Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park

DRAFT General Management Plan

October 2026

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A GUIDE TO THIS DOCUMENT

This general management plan sets the framework for the National Park Service to manage Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park. This plan is organized into the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction to the Plan** describes the park, the need for the plan, and the general management plan's relationship to the park planning portfolio.
- **Chapter 2: Park Management Vision** outlines the general management direction for the park, including desired conditions and management areas. Desired conditions are defined as statements of aspiration that describe resource conditions, visitor experiences and opportunities, and facilities and services that an agency strives to achieve and maintain in a particular area.
- **Chapter 3: Management Strategies and Actions** identifies management strategies and actions to achieve and maintain desired conditions for the park.

Appendixes

The appendixes provide supporting information, analyses, and management resources for the general management plan and environmental assessment:

- Appendix A: Foundation Elements
- Appendix B: Maps
- Appendix C: Indicators, Thresholds, and Objectives
- Appendix D: References

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Rationale for General Management Planning

The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 and National Park Service (NPS) *Management Policies 2006* requires each unit of the national park system to have a general management plan (GMP). Director's Order 2: *Park Planning* specifies that a general management plan refers to (1) a stand-alone general management plan or (2) the planning documents in a park's planning portfolio that collectively address the statutory requirements for a general management plan. These statutory requirements, as described in the National Parks and Recreation Act, include the following:

- measures for resource preservation
- indications of the types and general intensities of development (visitor circulation and transportation patterns, systems, and modes), including general locations, timing of implementation, and anticipated costs
- identification of and implementation commitments for visitor carrying capacities
- indications of potential boundary modifications and the reasons for modifications

The purpose of general management planning is to ensure that a national park system unit has a clearly defined direction for resource preservation and visitor use to best achieve the NPS mandate to preserve resources unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. In addition, general management planning makes the National Park Service more effective, collaborative, and accountable by:

- providing a balance between continuity and adaptability in decision-making by defining the desired conditions to be achieved and maintained in a park unit and providing a touchstone that allows NPS managers and staff to adapt their actions to changing situations, while staying focused on what is most important about the park unit.
- analyzing the park unit in relation to the surrounding ecosystem, cultural setting, and community, which helps NPS managers and staff understand how the park unit can interrelate with neighbors and others in ways that are ecologically, socially, and economically sustainable. Decisions made within such a larger context are more likely to be successful over time.
- affording everyone who has a stake in decisions affecting a park unit an opportunity to be involved in the planning process and to understand the decisions that are made. Park units are often the focus of intense public interest and public involvement throughout the planning process. Involving all interested stakeholders in general management plan development provides opportunities for NPS managers and staff to interact with the public to learn about their concerns, expectations, and values and to share information about the park unit's purpose and significance and the opportunities and constraints for management of park lands.

The ultimate outcome of general management planning for park units is an agreement among the National Park Service, its partners, and the public on why each area is managed as part of the national

park system, what resource conditions and visitor experiences should exist, and how those conditions can best be achieved and maintained over time.

General management plans are intended to be long-term documents that establish and articulate a management philosophy and framework for decision-making and problem -solving in national park system units. General management plans usually provide guidance for 15 to 20 years.

Other Laws and Policies Related to NPS Management

This section discusses some of the most pertinent servicewide laws and policies related to planning and managing the park. Importantly, the park must comply with these laws and policies regardless of this GMP planning effort.

The National Park Service must comply with laws and policies to protect environmental quality and resources, preserve cultural resources, and provide public services. Applicable laws and policies related to resource management include the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, Clean Water Act of 1972; the Endangered Species Act of 1973; the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended; the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990; and Executive Order 11990, "Protection of Wetlands." Laws and policies related to public services and access include the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Act Standards, the Final Outdoor Developed Area Guidelines, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Fair Housing Act.

Some of these laws and policies are applicable solely or primarily to units of the national park system. These include the 1916 Organic Act that created the National Park Service; the General Authorities Act of 1970; the act of March 27, 1978, relating to the management of the national park system; and the National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998. Other laws and policies have much broader application, such as the Endangered Species Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and Executive Order 11990, which addresses the protection of wetlands.

The NPS Organic Act (16 United States Code [USC] 1) provides the central management direction for all units of the national park system:

> *[P]romote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations…by such means and measure as to conform to the fundamental purpose of said parks, monuments and reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.*

The national park system General Authorities Act (16 USC 1a-1 et seq.) affirms that while all national park system units remain "distinct in character," they are "united through their inter-related purposes and resources into one national park system as cumulative expressions of a single national heritage." The act makes it clear that the NPS Organic Act and other protective mandates apply equally to all units of the system. Further, amendments state that NPS management of park units should not "derogate … the purposes and values for which these various areas have been established."

The National Park Service also has established policies for all units under its stewardship. The guidance manual, NPS *Management Policies 2006*, identifies and explains these policies. This general management plan incorporates and complies with the provisions of these mandates and policies.

Compliance with The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as Amended

This general management plan is subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), implementing regulations found in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500–1508, Director's Order 12 (NPS 2011), and the NPS NEPA Handbook (NPS 2015).

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Park Purpose and Significance

The park purpose statement conveys the reasons that the area was set aside as a national park. Grounded in an analysis of park legislation and legislative history, purpose statements also provide primary criteria against which the appropriateness of plan recommendations, operational decisions, and actions are tested.

The purpose of Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park is as follows:

> Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park preserves and interprets the historical, cultural, and natural resources associated with the life, work, and legacy of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad for the benefit of current and future generations.

Significance statements capture the essence of the national park system unit's importance to the nation's natural and cultural heritage. They describe the unit's distinctiveness and describe why an area is important within regional, national, and global contexts. These statements help managers focus their efforts and limited funding on the protection and enjoyment of attributes that are directly related to the purpose of the park unit.

The following significance statements have been identified for Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park:

- **Harriet Tubman's Life.** The park encompasses the landscape where Harriet Tubman was born and enslaved and where she forged relationships, practiced skills, escaped from enslavement, rescued family members and others, and experienced events that affected her for a lifetime.

- **Integrity of the Rural Landscape.** The rural landscapes of Dorchester, Caroline, and Talbot Counties within the park boundary are exceptionally valuable in illustrating the narratives of enslavement and escape that played out over their environment. The 21st-century rural working landscape maintains an agricultural character that Harriet Tubman and her contemporaries witnessed in her time in the region. This landscape supported a community that demonstrated self-reliance and resistance in the face of oppression.

- **Underground Railroad.** The Underground Railroad was a resistance movement symbolized by a very sophisticated network of escape routes throughout the United States from North to South and East to West, and routes to other countries used by enslaved people who self-liberated and those who helped them along the way. The landscapes of Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad

National Historical Park serve as a regional example of this larger and diverse international Network to Freedom that involved freedom seekers and their allies.

Park Description

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park is on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, with a boundary spanning land in Dorchester, Caroline, and Talbot Counties. The large boundary is co-managed with many partners, including the 480-acre Jacob Jackson Home Site owned and administered by the National Park Service, parts of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park administered by the Maryland Park Service. Many public and private entities also partner with the NPS to manage the legislated boundary although all partnerships and agreements with the NPS are voluntary and do not alter property ownership or land management authorities.

The park memorializes the remarkable legacy of Harriet Tubman through the preservation of the landscape of her enslaved youth, self-emancipation at age 27, and more than a decade of perilous journeys guiding others to freedom. Harriet Tubman, named Araminta Ross at birth, was born into slavery in Maryland in 1822 and liberated herself in 1849. As a young adult, Araminta changed her name to Harriet Tubman to honor her mother Harriet "Rit" Ross. She returned to the area of her birth 13 times between 1850 and 1860 to lead family, friends, and other enslaved African Americans to freedom in the North. Although unable to read the written word, Tubman was highly skilled at reading the landscape and the night sky, a skill she used to navigate as a conductor on the Underground Railroad. The rural community of Church Creek, Maryland, and regional communities she traversed are where she forged trustworthy and life-long relationships and developed and honed work and survival skills, many of which were learned from her father. Throughout her life, Harriet Tubman fought tirelessly for the abolition of slavery, the rights of women, and, during the Civil War, for the Union Army cause. She was a leader in the struggle for human rights and was forever motivated by her love of family and community and her abiding faith. Considered a national hero for her bravery and leadership in the struggle for equal rights for African Americans and women, it was here that Harriet Tubman first experienced the power of collective resistance and learned to read the landscape to facilitate her own escape and that of many others through the Underground Railroad.

Harriet Tubman never stopped serving and advocating for others. The Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, New York, is the companion unit in the national park system. This park interprets the loving home Tubman created for extended family and her many service endeavors, including the Home for the Aged, educational programs for young women, and services for anyone in need. It was in Auburn, New York, that she attained international prominence as a human rights leader with key support from state and federal elected officials.

