

Natural Heritage Commission

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GENERAL RULES FOR MANAGEMENT  
OF  
ARKANSAS' SYSTEM OF NATURAL AREAS

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SECRETARY OF STATE  
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

BY

ARKANSAS NATURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

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The Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission is grateful to the Arkansas Department of Planning and the Arkansas Natural Area Plan for the basic form and content of this document.

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AUTHORITY

The authority to establish the following rules and regulations is given the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission by Section 9, paragraphs d and h of Act 112 of 1973. The Natural Heritage Commission is the legal successor to the Arkansas Environmental Preservation Commission created by Act 112 of 1973.

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## INTRODUCTION

Supervising the protection, management, and use of Arkansas' System of Natural Areas is a major responsibility of the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission. When an area is acquired, it will require the application of management principles that will insure its protection and utilization for the welfare of the citizens of Arkansas. The complexity of each individual site dictates an individual management plan which has been specifically designed to enhance and protect that preserved natural area. Two major management goals should be used to develop any detailed management plan for Arkansas' Natural Area system: *RCR* *Check print system*

1. Primary Goal--The major management goal is to protect and preserve the natural areas of Arkansas for the present and succeeding generations.
2. Secondary Goal--To manage for specific uses--scientific, educational, recreational, and esthetic--which are compatible with the primary management goal and which will not impair the natural area. *RCR*

While there are many potential uses of natural areas which could benefit the public, management for those uses is secondary and should never supercede the primary goal of protection and preservation. All detailed management plans for any site must be in accordance with these guidelines and should be reviewed by the Commission to insure compliance with these principles.

To accomplish these objectives, General Rules for Management of Arkansas' System of Natural Areas and a Natural Area Master Plan outline are recommended here to bring about the efficient management of natural areas in Arkansas. As a part of the management of each site, it is recommended that each individual natural area in the system have a master plan which will guide the custodian in managing that area.

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GENERAL RULES FOR MANAGEMENT  
OF  
ARKANSAS' SYSTEM OF NATURAL AREAS1. General Provisions1.01 Definitions

As used in these rules, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated, except where the context otherwise requires:

RT A. "Commission" means the Natural Heritage Commission, the successor to  
TAB TAB the Arkansas Environmental Preservation Commission, established by  
Act 112 of 1973. RCR

RT B. "Custodian" means the person or agency that is responsible for the  
protection and care of a natural area in accordance with these rules  
and the master plan, and the individual person in direct charge of a  
preserved natural area. RCR

RT C. "Master Plan" means a plan which sets forth in specific detail the  
purpose, character, resources, management, and other considerations  
for the protection and use of an individual preserved natural area. RCR

RT D. "Natural Area" is defined in Section 2 of Act 112 of 1973. RCR

RT E. "Arkansas' System of Natural Areas" includes sites which have been  
acquired by the Commission or which are subject to a conservation or  
environmental easement which has been granted to the Commission. RCR

RT F. "Administrative Procedures Act" means Act 434 of 1967. RCR  
RCR

1.02 Applicability of Rules RCR

Management of each Arkansas preserved natural area will be in accordance  
with these rules except as may be provided in the master plan. RCR

There will be a master plan for each preserved natural area, such plan to  
be in the form provided in Rule 6.01 and elsewhere in these rules. RCR

Wherever it is legally required or otherwise provided in the master plan

Record

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that there be a deviation from the rules in the management of a preserved natural area, such deviation will be set forth in detail, together with the reasons, in the master plan.

A deviation from these rules will take effect only upon approval by the Commission by a majority vote of all the members at a meeting following the meeting at which such deviation is proposed.

These rules may be amended by the Commission from time to time as deemed appropriate, in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act.

#### 1.03 Administration and Custody

The Commission may itself permanently hold fee title to real property, or may convey title of property to an agency or department of the State.

The form and method of administration and custody of each preserved natural area will be designated in the master plan. Each preserved natural area shall have a custodian who will administer, manage, and protect the area in accordance with these rules and the master plan. The master plan shall designate an agency, organization, or individual as custodian of the area. If not otherwise provided in the articles of dedication or master plan, the owner of a preserved natural area shall have custody.

#### 1.04 Reports

The custodian shall submit to the Commission an annual report and any other periodic reports in the form and as the Commission requires. The annual report shall include a record of management activities, natural catastrophes, and other influences affecting natural conditions within the preserved natural area.

