



# Limits of Acceptable Change Red River Gorge



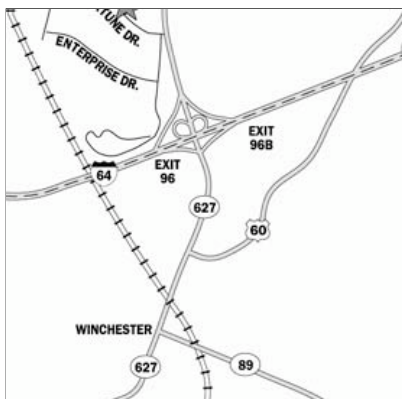
**USDA FOREST SERVICE • DANIEL BOONE NATIONAL FOREST • NOV. 2005**

## Next LAC Workshop December 13, 2005

The next LAC workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, December 13, 2005 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Clark County Cooperative Extension Service in Winchester, KY.

We will be presenting some of the results of the inventory from Step 4 and begin Step 5 (specify measurable standards for resource and social indicators for each opportunity zone).

Directions: The Clark County Cooperative Extension Service is located on Fortune Drive, 1/4 mile north of I-64 at exit 96.



## Dear Friend of the Red River Gorge,

The public LAC meetings will resume on December 13, 2005. We have made progress with the inventory in Step 4 and can now begin Step 5 (specify measurable standards for resource & social indicators for each opportunity zone).

This year has been a busy one in regard to the LAC process. We completed Step 3 (select indicators of resource and social conditions) in late winter. We held several volunteer training sessions in the spring for those interested in assisting with the inventory projects of Step 4. Most of the summer and fall focused on the inventory. One informational meeting was held during the summer. On July 13, we met to get comments on a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) prepared to address the declaration of the LAC process as an "undertaking" pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act. There is a more detailed article concerning the MOA in this newsletter.

At the December 13 workshop we will review some of the inventory data collected for Step 4 and then begin Step 5. Step 5 will probably require several workshops to be conducted throughout the coming winter. There is a lot of inventory data to review and to interpret. Specifying measurable standards for each opportunity zone will be a key component of the LAC process. In fact, the next two steps of the LAC process (Step 5 - specify standards and Step 6 - identify alternative opportunity zones) are really the heart of the whole LAC process. To help prepare for Step 5, you should review the results of the previous three steps. In particular, the results from Step 2 and Step 3 will be important for working through Step 5.

Again, the next LAC workshop will be Tuesday, December 13. The workshop will be held at the Clark County Extension Service in Winchester from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. If you have any questions contact the LAC Coordinator, Tim Eling. The contact information is on the back of this newsletter.

Thank you for your continued involvement in the LAC process!

## July 13, 2005 meeting on LAC and Heritage Resources

On July 13 an informational meeting was held that focused on the management of heritage resources in the Red River Gorge. Dr. David Pollack with the Kentucky Heritage Council (State Historic Preservation Office) was the primary presenter. Dr. Pollack reviewed a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Daniel Boone National Forest, Kentucky Heritage Council, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

This MOA states that because of the unusual nature and significance of the archaeological sites and historic properties within the Red River Gorge that the establishment of opportunity zones (Step 6) and measurable resource standards (Step 5) constitute an "undertaking" that has the potential to cause effects on properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NR) in the RRG.

We believe that the effects of the LAC process on the National Register Heritage sites in the Red River Gorge will be positive. One of the positive results of the MOA will be the development of a Heritage Resource Management Strategy (HRMS). The key purpose of this strategy is to provide a context for evaluating archaeological sites and developing appropriate mitigation measures – a one stop information source for archaeologists and Forest Service resource managers working in the RRG. The HRMS will prioritize areas within the Red River Gorge for future inventory and research. This HRMS will be completed in conjunction with the steps of the LAC process and should be very useful as we continue the LAC course of action.

Written and verbal comments on the specific content of the draft MOA were received from various groups and individuals. The following groups requested to be consulting parties: Access Fund, Red River Gorge Climbers' Coalition, Kentucky Organization of Professional Archaeologists, Wolfe County, United Keetoowah Band and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. These four groups and two Tribal governments, plus the remaining four Tribal governments that the DBNF consults with on a regular basis (because of our unique relationship to these sovereign governments), were identified as consulting parties and sent copies of the final version of the MOA. The MOA was signed by the signatories on October 18, 2005.

As explained in the July 13th meeting, the signatories to this MOA are the Daniel Boone National Forest, the Kentucky Heritage Council (State Historic Preservation Office, or SHPO), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. It is only these three entities that have the authority in this MOA for oversight and review, amendment, and/or termination under the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations.