On March 25, 2013, President Barack Obama issued a proclamation creating the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument on 11,750 acres in Dorchester County, Maryland. It includes the 480-acre Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site donated to the federal government by the Conservation Fund. When the national monument was established, the proclamation noted the shared administration responsibilities among Department of the Interior bureaus.

In December 2014, Congress created both the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, New York, and the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park on Maryland's Eastern

Shore as part of the fiscal year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 113-291). The boundary for the new national park was described in the map associated with the legislation (see Appendix B). It encompassed the national monument's previously designated 11,750 acres, including the donated 480-acre Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site, with an almost identical boundary to the national monument. The map also indicated authorized future acquisition areas (from willing sellers only) in Dorchester, Talbot, and Caroline Counties. The map included the US FWS Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge boundary although only the northern half of the refuge is within the national park boundary. Both the national monument and the national historical park are administered as a single unit—Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park, and any reference to "the park" in this general management plan refers to this collective unit. Together, the park and monument interpret the natural and cultural landscapes and special places important to Tubman's life as an enslaved child, young woman, and freedom seeker in eastern Maryland. The law also required general management planning for the new park be coordinated with the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, New York, as well as Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge and the NPS National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.

The park boundary encompasses federal, state, and private lands in Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot Counties, Maryland. Approximately 11,750 acres within the park boundary are reserved as federal lands, the majority of which are part of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (figure 1). The park's boundary includes the 480-acre Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site, owned and administered by the National Park Service; parts of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park, administered by the Maryland Park Service; and privately owned land. These lands include the natural, cultural, and working landscapes, home sites, and other historic resources related to, and evocative of, Harriet Tubman's time in the region. In this area, Harriet Tubman is memorialized in the land, water, and sky of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, where she was born and where she returned again and again to free others. The landscapes and waterways she navigated and used for sanctuary on her Underground Railroad missions in the mid-19th century have changed little from her time.

Though many of the buildings once associated with the life of Tubman and the people she knew have been lost, Tubman would recognize the fields and marshes, rivers, and forest that shape the Eastern Shore landscape. Blackwater and Parson's Creek Canal (also referred to as Stewart's Canal), a 7-mile canal dug by hand by free and enslaved people throughout the late 1820s and early 1830s for commercial transportation, stands out as a straight, narrow waterway among the more prominent Choptank River and the meandering Blackwater River. Tubman learned important navigation and communication skills working in nearby timbering operations with her father, Ben Ross. Stewart's Canal is part of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, which includes a significant part of the land within the park boundary and conserves habitat that supports the abundant wildlife of the region today. Also within the most westerly portion of the Refuge are Peters Neck and 10 acres given to Harriet Tubman's father Ben Ross by Dr. Anthony Thompson ("Ben's Ten"). In 2019, the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge acquired 2,600 acres in this area, and partners with the State of Maryland and the NPS on archaeological and interpretive opportunities. The Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site, donated by The Conservation Fund, is currently the only property within park boundaries under NPS ownership. Jacob Jackson was a free and literate African American man who helped Tubman and her family.

Given that information about Underground Railroad activities and the lives of enslaved people must be pieced together from disparate sources, the Harriet Tubman and Underground Railroad stories are and will continue to be journeys of research and discovery.

The park is within the multistate route of the National Park Service's Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program, which honors the history of resistance to enslavement through escape and flight. The park provides the public a key location along the Network to Freedom in Maryland's Choptank River Region to learn about slavery, freedom seekers, and self-emancipation in America through the experiences of Harriet Tubman, her family, and the communities around her. The State of Maryland's Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway is an important public resource providing at numerous locations public interpretation about Tubman's early life and self-emancipation. The primarily rural cultural landscape in the Choptank River region is still reminiscent of Tubman's time in many respects. The cultural landscape connects the public to the life of Harriet Tubman and thereby serves the overlapping and shared missions of the national park, the NPS Network to Freedom, and the state byway.

Partnerships with state and local governments, nonprofits, and academic institutions, as well as residents and historic site owners within park boundaries, maximize the opportunities for ongoing collaboration. Farmers continue to be important to the partnership through the ongoing management of the agrarian landscape, and tourism professionals play a role in fostering an appropriate tourism infrastructure to maintain the delicate balance of landscape uses and users. The proximity of Harriet Tubman-related resources and Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge provides the opportunity for the National Park Service and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to share in the protection of these resources in a cooperative manner compatible with the missions of both agencies.

Many of the sites of interest within the park boundary are linked by the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway, a self-guided driving tour along single-lane roads through rural landscapes offering scenic vistas of the marsh, forest, and agricultural land typical of the Eastern Shore in the 19th century. Within the 17-acre Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park is the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center, which is owned by the Maryland Park Service and comanaged and staffed through a partnership with the National Park Service. The visitor center received upwards of 100,000 visitors from more than 60 countries in the first year of the center's opening in 2017.

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park in Maryland's Eastern Shore has an independent companion unit, Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, New York, that preserves the resources and interprets the story of Harriet Tubman's adult life after she achieved her freedom and is also her final resting place. Planning for both national park units is coordinated to some degree, but each park is developing its own portfolio of planning documents. This document provides management direction only for the Underground Railroad national historical park in Maryland.

This general management plan addresses key areas of management guidance for the park, including management zones or areas, desired conditions in each zone or area, and an initial visitor capacity analysis at Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park.

Foundation Document

The *Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park Foundation Document* provides the underlying basis for general management planning and includes relatively stable components that will not change much over time. These components are the legislated purpose of the park unit, the significance the unit holds, the focus of the unit's interpretation (interpretive themes) and education program, and the unit's fundamental resources and values. In addition, the foundation document contains dynamic components (e.g., special mandates and administrative commitments, key issues and associated planning and data needs) that can be updated. The special mandates and administrative commitments identify the legal requirements that must be followed in managing the park unit. The foundation document is a useful reference for all aspects of park management to ensure that the most important objectives are accomplished before turning to items that are also important but not directly critical to achieving the park purpose and maintaining its significance.

The following sections of the foundation document are provided in appendix A, as they contain information pertinent to the general management plan:

- park purpose and significance statements
- fundamental resources and values
- special mandates and administrative commitments

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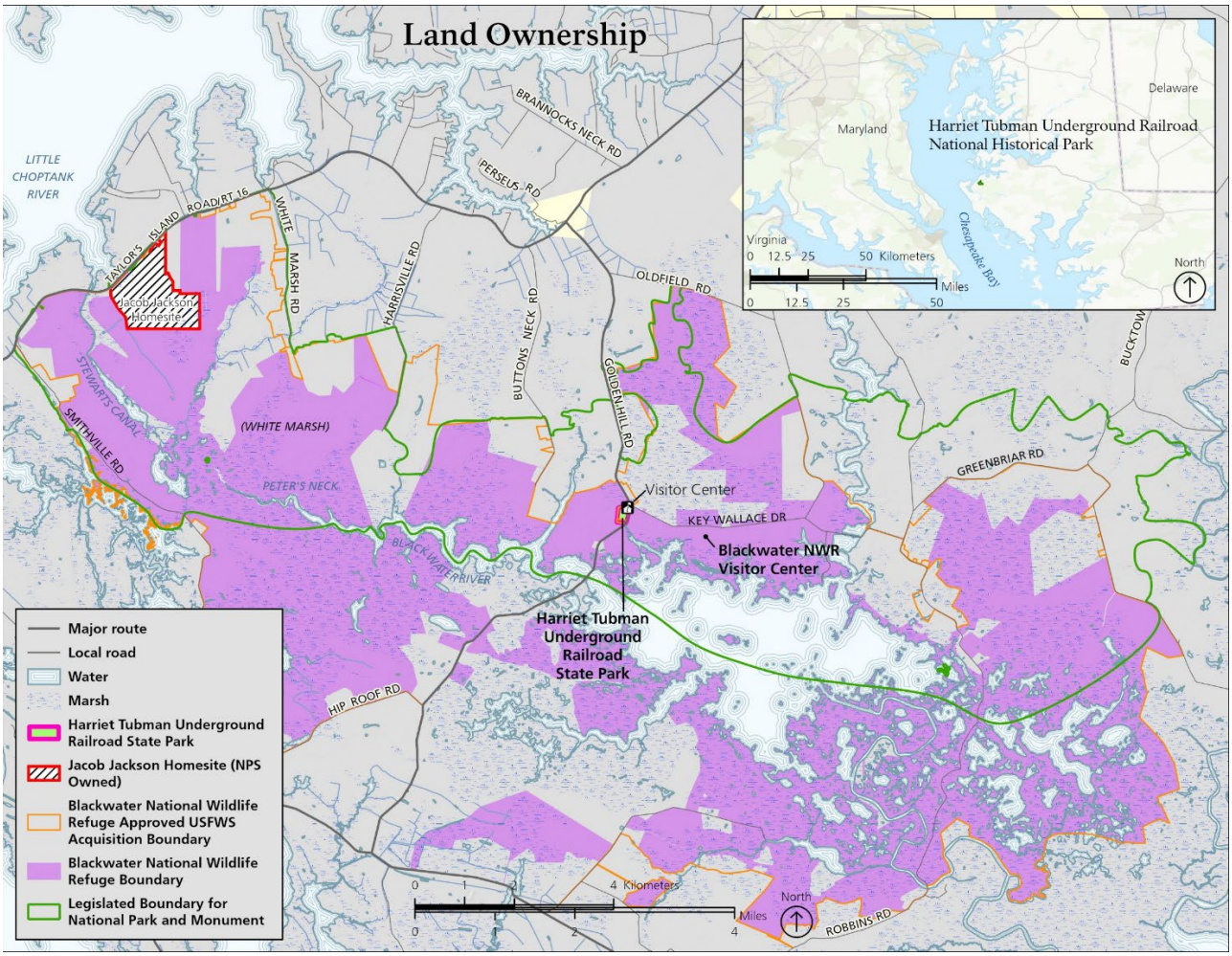


