

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Horseshoe Bend National Military Park



Foundation
for Planning and Management

Purpose

Foundation for Planning and Management

Every park needs a formal statement of its core mission to provide basic guidance for all the decisions to be made about the park - a foundation for planning and management. As parks begin planning for their future, it is imperative



that everyone has a shared understanding of what is most important about the park, as identified in the purpose, significance, fundamental resources and values, and other important resources and values.

The purposes of Horseshoe Bend National Military Park are to

- Commemorate the Battle of Horseshoe Bend and the people involved in the battle
- Develop the means for the public to understand, appreciate, benefit from, and enjoy the park



- Preserve the Battlefield and associated landscape that supports native Alabama plants and animals
- Interpret the cultural relationships and conflicts leading to the Creek Indian War and its impacts on the Creek people
- Interpret the War of 1812 and subsequent western expansion of the United States
- Interpret the role the Battle of Horseshoe Bend played in the career of Andrew Jackson and the development of our nation

- Provide educational and recreational opportunities compatible with these resources and stories for enjoyment and inspiration

Park Significance Statements express why the park's resources and values are important enough to warrant national park designation. Statements of the park's significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context and are directly linked to the purposes of the park.

The primary significances of Horseshoe Bend National Military Park can be summarized as:

The Battle contributed to the forced emigration of the Creek People from their southeastern U.S. homeland to Indian Territory (present day Oklahoma).



The decisive Battle led to the creation of the state of Alabama and westward expansion of the young United States.

The events at Horseshoe Bend established the prominence of Andrew Jackson as a national hero and ultimately, a political leader.

While the Revolutionary War gave a definition to America as a nation, the War of 1812 began to give definition to the American identity as diverse people joined to fight for the United States.

Horseshoe Bend is the only unit of the NPS east of the Mississippi protecting the site of a battle between U.S. forces and an American Indian nation. The Battle resulted in the highest casualty rate of American Indians in any single battle in U.S. history.

The villages of Tohopeka and Newyaucau combined with the Battlefield present a unique venue for the interpretation of the history of the Creek people, the largest and most influential Indian nation in the Southeast during the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

The victory at Horseshoe Bend gave leverage to the U.S. negotiators during the 1814 Treaty of Ghent, leading to a *status quo ante bellum* agreement.

Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values are the most important systems, processes, features, visitor experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, scents, or other resources and values to be communicated to the public about a park. They warrant primary consideration during planning and management because they contribute to significance and are critical to achieving the park's purpose.



Cultural History and Resources

- American Indian history and spiritual connection
- Key component of the War of 1812 and rise to power of Andrew Jackson
- Decisive engagement of the Creek Indian War of 1813 - 1814

- Events at Horseshoe Bend devastated the Creek Nation
- Story of the power of the individual and the role of local communities in the establishment of a national park
- Archaeological resources and museum collections

Scenery

- Natural beauty, wildlife, clean air, lack of development
- Dramatic bend in the Tallapoosa River

Ecological Communities and Nature

- Converging ecosystems where the Blue Ridge meets the Piedmont physiographic province
- Natural occurrences such as fire and drought are allowed to influence the landscape
- Tallapoosa River and its tributaries
- Riparian and terrestrial habitat for full complement of native species
- Clean water



Visitor Experiences in an Immersive Historical Place

- Peaceful modern setting prompts reflection on violent past
- Opportunities to observe wildlife and study diverse plant populations
- Range of activities available to appeal to varying interests and abilities that are accessible year round
- Opportunities for solitude, contemplation, and outdoor recreation