Consulting/concurring parties may choose to sign the MOA or not, in order to demonstrate their concurrence with the terms of the agreement. However, the Forest fully intends to remain open to the comments and concerns of all involved throughout the process of implementing this MOA.

Please keep in mind that heritage resources, like threatened and endangered species, are resources that the DBNF is mandated by law to protect or mitigate adverse effects. The LAC process must work within these laws and regulations in finding a balance between recreation use and resource protection. The work associated with the MOA will be conducted in support of the ongoing LAC study. Consulting/concurring parties and other LAC participants will be afforded periodic updates when interested. A copy of the final MOA can be found on the DBNF LAC web page.



Forest Service intern documents rockshelter impacts.

## What data did you collect for the inventory?

Step 4 of the LAC process is "Inventory Existing Resource and Social Conditions". The requirements for Step 4 include documenting the current conditions of the Red River Gorge. Remember that LAC deals primarily with recreation use and impacts, thus the majority of inventory is recreation-related. We need this baseline inventory in order to develop standards (Step 5), decide on the locations and alternatives for opportunity zones (Step 6), and decide on appropriate management actions (Step 7).

**Resource inventory** is being accomplished by Forest Service backcountry rangers and trained interns documenting existing resource conditions through the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) units. The backcountry rangers walk the trails while mapping their locations, as well as assessing the extent of impacts on trails (erosion, muddiness, etc.). As areas of recreation use are encountered, these areas are mapped and assessed. There are six main categories of recreation use that are inventoried as part of Step 4:

1. **System trails** - US Forest Service official trails
2. **User-Created trails** - Trails created by visitors and not maintained.
3. **Campsites** - Visitor-created campsites throughout the Gorge.

4. **Destination Points** - Points of interests that are not official USFS areas. There is some level of disturbed vegetation/soils or surface litter. Examples: vistas, rappel areas, waterfalls, water access, and caves.
5. **Rockshelters** - Cave-like recesses along cliffs where there is some level of impact from visitors. Rockshelters not impacted by visitors are not recorded.
6. **Climbing Areas** - Visitor-created climbing areas throughout the Gorge.

As resource inventory is collected, the GPS data is assimilated into the Daniel Boone National Forest Geographic Information System (GIS) network. Having this data within the GIS network will greatly improve the analysis capabilities and the progression to further steps in the LAC process.

**Social inventory** is being accomplished by Forest Service staff, universities and volunteers. Baylor University is helping to document opinions and perceptions of visitors through the use of a recreation visitor survey. Forest Service backcountry rangers and volunteers are documenting visitor use by hiking selected trails, recording use at parking areas, and using road and trail counters.

## Stanton District Ranger says Farewell

Dear Friends,

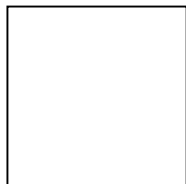
I am writing a short note to let you all know that this will be the last LAC newsletter from me. I have accepted the district ranger position on the Grandfather Ranger District of the Pisgah National Forest in North Carolina. I will be leaving the Daniel Boone National Forest effective December 24, 2005. Let me assure you that the LAC process will continue. Tim Eling, your project leader throughout this process, will continue to work diligently to keep you informed and involved as the LAC planning process moves forward.

The Daniel Boone National Forest is committed to finding the best solutions for balancing recreation use and resource protection needs in the Red River Gorge through the LAC planning process. We are half-way through this 9-step process, with the time consuming inventory step soon coming to closure.

Through the efforts of volunteers, Student Conservation Association enrollees and district employees, over 30,000 acres have been inventoried so far. This is a tremendous accomplishment. I want to thank everyone for their efforts. At the next meeting, please take a moment to thank Chris Carr for his efforts this summer. He has been a great help as a volunteer in the inventory process.

It has been a pleasure working with each of you. Although we have varied interests in the Red River Gorge, we have come together to work cooperatively in shaping the future of the Gorge. I appreciate all of your time, cooperation and willingness to work together. Keep up the good work, and I hope to see you somewhere down the trail.

Joy Malone



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# Is the Red River Gorge Special to you?



**LIMITS OF ACCEPTABLE CHANGE NEWSLETTER** **NOV. 2005**

**CONTACT US:**

Tim Eling is the coordinator for the Red River Gorge Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) process. You may contact Tim at the Winchester Office (headquarters for the Daniel Boone National Forest) or the Stanton Ranger District (local office for the Red River Gorge area).

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