FIGURE 1. MAP OF HARRIET TUBMAN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND SURROUNDING LAND OWNERSHIP

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PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

The National Park Service has prepared this general management plan to address the requirements of Public Law 113-291, which enabled the establishment of Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park; the March 2013, presidential proclamation creating Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument; the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978; and NPS *Management Policies 2006*. The general management plan builds on the park legislation, established resolutions, laws, and policies for the park, and on the park's foundation document to develop a management vision for the national historical park.

Through sustained civic engagement with the public and other key stakeholders, the general management plan will provide a management vision based on a shared understanding of the conditions and level of development that will best achieve the park's purpose and conserve its fundamental resources and values. A general management plan is a comprehensive plan that is parkwide in scale and looks holistically at critical issues, such as connected conservation outside of park boundaries, climate change adaptation and sustainability, and the socioeconomic environment and addresses how park management will provide inclusive and equitable access and opportunities.

The purposes of this general management plan for Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park are as follows:

- Articulate the management vision for the park through defining management areas and desired conditions in those areas that managers use as a guide.
- Describe current and aspirational resource conditions and visitor uses and experiences to be achieved in the national historical park without defining specific strategies, which park managers will develop through day-to-day management.
- Consider current and potential visitor and resource management opportunities and propose long-term strategies at a broad scale without definition for providing access, connecting visitors to key experiences, and managing use.

SCOPE

This general management plan articulates the overarching management vision for the national historical park and addresses the statutory requirements at a programmatic level; the plan does not describe how particular programs or projects should be implemented. Given the dynamic nature of park operations and issues, the descriptions for each requirement include reference to subsequent planning needs to better address the statutory requirements through the park's planning portfolio. Subsequent implementation plans, which would be consistent with the approved general management plan and the current *Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park Foundation Document*, would require additional analysis and compliance when moving forward becomes feasible.

PLANNING ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The public, NPS staff, and representatives from legislated partners and other organizations helped to identify planning issues, opportunities, and concerns during internal and public scoping. The National

Park Service solicited comments at meetings with legislated partners, agencies, and community stakeholders and through a planning newsletter. A planning issue is defined as an unrealized opportunity or unresolved conflict regarding the use or management of public lands. The general management plan provides high-level strategies for addressing these issues and opportunities in the context of the park's purpose, significance, and special mandates.

Preserving Cultural and Natural Resources

The park's fundamental resources include, but are not limited to, the cultural landscape throughout the park's expansive boundary in three counties that are reminiscent of the working agricultural and forested wetland landscapes of Harriet Tubman's time; the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site located within the 480 acres that the National Park Service owns near Madison, Maryland, and Stewarts Canal; working landscapes and traditional lifeways throughout the boundary; and key partnerships with the State of Maryland, Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, nonprofits such as the Harriet Tubman Organization and Bucktown Village Store and others, and academic partners. The general management plan will provide high-level guidance for managing the park's cultural and natural resources and explore the role of partnerships in achieving the desired conditions for natural and cultural resources. Previous and future studies completed after this general management plan do and will include documentation and specific guidance for resource management, visitor experience programming, and facility needs, as appropriate. These efforts include the 2017 and future archeological investigations, the cultural landscape report currently in development, a planned ethnographic overview and assessment, a planned historic structures report, the 2019 natural resource condition assessment, and other focused research and resource management efforts to provide park managers with detailed information to guide preservation of the park's resources, visitor experiences appropriate to resource condition and carrying capacity, and the development of facilities to support the park's mission.

Experiencing the Park

The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center houses permanent exhibits, a film, restrooms, a museum store, an information desk, and a research library and serves as an orientation center and gateway to the larger Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway. The visitor center is intended to be the arrival and entry experience to what otherwise becomes a self-guided tour through the cultural landscape within the larger park boundary and is the park's primary visitor destination. The Maryland Park Service and the National Park Service comanage and operate the visitor center. Through a cooperative management agreement, both partners provide either/or in-kind services and financial support in the operation and maintenance of the park and work jointly in providing programming and events for the visiting public. Groups larger than 10 can make online reservations for ranger-led interpretation programs, run in partnership with the Maryland Park Service.

On the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site, brackish muddy marshes, golden with sedges and grass, spread from Taylors Island Road at the property's western boundary to thick forests of oak, pine, and sweet gum. Creeks, ditches, and abandoned canals stretch from the ragged edges of the Chesapeake Bay deep into the site, leaving traces of the area's historic agricultural use. The site has no extant buildings; the wooden houses, barns, and fences that defined these long-abandoned fields are gone. Only a sunken road trace, old Martins Lane, now filled with brackish marsh water like a straight, narrow river, points toward the land Jacob and Dinah Jackson farmed in the mid-19th century. The Jacob and

Dinah Jackson Home Site portion of the park remains closed to the public, as stated in the Superintendent's Compendium (NPS 2022) due to ongoing site analysis and management considerations.

In addition to fostering learning about Tubman's early life in Maryland, the park provides information about her life after self-emancipation. The companion park unit, Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, New York, preserves the resources and interprets the story of Harriet Tubman's adult life after she achieved her freedom.

Responding to Climate Change

Over the last decade, the National Park Service has consulted with the scientific community, federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other informed parties to gather data and explore strategies to prepare the national park system for potential future impacts of a changing climate. In the future, sea level rise, extreme precipitation events, heat waves, and increases in severe winds or other phenomena related to climate change will alter how natural and cultural resources are managed and the types of activities, facilities, and infrastructure the National Park Service can support.

Climate change adaptation will play an increasingly important role in park resource management. Both historical trends and future projections suggest park managers should prepare for increases in temperature, precipitation levels, intensity of severe weather events, and overall sea level rise impacting some existing uplands and marshy areas, particularly in the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site property and Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge areas within the park boundary in Dorchester County. These changes will compound many of the other issues described in this section and have direct impacts on resource management, recreational facilities, park operations, and visitor use and experience. Some of these impacts are already occurring or are expected at the park in the time frame of this plan. Temperature shocks may cause significant damage to buildings and paved surfaces such as sidewalks. Increased precipitation and storm events, particularly heavy rainfall events, may result in increased occurrences of flooding. Projected sea level rise will continue to encroach on the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site adjacent to the Little Choptank River/Chesapeake Bay coast.

This general management plan broadly establishes desired future conditions based on the park's purpose and cultural and natural resource conditions and desired visitor experiences and opportunities. More detailed studies on those issues, and associated facilities and services, will be climate-informed and consider plausible climate futures. Park-specific documents are being prepared that will help inform and guide the park in preparing for future conditions. Although beyond the scope of this general management planning document, park managers acknowledge the need to develop tools and strategies to help identify and mitigate climate change impacts on natural and cultural resources and visitor amenities. The National Park Service will work in cooperation with other federal agencies, the states, counties, and communities to explore options to adapt to and/or mitigate projected impacts of sea level rise and storm surge on NPS-managed areas. Management strategies will be based on the best science available, conform to the mission of the National Park Service and relevant policies, and be within the park's available financial resources.

Partnerships

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park is built on partnerships. Throughout the park's expansive congressionally authorized boundary, many parties voluntarily cooperate to preserve the park's resources and provide experiences for visitors and to accomplish the vision for the park. Partnerships support the park in addressing current issues and can provide expertise, resources, and support, thus expanding the park's organizational capacity. The National Park Service will continue to collaborate and strengthen relationships with current partners and to seek out potential new partners to collectively fulfill the park's legislated purpose.

The continued preservation of natural and cultural landscapes at the park is imperative to protect the historic integrity and visitor experience at the park. However, the National Park Service does not have fee-simple ownership or easements outside of the 480-acre Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site. Therefore, the park is working with its partners to effect preservation of the lands within its boundary. Key partners include the Maryland Park Service, which operates the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park, and Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, a significant portion of which is included within the boundary of the national historical park and has been under protection since 1933. The National Park Service's Network to Freedom program links the park and its partners to the larger narrative of freedom seekers beyond the Choptank River region. Other partnering agencies include the State of Maryland Department of Transportation, Maryland Office of Tourism Development, and local governments including local transit agencies. In addition, nonprofits such as the Harriet Tubman Organization, Bucktown Village Store, and academic partners provide critical scholarship, research, interpretive exhibits, and media necessary to bridge the gap between the 19th-century stories and the existing landscape that requires interpretation for visitors to further understand.

