78
DSC APRIL 75
The Chalet should continue to function for concessioner-souvenir sales, cave-tour-ticket sales, and concessioner-employee housing. Both the Chateau and Chalet have experienced flood damage in the past because of their situation in the path of a natural drainage. This will continue to be a potential problem during unusual spring snowmelt conditions and will require further study.

Information Building
The information building at the end of the parking area should be expanded to accommodate space for a ranger office and an improved cave orientation/information service. Perhaps it can be designed with a second level and possibly expanded on the slope side to conserve all usable parking space. The temporary office building will be removed as soon as the expansion is completed.

Sewage Disposal System
The waste-water disposal facilities serving the monument should be improved to assure greater protection against the possibilities of effluent percolating into Cave Creek. Studies have been completed, and the recommended improvements should be scheduled for early construction.

Trails
All trails are to be retained and maintained for hiking and interpretive use.

Cave Facilities
The visitor’s experience within the cave is the most important event in which he participates while visiting the monument. This makes it essential that the cave interpretation be of excellent quality, communicating understanding and appreciation, and culminating in a delightful visitor experience.

Many of the structures in the cave have been improved and must be maintained to enhance the visitor’s tour. The cave features and interpretation, although of greatest importance, are not all the visitor experiences. The ladders, stairways, and handrails are also part of his involvement and reflect the contouring of the cave and the natural geologic coloring.

The removal of exotic plantlife and the control of vandalism (mentioned under management) will help present the resource nearer its natural condition.

LAND CLASSIFICATION

The predominant land classification in the monument is Class III (natural environment areas) — a total of 455 acres. The main parking area, the visitor-use area behind
the Chateau, and the Chateau are all within the Class II designated lands (visitor accommodations, administrative facilities) — a total of 11 acres. The underground cave system and the land above the cave have been classified as Class IV lands (unique features).

DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE THE MONUMENT

Cave Junction Information Station
Because summer visitation in the monument is consistently near or exceeds the optimum capacity of the parking area (108 cars), it is proposed that a National Park Service-manned information/contact station be established in the Cave Junction area on Oregon 46 to provide complete visitor-information service for the prospective monument visitors. A very modest facility that would be appropriately signed and in full view of the inbound traffic would be necessary. Space should be provided within the station for the personnel to operate a complete information service including a small portion of the facility for interpretive, informational, and visitor-orientation exhibits. Some working arrangement or lease with private interest may be necessary to acquire space for the daytime storage of visitors’ trailers. The parking area should be reasonably close and convenient to the information/contact station.

The primary objective of operating an information/contact station at this location is to provide a previsit information service and a means of regulating vehicle-traffic volume into the limited-parking area at the monument. The information service will assist in cave-trip scheduling throughout the day, and offer information to travelers who otherwise might overlook the cave experience.

Associated with the establishment of the Cave Junction information station is the vital need for a dependable and effective communication system between the station and the monument. A reliable communication means is necessary to keep the Cave Junction station apprised of current parking conditions at the monument and to establish effectively a workable control system of visitor access.

Appropriate signing along U.S. Highway 199 on either side of Cave Junction should advise motorists of the information station at Cave Junction.

Residence and Maintenance Area (Near the Monument)
A maintenance building is needed for storage of maintenance items and as a working area for maintaining the utilities and equipment.

Additional housing should be provided in this developed area to replace the present temporary trailer residences now in use at this site.
MANAGEMENT

Preservation of Resources
Exotic plantlife in the cave, a result of the artificial light, should be controlled. It is increasing gradually and changing the pristine character of the cave. Research should be conducted to determine the best means of returning the cave to its former pristine condition. Management should resist all pressures to increase the size of tour groups beyond that which guides can adequately supervise — a recommended 16 people. Visitor use of the cave should be controlled to avoid vandalism of delicate features.

While it is an objective to maintain a natural appearance for the developed area around the cave and parking facilities, the plant and animal life must be managed for visitor safety and enjoyment. Such management may include control of diseases and insect populations, removal of dangerous trees, and animal control.

The replanting on the slopes above the Chalet is progressing slowly because of environmental conditions. Every effort will be made to restore the appearance of this area to a natural condition.

Management of the undeveloped area of the monument should be directed toward sustaining pristine conditions. Because the monument is small and may be influenced by resource use of the surrounding national forest, the National Park Service should seek Forest Service cooperation toward perpetuating natural conditions in the monument.

Interpretation and Information
Proper interpretation is fundamental to providing visitors with a meaningful visit to Oregon Caves. Exhibit facilities and the personal contact of National Park Service employees and the concessioner’s cave-tour guides will be included in the interpretive program.

National Park Service rangers will be stationed in the information building and circulate elsewhere in the vicinity during the heavy travel season. Concessioner tour guides will lead visitors through the cave and interpret it according to the instructions and the training provided by the National Park Service and the concessioner.

The first contact with the visitor during the busy summer season should be at the information station in Cave Junction. Here, the visitor would be provided information concerning:
Travel time to the cave.

Waiting time for the tour.

Time required for and length of the tour.

Cave-tour fee.

Strenuous nature of the tour.

Regulations concerning minimum age for the tour and information about the availability of nearby picnicking and camping facilities.

Restriction of trailer travel along the roadway to the monument.

Food service available at the monument.

Facilities available for visitors.

Recreational opportunities at the monument.

Optimum time for visiting cave.