#### 1.05 Intrusions

There shall be no intrusions of structure, easements, rights of way, or land uses which do not conform with these rules and with the purpose of a preserved



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natural area as specified in Act 112 of 1973 except for intrusions that are allowed by the Act and the master plan. No other intrusions will be allowed to continue or become established. RCR

#### 1.06 Publicity RCR

Information about Arkansas' preserved natural areas and appropriate descriptive material will be developed and made available to all interested persons. However, publicity which would induce more visitors than is compatible with preservation of the area will be avoided. RCR

### 2. Structures and facilities RCR

#### 2.01 Boundary Markers RCR

Natural area boundaries will be made clearly evident by placing survey monuments at corners and other strategic locations, by posting boundary markers at intervals specified in the master plan and, if appropriate, by fencing or other means. Boundary marker signs will be as the Commission may establish. RCR

#### 2.02 Fences RCR

Necessary fences and barriers may be installed as provided in the master plan. Generally, they will not be in a form that will create a detrimental effect on movement of wildlife or on other natural conditions. RCR

#### 2.03 Location Markers RCR

As a locational aid, a preserved natural area may be divided into plots in a manner designated in the master plan. Identifying markers may be installed at plot corners. RCR

#### 2.04 Access Lanes RCR

Vehicular access lanes will be installed and maintained within a preserved natural area only where essential for patrol, fire control, or other management or research activities and in accordance with the master plan. Clearing for lanes will be of a minimum and of the width designated in the master plan. Lanes RCR

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will be closed to all except service vehicles. *RCR*

## 2.05 Fire Breaks *RCR*

Fire breaks will be kept to a minimum and constructed only in accordance with the master plan. *RCR*

## 2.06 Trails *RCR*

Location and form of any trails other than natural wildlife paths shall be specified in the master plan. Trails will be constructed to provide for permitted use of a natural area and to prevent deterioration of the area by uncontrolled foot traffic. Trail construction will be kept to a minimum and designed to prevent soil erosion. Use of paving materials, and elevated walks is permissible when necessary and provided for in the master plan. *RCR*

The trail plan will conform to the preservation objectives of the preserved natural area as stated in the master plan and to the allowable use intensity zones established in accordance with Rule 5.03. *RCR*

## 2.07 Other Structures and Improvements *RCR*

All other structures and improvements must be provided for in the master plan and approved by the Commission. *RCR*

## 3. Management of Adjacent Land *RCR*

Buffer areas will be established adjacent to preserved natural areas wherever possible in order to eliminate the adverse effects of external influences. Such areas may be devoted to uses other than nature preservation which do not adversely affect the preserved natural area. Buffer areas may be controlled by ownership, by dedication as part of the preserved natural area or dedication as a buffer to the preserved natural area; by easement, by agreement, or by other appropriate means. Provision for buffer areas will be included in the master plan where such areas are possible. *RCR*

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#### 4. Land Management Practices

##### 4.01 Landscape Management

There will be no cutting of grass, brush, or other vegetation, thinning of trees, removal of dead wood, opening of scenic vistas, or planting, except as provided in the master plan. *PCR*

##### 4.02 Safety Precautions *PCR*

Guard rails, fences, steps, and other devices necessary for visitor safety may be installed as provided in the master plan. Control of hazardous plants or animals will be only as provided in the master plan. *PCR*

##### 4.03 Removal or Introduction of Objects *PCR*

Removal or consumptive use of any material, product, or object from a preserved natural area is prohibited, except as provided for in the master plan. Introduction of any material, product, or object to a preserved natural area is prohibited, except as provided for in the master plan. Other prohibited activities include, but are not limited to, grazing by domestic animals; farming; gathering of firewood or other plant products; and dumping, burying, or spreading of garbage, trash, or other material. *PCR*

##### 4.04 Water Control *PCR*

Natural water conditions, surface or subsurface, will not be altered. Man-made water control structures may be either changed or maintained if provided for in the master plan as essential for the maintenance or restoration of natural conditions. *PCR*

##### 4.05 Fire Control *PCR*

Procedures and methods for use, prevention and control of fire shall be included in the master plan. *PCR*

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#### 4.06 Erosion

Natural erosion will not be controlled. Erosion and soil deposition due to past or present activities by man in a preserved natural area may be controlled in accordance with provisions of the master plan.

#### 4.07 Management of Vegetation and Wildlife

(a) Control of plant succession-- Prescribed burning, mowing, grazing, and cutting of shrubs and trees, may be employed to alter plant succession as provided for in the master plan. Control measures will be applied with caution and only to that part of the area where they are necessary. Control measures will be undertaken only with adequate prior study of the area and with evidence of necessity.