Many of the park's partners, including the landowners within the park boundary, have been protecting the landscapes of Dorchester, Talbot, and Caroline Counties for decades and can be credited for maintaining views into the cultural and working landscape that park visitors see today. With limited NPS ownership, this wide range of cooperative formal and informal partnerships is fundamental to the interpretation of the stories of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad and to the preservation of related resources. The general management plan provides high-level management direction to the park that supports the National Park Service's valuable relationships with these community partners and those partners identified in the park's enabling legislation.

HOW HARRIET TUBMAN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK IS ADDRESSING THE FOUR STATUTORY GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN REQUIREMENTS

This general management plan articulates the overarching management vision for the national historical park and addresses the statutory requirements at a programmatic level. Given the dynamic nature of park operations and issues, the descriptions for each requirement include reference to subsequent planning needs to better address the statutory requirements through the park's planning portfolio. Subsequent management direction and planning, which would be consistent with the current general management plan and the *Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park Foundation Document*, would require additional analysis and compliance when moving forward becomes feasible.

Resource Preservation

This general management plan outlines a management vision for resource preservation, identifies desired conditions for natural and cultural resources, and identifies how those resources would be managed within each of the park's management areas. The general management plan also identifies management strategies and actions for natural and cultural resources that would improve their preservation. Subsequent plans, such as the park's cultural landscape inventory and soon-to-be completed cultural landscape report, will be consistent with the approved general management plan and will include specific recommendations for preserving the park's resources.

Types and General Intensities of Development

This general management plan delineates and designates management areas, outlines the management vision for and indicates desired conditions for the types and general intensities of development associated with public enjoyment and use of the area, and provides high-level strategies and actions for facility management. Subsequent management direction and implementation plans, including a potential site plan for the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site, would be consistent with the approved general management plan and would include more extensive details and analysis to support the park's future strategic facility investment needs.

Visitor Carrying Capacity

This general management plan identifies desired conditions for visitor use and experience throughout the park, as well as in each of the park's management areas, although visitor carrying capacity and experiences will be directly administered as appropriate by each land manager/property owner (NPS, Maryland Park Service, USFWS, private owners, etc.). This plan also includes indicators, thresholds, and a range of potential management strategies that would respond to changes in visitation (appendix C). The plan also identifies general intensities of use and activities associated with public enjoyment and use of the park. As needed, subsequent plans will be developed and will include more extensive management strategies to address visitor use and experience.

External Boundary Modifications

National Park Service policies require park managers to evaluate the adequacy of boundaries for protecting resources and providing visitor opportunities in general management planning. The criteria for potential boundary adjustments state that boundary adjustments may be recommended for the following purposes:

- Protect significant resources and values or enhance opportunities for public enjoyment related to park purposes.
- Address operational and management issues, such as the need for access or the need for boundaries, to correspond to logical boundary delineations (e.g., topographic or other natural features or roads).
- Otherwise protect park resources that are critical to fulfilling park purposes.

No specific boundary adjustment needs were identified in this general management plan. However, this plan does not preclude future consideration of boundary adjustments should needs or conditions

569 change. Potential boundary adjustments would be evaluated in a boundary study or similar planning
570 document.

CHAPTER 2: GENERAL MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the general management direction for the park, including parkwide desired conditions, a map of park management areas, and desired conditions associated with each management area.

MANAGEMENT VISION

The general management vision articulates high-level parkwide desired conditions and guides management decision making for the unit. This vision guides NPS management commitments for resource preservation, types and intensities of development associated with public enjoyment and use, visitor carrying capacities, and boundary modification assessments, as needed (the following are not listed in priority order).

Mutually Supportive Partnerships/Uniquely Effective Operational Structure

- The park's strength is its rich quilt of narratives and cooperative partners as witnessed through the close working relationships among the park and its key partners. A major focus of what the park does to carry out the mission of the National Park Service is the quest for bringing vitality and new life to the communities the park is associated with through a common commitment of preservation and conservation. Park staff are proud to offer technical advice, assistance, and recognition of the local history to these communities in hopes of enhancing public engagement and introducing the next generation to stewardship opportunities and responsibilities. The park, its partners, and the roles they fulfill are described below.
    - Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park in Church Creek, Maryland, offers the public scholarship and engaging programming through storytelling, interpretation, and educational opportunities about the origins of Harriet Tubman and her relevance to American history and the struggle for freedom and equality. Park managers lead partnership engagement and convene multiple partnership opportunities that enrich shared and overlapping initiatives. Through these relationships, park managers collaborate with land management partners to ensure shared stewardship of sensitive natural resources, cultural landscapes, and historic sites.
    - Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, New York, serves as the bookend to the life and legacy of Harriet Tubman. Collaboration between the two parks, as mandated per law, allows for a more complete depiction of the significance and historic quest of freedom seekers made from the South to the North. The "sister parks," established simultaneously under the same law, uniquely share parallel paths in developing their universal framework and work side by side in coordination on resource documents and special programs and projects.
    - The NPS National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program works directly with park staff in managing the stories tied to the historical significance of Harriet Tubman and

a network of allies and resources that served in a very complex and discreet manner to assist freedom seekers during the era of the Underground Railroad.

- Maryland Department of Natural Resources contributes through a partnership a wide variety of expertise from the Maryland Park Service staff and their unique ability to collaborate on resource protection and visitor experience opportunities. From the early planning stages of the park to current day, both partners have played a significant role in the full build-out and sustainment of the visitor center and surrounding structures.
- The USFWS Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, an interagency partner, provides almost a century of natural resources stewardship and land management expertise helping to frame the park's natural resources component in the shared Natural Resources Area (a park management zone). Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge also provides law enforcement services for the park.
- Partnerships development is core to the fulfillment of the park's purpose. Park managers actively build and sustain constituencies advocating for long-term collaboration with local sites connected to the stories and protection of resources associated with the life of Harriet Tubman on Maryland's Eastern Shore. This work is accomplished through workshops, regular meetings, joint trainings, special events, and other forums.

Resource Management

- Partnerships with the Maryland Park Service; the US Fish and Wildlife Service; various state, local, and regional stakeholders; and the public assist in the protection and interpretation of the distinctive landscapes associated with the life and legacy of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad.
- Management decisions about natural and cultural resources are based on scholarly and scientific information, fundamental resources and values, consultation with appropriate agencies and communities, and consideration of the broader context of the resources on Maryland's Eastern Shore, including the effects of climate change and sea level rise.

Visitor Experience

- Through outreach and education, park staff and their partners foster public understanding of and appreciation for the purpose and significance of Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park and its natural and cultural resources, as well as its sister sites and programs.
- Visitors enjoy a seamless experience and have the opportunity to explore and understand natural and cultural landscapes across Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot Counties that convey the themes associated with Harriet Tubman.
- Visitors are aware of and understand the link between the sites associated with Harriet Tubman on Maryland's Eastern Shore and in Auburn, New York.

- The park builds historic context for visitors, interpreting aspects of 19th-century Eastern Shore life, such as the conditions of slavery and freedom and the interplay between African American, white, and Indigenous peoples in and around Madison.
- Through close collaboration, park staff and the NPS National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom provide a powerful interpretive resource for the public and other partners.

Land Use and Development

- Park staff and park partners advocate for the voluntary preservation of the cultural landscape and related views, sounds, and night skies evocative of Harriet Tubman's time.
- Development plans and facilities support the park's activities while being cost effective, including life cycle cost considerations, in park staffs' capacity to manage, and are used efficiently to enhance overall operations.

DESIRED CONDITIONS

Desired conditions are statements of aspiration that describe resource conditions, visitor experiences and opportunities, and facilities and services that the National Park Service strives to achieve and maintain in a particular area. Desired condition descriptions paint a picture of what an area will look, feel, sound like and how it will function as the park's management vision is achieved. Descriptions of desired conditions help park managers answer the question "what are we trying to achieve?" They do not answer how conditions will be maintained or achieved.

Desired conditions may vary across the landscape of a park, depending on resource types and desired experiences for visitors. This plan divides Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park into management areas (commonly referred to as "management zones" in other planning contexts), that delineate differences in management. Each of these management areas includes a description of distinct desired conditions arranged along a continuum of visitor opportunities, resource conditions, and realistic levels of management and infrastructure to be provided. Management area-specific desired conditions allow for the development of meaningful guidance on the types and levels of use that may be appropriate in an area and how that use may generally be managed.