Additionally, the information station would inform the visitor of the many recreational opportunities surrounding Oregon Caves and of the recreation areas and facilities within a day’s drive that he might choose as an alternative should the waiting period for a cave tour be excessively long. The visitor might choose to visit an alternate area and then return for a cave tour at a less crowded time of day.

The alternative recreation key and map in the appendix indicates in hours of driving time what recreation areas, facilities, and overnight accommodations could be reached in the same given time visitors would have to spend waiting for a cave tour. The times represent average travel time for a family as established by the American Automobile Association.

Visitor-use patterns and the success of the information/contact station will determine future expansion. If expansion occurs, it should include exhibits and, possibly, audiovisual devices that will explain the cave’s formation and its geology.

Interpretation at the monument will consist of introducing the cave to those taking the tour, and introducing the natural history associated with the cave to those who do not. Further interpretation will be available in sales literature. Cave flora and fauna will be given an appropriate place in the story. Exterior plants and
animals that are not associated with the cave will require only minimal interpretation to satisfy visitor curiosity.

The visitor’s cave experience can be upgraded through improved interpretation. The National Park Service is responsible for the quality of interpretation and must work with the concessioner to achieve a standard of excellence. In order to equip guides to provide interpretive services consistent with Park Service standards, all training should be coordinated by the National Park Service staff. Training is a continuing task. It requires group sessions, audits of individuals, personalized coaching, and intensive work with new employees who fill vacancies created during the year.

The quality of the cave tour will also be enhanced through continued improvements in the trail and lighting systems, as discussed elsewhere in this master plan.

Staffing
The National Park Service manager in charge of the monument is supported by a staff of two permanent personnel and 12 to 15 seasonal employees, the latter proficient in protection and interpretation. The workload will increase with the developments and services proposed in the preceding sections of this plan. The monument must be staffed to maintain and operate the information/contact station at Cave Junction, the monument parking area, and the information station. Resource management, visitor protection, supervision of the cave-tour operation, and training of guides will all require appropriate staffing.

PRIORITY OF NEEDS

1. Enhance the quality of interpretation.

2. Establish a visitor information/contact station at Cave Junction.

3. Develop or acquire an effective communication system between the monument and Cave Junction.

4. Construct a National Park Service maintenance building in the National Park Service housing area detached from the monument.

5. Expand National Park Service employee housing in the existing housing area outside the monument, as needed.

6. Landscape visitor-use area.

7. Control exotic plantlife within the cave.
APPENDIXES

A: LEGISLATION

B: PLANNING TEAM
WHEREAS, certain natural caves, known as the Oregon Caves, which are situated upon unsurveyed land within the Siskiyou National Forest in the State of Oregon, are of unusual scientific interest and importance, and it appears that the public interests will be promoted by reserving these caves with as much land as may be necessary for the proper protection thereof, as a National Monument;

Now, THEREFORE, I, William Howard Taft, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the power in me vested by section two of the Act of Congress, approved June eighth, nineteen hundred and six, entitled, "An Act For the preservation of American antiquities," do proclaim that there are hereby reserved from all forms of appropriation under the public land laws, subject to all prior valid adverse claims, and set apart as a National Monument, all the tracts of land in the State of Oregon shown as the Oregon Caves National Monument on the diagram forming a part hereof.

The reservation made by this proclamation is not intended to prevent the use of the lands for National Forest purposes under the proclamations and Executive Order establishing the Siskiyou National Forest, but the two reservations shall both be effective on the land withdrawn, but the National Monument hereby established shall be the dominant reservation, and any use of the land which interferes with its preservation or protection as a National Monument is hereby forbidden.

Warning is hereby given to all unauthorized persons not to appropriate, injure, remove, or destroy any feature of this National Monument, or to locate or settle on any of the lands reserved by this proclamation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

DONE At the City of Washington this 12th day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and nine, and of the [seal] Independence of the United States the one hundred and thirty-fourth.

WM. H. TAFT.

By the President:

P. C. KNOX,
Secretary of State.
OREGON CAVES NATIONAL MONUMENT
WITHIN SISKIYOU NATIONAL FOREST
UNSURVEYED TOWNSHIP 40S-RANGE 6 W.
OREGON
WILLAMETTE MERIDIAN AND BASE
NATIONAL MONUMENT BOUNDARY

Variation 19°45'E.
Area approximately 480 acres

P. Mar. 31. 09
B: PLANNING TEAM

This plan was prepared during periods of time over the last 4 years and uses the ideas and results of studies made by many. Those most influential in the formulation of this plan, and periods of their involvement, include:

Richard W. Barnett, Team Captain,
Western Service Center, 1971

Bruce W. Black, Naturalist,
Western Service Center, 1971

Donald W. Campbell, Landscape Architect,
Western Service Center, 1971

Andrew C. Wolfe, Concessions Specialist,
Western Service Center, 1971

Donald Spalding, General Superintendent,
Klamath Falls Group, NPS, 1971-1972

Ernest Borgman, General Superintendent,
Klamath Falls Group, NPS, 1972-

Richard Sims, Superintendent,
Oregon Caves, NPS, 1971-1973

John Miele, Superintendent,
Oregon Caves, NPS, 1974-

James Rouse, Environmental Specialist,
Pacific Northwest Regional Office, NPS, 1971-

Harry Christensen, Concessions Manager,
Oregon Caves
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 506