(b) Control of natural populations--Generally, there will be no action to increase or reduce populations of native plants or animals or to restrict movement of wildlife across boundaries of a preserved natural area. Any control measure to be used must be provided for in the master plan.

(c) Management of rare or endangered species--Habitat manipulations in favor of particular rare or endangered species will be undertaken if preservation of the species is designated in the master plan as an objective of the preserved natural area. These manipulations will be undertaken in such manner as provided in the master plan.

(d) Introduction of plants or animals--No plants or animals will be brought into a preserved natural area except as provided in the master plan.

### 5. Management of Visitors and Use

#### 5.01 Use Tolerance

Use of preserved natural areas will be allowed to the extent and in a manner as will not impair natural conditions. To the extent possible, the

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master plan shall define the use tolerance of each portion of the preserved natural area and the controls and restrictions to be placed on areas and on use. The custodian shall be continuously vigilant for conditions which result in damage and, through approval of the Commission, further restrict access and use as necessary to protect the preserved natural area.

#### 5.02 Tolerance Classes

A classification of tolerance will be used to indicate the capacity of an area to withstand use without deterioration. Classification will be related to soil characteristics, vegetation, moisture conditions, topography, and presence of rare or easily disturbed species or features.

#### 5.03 Allowable Use Intensity Zones

Each preserved natural area will be divided into zones of allowable use intensity. Visitor presence and degree of development of trails and visitor-handling facilities will conform to the allowable use intensity zones.

Zones shall be established giving consideration to:

- (a) the objectives of the preserved natural area as stated in the master plan.
- (b) the characteristics of the area such as use tolerance, natural attractions, and presence of rare or easily disturbed species or features.
- (c) the feasibility of providing adequate visitor-handling facilities.

#### 5.04 Classes of Visitors

Groups visiting preserved natural areas may be divided into three classes: "Casual" (persons who come individually or in small groups without prior arrangements), "organized" (persons who come in larger groups under more definite leadership), and "research" (persons who come to carry on serious

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studies or creative work relating to matters within a preserved natural area).

Provisions will be made in custodial operations for handling each of these classes of visitors. The custodian may restrict each class in such manner as is appropriate and necessary for visitor control and for the protection and management of the preserved natural area.

#### 5.05 Character of Visitor Activity

The principal visitor activities in a preserved natural area will be walking and observing. Activities will be regulated to prevent disturbance of an area beyond what it can tolerate without permanent destruction. Visitors without permits for research or educational activities will generally be restricted to trails. Persons wishing to traverse a preserved natural area elsewhere than on trails shall obtain permission from the custodian.

Activities and uses which are unrelated to observation and study are prohibited except as provided in the master plan. Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to, picnicking; trapping; removal, disturbance, molestation, or defacement of minerals, plants, animals, or natural features.

#### 5.06 Access Control

Entrances and exits will be provided only at locations and under conditions as may be specified in the master plan.

#### 5.07 Permits for Research or Education Activities

A person wishing to engage in research or educational activities in a preserved natural area not otherwise permitted by these rules or in the master plan shall secure a permit approved by the Commission. Each permit shall contain provisions and restrictions as the Commission sees fit.

A person holding a permit shall report to the custodian before commencing and upon completing of permitted activities.

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## 6. Plans and Records

### 6.01 Master Plan

Responsibility for preparation, revision, and adoption of the master plan for each preserved natural area shall rest with the Commission. However, the custodian and other interested persons may participate in the formulation of master plans. The master plan for each preserved natural area will take effect upon approval by the Commission. To the extent feasible, copies of master plans will be made available to interested persons.

The master plan will consist of text and maps. The amount of detail may vary according to circumstances. The form and content will be as the Commission may establish.

### 6.02 Records

Records will be kept in duplicate for each preserved natural area. One copy will be held by the custodian and one by the Commission. These copies will be open to the public at reasonable times and places. The records will include annual reports by the custodian as provided in Rule 1.04 and all other pertinent documentary material, studies, reports, and descriptions of significant events. The form and content of the record will be as the Commission may establish.

## 7. Adoption and Amendment of Rules

These rules, and any amendment, shall take effect upon approval by the Commission and in compliance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act.