PARKWIDE DESIRED CONDITIONS

The following desired conditions apply to all areas of the park, regardless of which management area they fall into. Due to the high-level scope of these desired conditions, they are similar to management goals that park managers strive to attain and maintain in perpetuity and guide management decision-making.

Cultural and Natural Resources

- Visitors of all abilities and backgrounds can experience and connect with the park's agricultural and natural landscapes and the traditional lifeways those areas support to this day.
- Managed cultural landscapes, including agricultural farms and fields, sites, and features, are conserved to the extent possible under changing ecological conditions as representations of

landscapes, sights, and sounds that Harriet Tubman and her contemporaries would recognize if they could visit today.

- Visible, tangible, and historical resources, including agricultural lands, family farms, planted fields, roads, canals, fields, and forested woodlands, remain on the landscape to the extent possible in a condition that conveys their significance and the park's history to park visitors.
- Important aspects of the landscape that are no longer visible (e.g., archeological resources) are interpreted in compelling and accessible ways.
- The landscape is managed to clearly portray the natural and culturally relevant qualities it possesses and the role those qualities have and continue to play to this day as a driving factor for human settlement and resource exploitation.
- A mosaic of habitats is supported across a diverse complex of ecosystems that provide refuge for native flora and fauna that are integral to the historic use and cultural legacy of the area.
- Management of the landscape remains dynamic and adaptive in response to projected climate change in a way that recognizes and considers the impact on the historical context and cultural resources that are embedded in the natural landscape.
- Dark night skies and celestial events can be clearly seen by the naked eye so that park visitors can understand the ways stars were used to navigate more than a century ago and how that ability to "read" the landscape played a critical role in the successful journey of those seeking freedom.
- Artificial light intrusion and pollution at key locations associated with Harriet Tubman's life are minimal, and natural night skies are largely unobscured.
- The role natural resources have played in regional industry (such as native timber's role in shipbuilding) is interpreted.

Facilities

- Facility development is consistent with the best available climate change science to ensure sustainable investments. Facility design incorporates climate change factors, where applicable, in a manner that supports the flexibility to adapt management decisions based on scenarios supported by the most current data and conditions on the ground.

Visitor Experience

- Visitors of all abilities can experience the park's fundamental resources and values.
- Visitor experiences are informed by audience needs and are enhanced by building long-term relationships with communities and audiences.
- Local, regional, and national visitors all find relevance and high-quality experiences in the park and feel a sense of connection to place and history.

- Visitors can immerse themselves in the sights and sounds of the landscape as Harriet Tubman experienced them.
- Visitors and educational groups have access to comprehensive education materials and programs that focus on fundamental resources and values, natural and cultural landscapes, and communities preserving and promoting their natural and cultural resources.
- Visitors have access to the information required for and understand how to explore and be inspired by sites within the park boundary along the State of Maryland's Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway and the NPS National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program sites and can engage with and connect to their stories.
- Visitors have opportunities to understand and immerse themselves in the historic and cultural legacy derived from this landscape and its present-day manifestation through long-held traditions in local communities.

Partnerships

- Various formal and informal partnerships continue to expand and strengthen so that visitors can understand and explore connected stories across space and time, such as other Underground Railroad sites, as well as connected civil rights themes like women's rights, segregation, and the equitable application of the law.
- Resources are leveraged across partnerships to support the visitor's ability to access comprehensive, meaningful, and accessible experiences within the park boundary and beyond.
- All parties recognize and respect the autonomy of all entities and landowners located within the park's congressionally authorized boundary.
- Landowners continue to play a critical role as stewards of both the cultural landscape and the traditional lifeways they foster that perpetuate to this day.
- Partners collectively engage in the visibly seamless management of the natural and cultural landscape across a diversity of jurisdictions, regulations, and interests.
- Park managers work cooperatively in partnership with public and private property owners to encourage consistency to fulfill Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park's purpose.

MANAGEMENT AREAS

Management "zoning" is the method used by the National Park Service to identify and describe the variety of resource conditions and visitor experiences to be achieved and maintained in different areas of a park unit. Section 2.3.1.2 of NPS *Management Policies 2006* requires that each park's approved general management plan include a map that delineates management areas (zones) or districts that correspond to a description of the desired resource and visitor experience conditions for each area of the park (NPS 2006). In this general management plan, management zones are referred to as "management areas," although the terms are interchangeable.

Each management area is accompanied by a list of desired conditions describing the park's management commitments and appropriate activities and development. Section 2.3.1.2 of NPS *Management Policies 2006* requires that zoning will outline the criteria for (or describe the kind of) appropriate uses and facilities necessary to support these desired conditions. Some desired conditions may apply parkwide (see the "Parkwide Desired Conditions" section above). Management areas illustrate geographic differences in desired conditions for resource conditions, visitor experiences, and management activities (NPS 2006).

All lands within the park's legislated boundary are assigned to a management area, regardless of property ownership. The National Park Service's management areas do not change local government land use regulation (zoning) or impact individual property rights. All decisions about property management and activities on lands outside of the 480 acres that the National Park Service owns at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site remain within each property owner's purview. The National Park Service is committed to working cooperatively in partnership with legislative partners and public and private property owners to encourage consistency with the desired conditions for each management area to fulfill Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park's purpose.

This general management plan relies on the development of four management areas—Natural, Historic, Community, and Visitor Services—to define specific resource conditions and visitor experiences to be achieved and maintained in each management area of the park's authorized boundary. Each management area applies to different geographic locations (see descriptions below and more specifically, figure 2). The management areas are consistent with, and help achieve, the specific purpose, significance, and special mandates for the park.

Natural Area: This management area includes all lands in Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge within the park boundary. It also includes NPS owned lands not included in the Historic Area. This area is administered by United States Fish and Wildlife Service except for parts within the NPS owned 480 acres administered by the National Park Service at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Homesite.

Historic Area: This management area includes 140.25 acres of NPS-administered lands encompassing the Madison community and Jacob and Dinah Jackson home. It is a subset of the larger 480-acre NPS-administered parcel.

Visitor Services Area: This management area includes the 17-acres owned by Maryland Park Service that includes the visitor center on Golden Hill Road managed in partnership with the NPS. This management area also includes the 5.2-acre USFWS-owned parcel that includes the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge visitor center on Key Wallace Drive.

Community Area: This management area includes privately owned farms, agricultural areas, homes, businesses, and other maintained landscapes. Property in this management area is not administered by the National Park Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, or Maryland Park Service. This management area's boundary conforms with the USFWS acquisition boundary (see Appendix B, 2014 Boundary map). However, any future USFWS acquisitions within the boundary would be conducted with willing sellers only. Partnerships and agreements with the National Park Service are voluntary.

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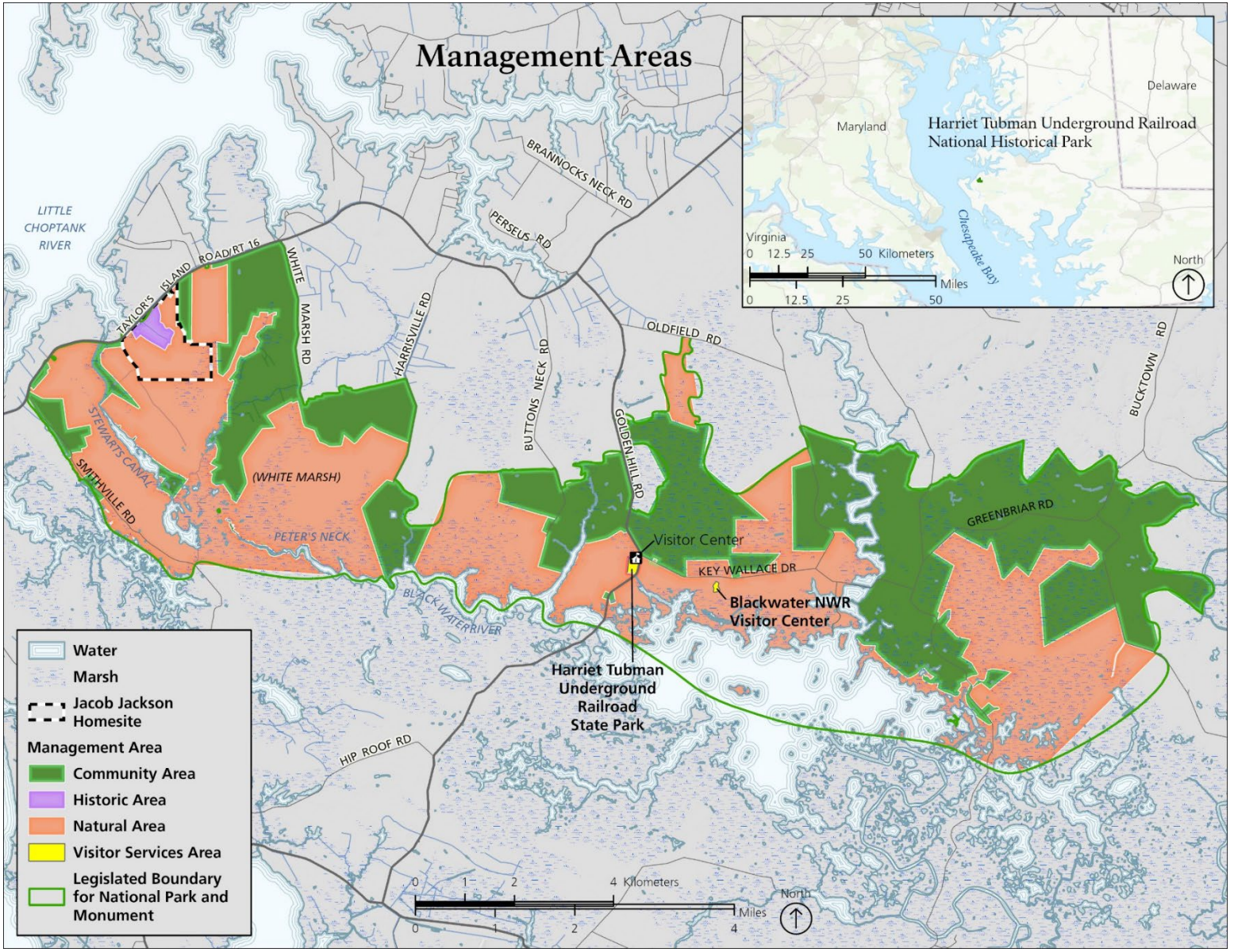


