

technology; or (5) any other aspect of this collection of information.

Diane M. Cooke,

*Information Collection Clearance Officer,
National Park Service.*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Information Collection Requirements; Backcountry Use Permit

AGENCY: National Park Service,
Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice and request for
comments.

Notice of Submission to OMB, Opportunity for Public Comment. OMB has up to 60 days to approve or disapprove the information collection but may respond after 30 days; therefore, public comments should be submitted to OMB within 30 days in order to assure their maximum consideration. Backcountry Use Permit. **SUMMARY:** Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13, 44 U.S.C. 3507) and 5 CFR part 1320, Reporting and Recordkeeping Requirements, the National Park Service (NPS) invites public comments on a request for renewal of approval for the information collection requirements associated with permits implementing provisions of agency regulations, pertaining to the use of public lands (OMB Control 1024-0022). Standard Form 10-404, Backcountry Use Permit, is the primary form used to implement a backcountry reservation system and provide access into backcountry areas where limits are imposed in accordance with regulations. Such permitting enhances resource protection, hazard warnings and search and rescue efforts.

There were no public comments received as a result of publishing in the **Federal Register** (61 FR 14162) a 60-day notice of intention to request clearance for this information collection request.

DATES: Public comments will be accepted on or before July 31, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of OMB, Attention Desk Officer for the Department of the Interior, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503. All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval. All comments will become a matter of public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Dennis Burnett, Ranger Activities

Division, National Park Service, 18th and C Streets, Washington, DC 20240. Telephone 202-208-7675.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The objectives of the backcountry use permit system is to provide campers desiring access to backcountry areas of national parks with continuing opportunities for solitude, while enhancing resource protection and providing a means of disseminating public safety messages regarding backcountry travel. In 1976, the NPS initiated a backcountry registration system in accordance with regulations found at 36 CFR 1.5, 1.6 and 2.10. This system assures campers of finding routes and campsites which are not crowded beyond their capacity. The quality of both the recreational experience and the physical setting thereby remain uncompromised.

NPS backcountry program managers, by designating access routes and overnight camping locations, can redistribute campers in response to user impact, high fire danger, flood, wind or other weather related hazards, bear activity or other situations that may temporarily close a portion of the backcountry. The NPS may also use the permit system as a means of ensuring that each backcountry user receives up-to-date information on backcountry sanitation procedures, food storage, wildlife activity, trail conditions and weather projections so that concerns for visitor safety are met.

The Backcountry Use Permit is an extension of the NPS statutory responsibilities to protect the park areas it administers and to manage the public use thereof (16 U.S.C. 1 & 3). NPS regulations codified in 36 CFR parts 1 through 7, 12 and 13, are designed to implement statutory mandates that provide for resource protection and public enjoyment. Several regulations contain information collection requirements previously approved by the OMB (1024-0022).

Title: Public Information Collection—Backcountry Permit.

Estimated annual reporting burden: 16,500.

Estimated average burden hours per response: 4 minutes.

Estimated average number of respondents: 206,300.

NPS is soliciting comments regarding: (1) Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of NPS, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of the burden estimate including the validity of the method and assumptions used; (3) the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; (4)

ways to minimize the burden, including through the use of automated collection or other forms of information technology; or (5) any other aspect of this collection of information.

Diane Cooke,

*Information Collection Clearance Officer,
National Park Service.*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Notice of Availability of Draft General Management Plan/Development Concept Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: National Park Service, Stones
River National Battlefield, Tennessee.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This Draft General Management Plan/Development Concept Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/DCP/EIS) describes three alternatives for cultural and natural resource management, visitor use, and interpretation, and related facility development in Stones River National Battlefield. Alternative 1 (the National Park Service's (NPS) proposed action) would improve interpretation and the ability of the visitor to experience a "sense of place" within the battlefield; and it would also preserve a larger area of the battlefield that has retained historic landscape integrity. This would be accomplished by protection of more resources through boundary expansion, new exhibits in the visitor center, establishment of a new automobile tour route within the expanded park boundary, and new interpretive wayside exhibits. Alternative 2 would improve interpretation and the visitor experience within the authorized boundary of the park.

This would be accomplished by providing new exhibits in the visitor center, establishing a new automobile tour route within the park, and providing new wayside exhibits. Alternative 3 (continuation of existing conditions) would represent no significant change in interpretation and the way the park is being managed and no change in the authorized park boundary. Under all alternatives, there would be an emphasis on working with local agencies, groups, and landowners to preserve and protect lands that retain historic landscape integrity within the original battlefield, but outside the park boundary. Environmental impacts that