RECORDED  
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MANAGEMENT PLAN OUTLINE

ARKANSAS' SYSTEM OF NATURAL AREAS

Rule 6.01 of the Rules for Management of Arkansas' preserved natural areas requires preparation and adoption of a master plan for each individual area. Following is a basic outline of items that should be covered in the master plan for each preserved natural area:

Title

Name

County

Part I. General Information and Context

Section 1. Basic information summary

Location

In relation to other points

Abbreviated legal descriptions

Topographic quadrangle

Aerial photograph numbers

Access

Size

Date of acquisition

Owner and custodian

Natural character and notable features

Deviations from general management rules

Master plan

Authors

Approval dates and resolutions

Section 2. Purpose and value of preserved natural area



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1RT Objectives 1 RCR

2RY General ~~RCR~~

Specific 1 RCR

1RT Preservation values (natural quality)

2RT → Rarity of features RCR

Diversity of features

Endangered or rare species

Degree of past disturbance

Wilderness quality

Replication of other areas RCR

1RT Use values RCR

2LT Scientific

Educational

Esthetic

Recreational 1 RCR

Section 3. 1RT Surroundings 1 RCR

1RT Landscape characteristics 1 RCR

Population centers

Highway and utility rights of way

Land use and capability 1 RCR

Section 4. 1RT Legal aspects 1 RCR

1RT Ownership 1 RCR

Type of acquisition

Occupancy and custody

Deviations from management rules

Liability 1 RCR

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Section 5. Resource inventory and characterization of area

Climate

Topography

Geology

Soils

Water and wetland

Vegetational communities

Flora

Fauna

Archaeological features

Historical features

Use potential and tolerance

Section 6. History

Use and occupancy

Ecological

Scientific study

Preservation

Section 7. Visitor and use characteristics

Visitors

Numbers

Origin

Types

Frequency and duration of visits

Existing uses, activities, and attractions

Conforming

Nonconforming

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Use and activity problems, vandalism, and hazards

Part II. General planning considerations

*2 RT* Section 1. Deviations from management rules

Section 2. Buffer areas

Section 3. Land acquisition needs

*2 RT* Natural area *REC*

*2 RT* Service roads *REC*

Public access

Recreation and conservation uses

Watershed buffer

Trespass buffer

Scenic buffer

Buffer against other external intrusions

Controllable boundary

Section 4. Adverse external influences, existing and potential, and solutions

*2 RT* Water pollution

Drainage

Accelerated runoff

Siltation

Air pollution

Noise

Visual

Urbanization and population density

Trespass and overuse

Incompatibility

Other

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Section 5. Adverse internal factors and solutions

Overuse and misuse

Habitat alteration and degradation

Nuisances and hazards

Safety

Health

Esthetic

Other

\* Part III. Management plans

Section 1. General provisions

(1.)

Applicability of management rules; deviations

(1.02)

Reports

(1.04)

Publicity

(1.06)

Section 2. Structures and facilities

(2.)

Boundary markers

(2.01)

Fences

(2.02)

Location markers

(2.03)

Access lanes

(2.04)

Firebreaks

(2.05)

Trails

(2.06)

Other structures and improvements

(2.07)

Section 3. Management of adjacent land

(3.)

Section 4. Land management

(4.)

Landscape management

(4.01)

~~\* These numbers refer to the sections of the Rules for Management of Arkansas' Preserved Natural Areas, that are discussed previously.~~

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Safety precautions	(4.02)
Removal or introduction of objects	(4.03)
Water control	(4.04)
Fire control	(4.05)
Erosion control	(4.06)
Management of special features	
Terrain and geological	
Archaeological	
Historical	
Management of vegetation and wildlife	(4.07)
Control of plant succession	(a)
Control of natural populations	(b)
Management of rare or endangered species	(c)
Introduction of plants or animals	(d)
Section 5. Visitor and use management	(5.)
Use intensity zones	(5.03)
Visitor control and management	
Visitor classes	(5.04)
Visitor activities, discipline, and vandalism control	(5.05)
Access control	(5.06)
Visitor protection	
Visitor services, facilities, and transportation	
Use programs	
Interpretive	
Educational	
Research	

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Other

Section 6. Administrative and custodial organization (1.03)

Agency relationships and organizational structure

Land management

Visitor and use management

Administrative activities

Administrative facilities

Personnel management

Budgetary plan

Part IV. Management programs and schedules

Maps

Aerial photograph

Topographic

Vicinity

Surrounding land capability

Ownership

Geology

Soils

Drainage

Vegetation

Tolerance classes

Land condition classes

Resource use zones

Land acquisition

Access and trail plan

Service area plan

Allowable use intensity zones

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APPENDIX

A. Scientific collecting permit

Form 5.07-1