FIGURE 2. MANAGEMENT AREAS FOR HARRIET TUBMAN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK. SEE APPENDIX C FOR NOTES ON THE MAP.

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Desired Conditions by Management Area

The following desired conditions would apply in each area.

Table 1. Desired Conditions by Management Area

Category	Natural Area	Historic Area	Visitor Services Area	Community Area
Management Area Concept (Vision)	In addition to a range of educational, interpretive, and recreational opportunities in many locations, this area preserves the mosaic of fields, forests, streams, and wetlands that provide habitat for numerous species and contribute to the setting, context, and scenic views of the landscapes and waterways reminiscent of and associated with Harriet Tubman's early life. Visitors have opportunities for contemplative discovery, relaxation, and exploration in a relatively natural environment with limited interpretation. The Natural Area is managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in compliance with the Refuge's Comprehensive Conservation Plan (USFWS 2006) to largely mimic natural patterns through human management strategies and tools. Within the NPS-owned area, evidence of human management is minimal, and management is focused on natural resource conservation. On site interpretation is limited.	This area preserves historic, archeological, architectural, and landscape features affiliated with the life of Harriet Tubman, Jacob and Dinah Jackson, and the community that supported them. Visitors have a range of educational, interpretive, and recreational opportunities to enjoy and appreciate the park's resources. The park's history shines here. Key historical events are known to have occurred here, and visitors have an opportunity to experience and learn about that history and make connections. Management is focused on the preservation of cultural and historic resources. Interpretation highlights the connections between these places and their stories.	These locations orient visitors to diverse natural and cultural resources through visitor contact, programs, information, and interpretation. Special events, hosted by the National Park Service, partners, and others, offer visitors opportunities to experience the park during themed activities, community celebrations, and family events. These areas may also include space for park administration and maintenance. Visitors come here to orient to the park and learn about its resources here. Park management is focused on park administration and facilitating learning opportunities. Interpretation is focused on services that connect to the significance of the park.	In this area, natural and historic resources are managed and maintained in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies, including local land-use zoning. Landowners who continue to keep large acreage in agricultural use are supported and encouraged as stewards of a cultural landscape that facilitates a valuable immersive experience and understanding for visitors to the park. Evidence of human management is predominant. Interpretation is limited and focused on how lands like these connect to the history of the park and would be recognized by Harriet Tubman and her contemporaries.

Category	Natural Area	Historic Area	Visitor Services Area	Community Area
Administration	This area is administered by USFWS except for parts within the 480 acres owned by the NPS at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Homesite.	This area is owned and directly managed by the NPS	There are two areas within the Visitor Services Management Area: 1. Maryland Park Service property with visitor center that is co-managed by Maryland Park Service and National Park Service, 4068 Golden Hill Road, Church Creek, MD; and 2. Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge visitor center at 2145 Key Wallace Drive, Cambridge, MD.	Property in this management area is not administered by the National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service or Maryland Park Service. This mgt area's boundary conforms with the USFWS acquisition boundary (see Appendix B, 2014 Boundary map). However, any future NPS or USFWS acquisitions within the boundary would be conducted with willing sellers or donors only. Partnerships and agreements with the NPS are voluntary.
Cultural Resources	• The story of Harriet Tubman and her contemporaries' connection to natural spaces and resources is told in the natural area. • Visitors understand how the landscape reflects the connection that Harriet Tubman and her contemporaries shared with the natural landscape and its resources. • Views that contribute to the surrounding cultural landscape are maintained. **How the National Park Service supports partner managers:** • Park staff work with Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge staff to tell the story of Harriet Tubman's relationship to the land.	• Historic sites and landscapes are preserved or rehabilitated to reflect their period of significance as feasible, considering the effects of climate change. • Artifacts from the colonial period and Tubman era unearthed during archeological surveys help to solidify the historical significance of the park and tell the story of Harriet Tubman and her contemporaries. • The spatial relationship of field patterns, roads, and drainage ditches facilitates the understanding of how Harriet Tubman, Jacob Jackson, and others "read the landscape" and used the area.	• Cultural resources of the park are interpreted for visitors. • Archeological resources from other areas of the park are displayed and interpreted for the visiting public, as appropriate. • At the Maryland Park Service property, the park administration building/visitor center's design, its landscape, and surrounding setting reflect key aspects of Harriet Tubman's life and legacy. This design and symbolism are preserved with respect to the important themes that are represented, and these elements are highlighted and interpreted for park visitors.	• The monitoring and preservation of cultural resources connected to the story of Harriet Tubman in the community and Choptank River region is achieved through cultivated partnerships with local, state, and federal organizations. • Landowners continue to play a critical role as stewards of both the cultural landscape and the traditional lifeways it continues to foster. • Community partnerships are collectively expanded and maintained, fostering a shared commitment to safeguarding the area's cultural resources. **How the National Park Service supports partner managers:**

Category	Natural Area	Historic Area	Visitor Services Area	Community Area
	• In partnership with the USFWS which directly manages the resources, the NPS makes recommendations on cultural resources as appropriate.	• Historic landscapes, such as the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site, Tall Family cemetery, and Native American trade routes, are legible to the well-trained eye. • The cultural landscape reflects attributes of significant figures like Jacob and Dinah Jackson's legacy, evoking a sense of their day-to-day life and ultimately the role they played in supporting Harriet Tubman, the Underground Railroad, and the Madison, Maryland, community network. • Archeological resources in the Historic Area are documented, protected, and retrieved consistent with best archeological practices.		• The National Park Service maintains and expands relationships with partners and private landowners, fostering a shared sense of responsibility for safeguarding the area's cultural resources. • Cultural resources are managed and maintained by local landowners in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies, including local land use zoning. The National Park Service provides technical assistance to support historic preservation as feasible and appropriate.
Natural Resources	• The habitat mosaic and ecosystem diversity of agricultural, wetland, and pastoral landscapes supports diverse habitats for native flora and fauna and contributes to the area's historic and cultural significance. • The natural area supports a diverse array of native species, and invasive species are managed as practical in priority areas as determined	• Natural resource integrity is maintained to the extent possible, recognizing the primacy of historic preservation objectives in this management area. • The natural area supports a diverse array of native species, and invasive species are minimally or not at all present. • Habitat connectivity is maintained to promote	• The conditions at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center are conducive to having a Night Sky program. • Natural resources at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center are managed through the established partnership. • The natural grassland landscape of the Harriet Tubman Underground	• Natural resources are managed and maintained by local landowners in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies, including local land use zoning. • The National Park Service provides technical assistance as feasible and appropriate and is considered a technical asset to the community and partners in research and the

