

Part Four

Park Management Goals

This biological management plan establishes six goals, each of which has associated recommendations. The goals and recommendations are listed below. Following this initial listing, the next section discusses the recommendations in greater detail and proposes specific actions to implement the plan.

Goal 1: Identify Data Gaps.

1. Compile past and present data for the park and, as data are collected, create a geographic information system (GIS) overlay map with all relevant biotic and abiotic information.
2. Develop a prioritized list of data needs and obtain data needed to fill important data gaps.

Goal 2: Develop a Terrestrial Habitat Restoration and Management Plan.

Recommendations for terrestrial habitat focus on the reestablishment of a variety of self-sustaining native plant communities appropriate for the soil type and water availability of different areas of the park. At the same time, exotic vegetation will be removed and controlled. To prevent accidental damage to native species, proper removal of downed wood and fire control are necessary.

3. Protect, extend, and enhance all native plant communities in the park, especially riparian communities because this habitat type is in serious decline regionally.
4. For un-vegetated areas, select appropriate plant communities for each site based on soil characteristics and water availability.
5. Control or eliminate, where possible, non-native vegetation. Where stands of mature non-native vegetation persist, study the ecology of these stands and develop creative ways of maximizing their biological values.
6. Manage activities that remove dead wood in a manner compatible with biological quality and ecosystem integrity.
7. Prevent unmanaged fires in the park. Use fire only under controlled conditions when needed to achieve specific management objectives.

Goal 3: Develop an Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Management Plan.

Recommendations for aquatic habitat focus on expanding the types of aquatic habitats available in the park. Also important is enhanced water management to mimic the historic hydrograph to aid in the maintenance of channel and floodplain vegetation.

8. Coordinate water management activities to support and improve the park's aquatic and terrestrial habitats, with special emphasis on mimicking the historic hydrograph to provide periodic overbank flooding and fluvial processes that modify the streambed.
9. Protect, extend, and enhance the diversity of the aquatic habitats to benefit native plant and animal communities.
10. Develop a channel-management plan and implement non-structural methods for channel maintenance such as 'flushing flows' to remove accumulating sediment and allow the channel to 'meander' around sandbars.
11. Evaluate the feasibility of constructing a treatment wetland at the water inlet site to remove excess nitrogen and phosphorus from the treated effluent.

Goal 4: Monitor Ecological Factors that Affect Biotic Communities.

Factors such as changing soil and water salinity affect the diversity of species that can survive in the park. Awareness of changing conditions will facilitate appropriate management adaptations.

12. Monitor water table fluctuations and assess the causes of such fluctuations, including factors external to the park.
13. Develop a coordinated program to monitor the interrelationship of environmental factors and biological quality (with emphasis on diversity and abundance of native species) and ecosystem integrity (with emphasis on restoring and maintaining ecological processes).

Goal 5: Integrate Biological Management with Educational and Public Access Goals.

The biological management plan must be closely integrated with the educational and recreational functions of the park through placement of trails, research areas, bird-watching areas, visitor education center, and necessary facilities such as public restrooms.

14. Manage recreational activities in the park in a manner compatible with the park's biological quality and ecosystem integrity.
15. Develop an educational program that accommodates K-12 curricula, as well as casual visitors.

Goal 6: Develop an adaptive management plan.

Because biologic systems are not static, so also the park's management plan must be adaptable. As on-going monitoring identifies changes in such things as vegetation and water quality, management strategies may need to be adapted. Successful restoration requires an ongoing process of experimentation, evaluation of results, and refinement of techniques.

16. Regularly review and update this Biological Management Plan.
17. Integrate resource management activities in the park with those in surrounding areas to protect and enhance biological quality and ecosystem integrity.