Category	Natural Area	Historic Area	Visitor Services Area	Community Area
	by the US FWS which directly manages the resources. • Habitat connectivity is maintained to promote thriving habitats for sensitive species like the once-endangered Delmarva fox squirrel. • Opportunities for research regarding the area's natural resources is supported. • Boundaries of allowable hunting areas are clearly communicated, protected, and enforced consistent with legislated mandates.	thriving habitats for sensitive species like the once-endangered Delmarva fox squirrel. • Opportunities for research regarding the area's natural resources is supported.	Railroad Visitor Center is maintained to reflect the period of the park's significance.	preservation of natural resources. • Preservation of natural resources is achieved through the collective work of partners and community members.
Visitor Use and Experience	• Visitors can learn about the impact invasive plant and animal species have on the area's ecosystems and the role climate change plays in how they are managed. • Visitors can engage in a range of recreational activities in their corresponding regulated use areas. • The natural area supports opportunities for visitors to interact with and immerse themselves in the landscape as Harriet Tubman and her contemporaries once did. • The natural area provides visitors the opportunity to experience solitude and reflection in a diversity of	• Visitors would find a range of structured, guided, or limited self-guided opportunities to interact with natural resources, including open forests, marshlands, uplands, flora and fauna, and other habitats. • Visitors have occasional opportunities to interact with and learn about the historic resources and the landscape features that can be attributed to Jacob and Dinah Jackson's legacy, and the broader Madison community, at the site through structured, guided interpretive programming, special events, and virtual programming. Unsupervised	• The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center would remain the hub of visitor contact, and the primary area visitors visit to orient themselves to the park. • Sustainable energy and environmental features of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center offer an interpretive and educational experience for visitors. • The orientation of the grounds at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center allows visitors to understand and interact with the significance of the journey from the South	• Visitors have opportunities to understand and immerse themselves in the cultural legacy derived from the landscape and its present-day manifestations and traditions in local communities. • Various locations in this area have a direct link to the history of Harriet Tubman and provide visitors an opportunity for learning, recreation, and commerce. • Visitors may experience this area in a wide diversity of settings and have opportunities for social experiences, as well as opportunities for solitude and contemplation. Depending on

Category	Natural Area	Historic Area	Visitor Services Area	Community Area
	landscape settings. Encounters with other visitors and park staff would generally be infrequent. • Visitors to this area would need a moderate amount of preparation to travel in wet, marshy, and forested environments with some environmental hazards including inclement weather, biting insects, and poisonous plants. Visits would generally not be spontaneous and would typically involve a commitment to a visit of several hours. • This area would present a moderate challenge in terms of wayfinding skills needed and fitness level required to visit.	access to the primary resource would rarely be allowed. • Visitors have a cohesive experience throughout the visitor experience cycle (preparation, planning, traveling, visiting, departing, recollecting). • Resource impacts from visitor activity would be minimal, though some impacts are inevitable from visitor use. • Visitors can connect with the significance of the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site in a multisensory way. • Visitors would generally visit this area in a social group setting, though the guided and occasional self-guided access would create opportunities for contemplation and reflection. When visitors are guided to this area, encounters with other individuals or groups would be rare to nonexistent, though visitors would generally be in a larger group. • Visitors to this area would need a moderate amount of preparation to participate in guided tours and programs in this area and a greater amount of preparation to	to the North that Harriet Tubman and other freedom seekers traveled. The symbolic nature of the visitor center structure itself, and the immersive and tactile exhibits within, allow for a holistic connection between the visitor and the true hero that Harriet Tubman was. • Visitors of all ages would find educational programs on a variety of subjects related to the park's interpretive themes, with a focus on stories related to the life and legacy of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad. Special events include lectures, presentations, exhibits, performances, and other events. • Visitors would typically have more social experiences in this developed setting. Encounters with other visitors and park staff would be frequent. • Visitors would need a low amount of preparation to visit this area. Visitors would be in a developed setting, and exposure to environmental hazards would be limited. Visits can be spontaneous and may involve a time	the location and management, encounters with other visitors would be rare to frequent. Encounters with park staff would be rare. • Visitors would need a low amount of preparation to visit this area. Visitors would typically be in a developed setting, and exposure to environmental hazards would be limited. Visits can be spontaneous and may involve a time commitment of only a few hours. • This area would present limited challenges in terms of wayfinding skills needed and fitness level required to visit.

Category	Natural Area	Historic Area	Visitor Services Area	Community Area
		participate in self-guided activities. While guided, visitors may still be exposed to environmental hazards and need to be prepared for inclement weather and biting insects, though travel would typically occur on improved surfaces. Visits would generally not be spontaneous and typically involve a commitment to a visit of several hours. Self-guided visitors would need greater preparation for environmental hazards. • This area would present limited challenges in terms of wayfinding skills needed and fitness level required to visit.	commitment of only a few hours. • This area would present no challenges in terms of wayfinding skills needed and fitness level required to visit. **How the National Park Service supports partner managers:** • Visitor services are provided by NPS, Maryland Park Service, and USFWS interpretive staff at the visitor centers.	

Category	Natural Area	Historic Area	Visitor Services Area	Community Area
Visitor Activities, Services, and Other Allowable Uses	• Visitor access to the natural management area is not facilitated at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site, as that area would remain in its natural, undisturbed setting. • Working in collaboration with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, opportunities for interpretation would include immersive, intimate, and direct experiences. Visitors would have physical access to tangible resources. • Allowable visitor uses would include hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, sightseeing, picnicking, canoeing, kayaking, and birdwatching. • Park staff work in collaboration with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to support archeological, habitat and climate resilience studies. Studies in this area would be conducted as part of the mission and sustainment of the park and to provide technical assistance where feasible and applicable.	• Allowable visitor uses would include guided interpretive programming and similar activities. Visitors would occasionally be able to visit without a guide present under some form of management. Other visitor uses are not allowed. Clear delineations between the park lands and refuge lands ensure visitors are aware of allowable and nonallowable uses. • Interpretive services focus on history relative to Harriet Tubman and the Ross family and their connection to the Jacob Jackson family and the people of the community of Madison, Maryland. • The park supports archeological, habitat, and climate resilience studies in this area as part of the mission and sustainment of the park and to provide technical assistance where feasible and applicable.	• National Park Service staff, in collaboration with Maryland Park Service and USFWS staff, continuously explore new methodologies and approaches for interpreting how Harriet Tubman's legacy touched the region. • Interpretive services meet the continually evolving needs and preferences of park visitors to provide the highest level of service to the widest spectrum of audiences possible.	• Park staff actively engage with the community in furthering the legacy of Harriet Tubman through off-site interpretation and education programing such as walking tours, interpretive talks for group bus tours, virtual programming, partner events, and community celebrations.
Facilities and Operations Consistent with Desired Conditions	• Any proposed future development in the natural area is strongly encouraged to implement sustainable	• Any proposed development in the historic area minimizes or avoids impacts on the sensitive natural and cultural resources in the area and is	• The National Park Service is committed to providing funding for the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center in	**How the National Park Service collaborates with partners:** • Facilities would be consistent with the owner's and managers' intent.

Category	Natural Area	Historic Area	Visitor Services Area	Community Area
	design practices where practicable. • Any future development blends with the natural landscape to the greatest extent possible. **How the National Park Service collaborates with partners:** • The National Park Service annually enters into an inter-agency agreement with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to support joint efforts in helping to broaden the legacy of Harriet Tubman and maintain the integrity of the surrounding landscape.	operated and maintained by NPS staff. • The design character is consistent with the historic landscape. Facilities and development are the minimum needed to facilitate occasional guided access safely and effectively to this area. Low-maintenance natural surface footpaths, permeable parking areas, wayside exhibits, and similar development are allowable. • Any substantive actions considered or planned in the area are informed by and responsive to relevant climate change and sea level rise data. Where traditional built infrastructure supporting the visitor's experience of the area is impracticable, provide access to alternative programmatic experiences at more suitable locations in the park. **How the National Park Service collaborates with partners:** • Park staff would collaborate with Maryland Department of Transportation on any matters that require road egress and ingress from Route 16 into the property and road signage installation	support of sustained park operations while Maryland Park Service provides in-kind services for the administration building, such as staff offices, and keys to NPS staff. • Work with the Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division and the Maryland Park Service to encourage the use of exterior lighting on facilities and in the landscape that is conducive to supporting dark skies initiatives. **How the National Park Service collaborates with partners:** The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center visitor center is on lands owned by the State of Maryland. The National Park Service has no responsibility for the lands; therefore, ground maintenance, building maintenance and operations of the visitor center and its facilities are the responsibility of the Maryland Park Service. However, since the National Park Service jointly manages the visitor center, the interpretive staff provide support in daily upkeep of cleaning the exhibit hall.	

Category	Natural Area	Historic Area	Visitor Services Area	Community Area
		along Route 16 to comply with state regulations and ordinances and to further enhance the current partnership.		

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CHAPTER 3: MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND ACTIONSINTRODUCTION

This chapter identifies management strategies and actions that would resolve issues and leverage opportunities described in chapter 1 and would be used to achieve and maintain the desired conditions described in chapter 2. This chapter begins with management strategies that would be taken at a parkwide level, then lists strategies specific to each management area. Lastly, this chapter includes management strategies associated with indicators and thresholds identified to help track progress toward, or away from, achieving desired conditions from chapter 2.

Actions directed by this general management plan or in specific implementation plans would be accomplished over the years following the plan and would be updated as needed. Park managers would continue to look for creative and diverse funding opportunities.

PARKWIDE MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Cultural Resource Management

- Develop research and planning documents focused on understanding and highlighting the ethnographic resources and history of the park.
- Complete baseline documentation needed to inform the management of sensitive cultural resources.
- Encourage legislated and other partners to voluntarily preserve the cultural landscape and related views, sounds, and night skies evocative of Harriet Tubman's time.
- Conduct interpretation and educational programming of cultural resources.
- Plan to adapt to or attempt to mitigate the effects of climate change on cultural resources.
- Consider exploring the potential for integration of traditional knowledge into natural and cultural resource management and opportunities for collaborative stewardship consistent with laws and policies.

Natural Resource Management

- Support NPS and partner research on ecological systems to assess resource status and trends and manage natural resources to fulfill the park's purpose.
- Study sea level rise, which is already impacting the NPS-owned Jackson Home Site, to anticipate resource management needs within the park boundary.
- Encourage voluntary implementation of dark sky preservation strategies recommended by the NPS Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division among local, state, and federal land management agencies, as well as private entities within the park boundary.

- Develop and implement Dorchester County-appropriate night sky interpretive and educational programming based on recommendations from the NPS Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division.
- Develop and implement natural soundscape interpretation and educational programming based on recommendations from the NPS Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division.
- Plan to adapt to or attempt to mitigate the effects of climate change on natural resources.

Interpretive and Educational Programs

- Develop and implement a long-range interpretive plan.
- Continue agreements with partners identified in the park's enabling legislation and with extended partners to celebrate and honor key aspects of Harriet Tubman's legacy. This could include commemorations of Tubman's birthday and other "anchor" events.
- Host special events related to the park's interpretive themes, special summer or seasonal programs, or periodic commemorative events.
- Continue joint interpretive programming with Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, Maryland Park Service, and the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program. Ensure consistent messaging across all websites.
- Upgrade and maintain digital assets, such as the park website and social media platforms, to meet the needs of visitors, unify experiences across sites, and leverage partner efforts.
- Develop a variety of self-guided multilingual interpretive products that enable visitors to explore the park. These products would provide orientation and link visitor experience opportunities across multiple park sites.
- Communicate thematic connections between partnership sites across sites.
- Enhance partnerships related to visitor education, interpretation, wayfinding, and signage to improve connectivity between sites and visitor experiences.
- Provide site-based educational programs and services at specific locations in the park that are of cultural, historical, and/or natural interest.
- Highlight the park's connection with its sister park—Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, New York—for park visitors.
- Consider developing an NPS youth program and continue to support partnership youth programming.
- Engage with Native Nations to develop Tribal-created and, if and when possible, Tribal-told interpretation (pursuant to the 2012 US Department of the Interior's Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes [512 DM 4] [2022]), and provide opportunities for government-to-government recognition and support of Tribal ceremonies and programs.

- Consider interpretation of Indigenous components that contribute additional complexity to the Harriet Tubman story (e.g., aid from Tuscarora Nation; Afro Cherokee- communities).
- Develop night sky interpretive and educational programming based on recommendations from the NPS Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division.

Visitor Use and Experience

- Continue to support partnerships that support active outdoor recreational opportunities such as kayaking and biking. The park would generally not directly offer these types of opportunities.
- Continue to use easily accessible and evolving digital technology, such as the "Travel with Tubman App," the NPS app, and others, to encourage visitors to learn about and discover significant sites that are part of the Tubman Byway and the Underground Railroad story.
- Assess the need for accessible park shuttle services during special events, as appropriate.
- Continue to nurture and support partnerships with local and/or regional transit authorities, regional planning agencies, and others to assess opportunities for connecting routes and services to the park, particularly those that may serve underrepresented communities and visitors with disabilities, to provide sustainable transportation options to and from the park.
- Pursue a socioeconomic monitoring visitor study, as funding and opportunities allow, that improves park management's understanding of visitor demographics, visitor origin, trip characteristics, and visit frequency. Gathering visitation data, such as who the park's visitors are, where they are visiting from, how they experience the park, and how often, would help park managers in achieving the park's mission and interpretive themes. Visitor surveys such as these are time- and cost-intensive and would only be pursued opportunistically or to inform future planning if needed.

Facilities

- Continue to jointly support the operations and management of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center with the Maryland Park Service, per the existing cooperative management agreement.
- Limit and design any outdoor lighting on facilities in accordance with NPS lighting best practices.

Commercial Visitor Services

- Evaluate opportunities to support and enhance visitor experiences and community building through commercial services, agreements, or other special park uses.

Partnerships

- Complete a partnership analysis that identifies potential partners, gaps in programming, services, or other partnership needs. The analysis would form the basis for a potential partnership strategy.

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR THE HISTORIC AREA

Cultural Resource Management

- Implement treatment actions from cultural resource inventories and reports at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site (e.g., cultural landscape report, archeological surveys).
- Perform archeological field studies of potential historic sites and artifacts with potential support from NPS regional archeologists or state archeologists.
- Identify artifacts most at risk from sea level rise and develop a plan for documenting and/or removing them.
- Support research focused on better understanding the impacts of climate change on cultural resources and develop resist-accept-direct framework-informed solutions.

Natural Resource Management

- Request assistance from the USFWS and the NPS Invasive Plant Management Team in managing invasive species (e.g., phragmites) at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site.
- Support and partner with researchers and scientists on monitoring flora and fauna and conducting scientific studies in the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site area.
- Support research focused on better understanding the impacts of climate change on natural resources and develop resist-accept-direct framework-informed solutions.

Visitor Access and Opportunities

- Require an NPS guide or special permit to visit the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site until further planning determines otherwise.
- Pursue further planning to determine whether and how ranger-led and/or self-guided tours could be conducted at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site. Planning would consider logistical needs, operational scheduling, interpretive material needs, safety considerations, and other factors.
- Explore further planning to provide access to and interpret the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site that serves the public and supports the purpose of the park. Options could include historical demonstrations, classes, and Tribal and/or specialized interpretive programs such as audio tours and augmented reality experiences.
- Plan and coordinate with Maryland Department of Transportation to assess the potential for roadside interpretation and/or pull offs along Taylors Island Road.
- Evaluate the need and options for visitor facilities that could support guided, permitted, and/or general access at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site (if allowed), while considering coastal resilience and sea level rise projections.

- Continue to provide, support, and potentially expand limited access to managed experiences, special community events, and/or gatherings at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site while awaiting further planning.

- Evaluate the need and options for facilities supporting visitor access at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site in the context of financially sustainable life-cycle cost solutions, visitor experience goals, visitor safety, resource management needs, and the potential impacts of projected sea level rise.

Facilities and Operations

- Explore solutions to appropriately maintain the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site in light of projected sea level rise, as feasible.

- Maintain Interagency Agreement with Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge for law enforcement support and monitoring on NPS lands at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site.

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR THE VISITOR SERVICES AREA

Partnership Coordination and Support

- Continue to partner with the Maryland Park Service by renewing the five-year cooperative management agreement and strengthening the park's relationship with the Maryland Park Service.

- Maintain a comprehensive and collaborative approach to managing the visitor center, through the cooperative management agreement with the Maryland Park Service, that clarifies both parties' joint and independent responsibilities toward visitor services, emergency services, and cultural resource protection in this area.

- Coordinate with the Maryland Park Service as they consult with law enforcement agencies, fire departments, and other public safety organizations to render assistance that may be needed at the visitor center, including for staff members and the visiting public. Law enforcement assistance from USFWS is guided by the inter-agency agreement with Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in effect at the time.

- Engage in communications with the Maryland Park Service to inform them of possible opportunities for federal grants and funding to support any interests in interpretative program development and/or any educational components.

- Continue to strengthen the park's relationship with its cooperating association, Eastern National, and its operation of the bookstore in helping to further the story of Harriet Tubman.

- Continue to collaborate with the park's sister park, Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, New York, on options for connecting shared stories on the life and journey of Harriet Tubman.

- Continue to collaborate with the Network to Freedom program to connect Tubman's story to other Underground Railroad stories, such as Travel with Tubman, which the network developed to link the Underground Railroad-related Tubman sites.

Interpretation and Education

- Provide technical assistance, as budget and staffing allow, in the joint design, implementation, and operation of interpretive media, wayfinding, and interpretive programming in the visitor center to enhance public understanding of the park's cultural and natural resources.
- Offer interpretive staff and/or a volunteer presence, as available, at Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park to provide interpretive and education programs and services.
- Provide visitor information related to the local historic sites and surrounding areas in NPS and Maryland Park Service publications, both digital and hardcopy.
- Facilitate further learning by providing visitors with additional materials and literature about historic sites they may want to experience along the 125-mile Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway.
- Use the park's social media and website and the NPS app presence to connect viewers with a diverse assortment of digitally accessible interpretation and education opportunities.
- Develop a strategy to further build out staffing requirements using specific funding opportunities provided through the NPS Washington headquarters and regional offices.
- Work directly with the NPS regional office's visitor experience and community engagement personnel to annually complete the process for reporting interpretation, education, and volunteer data, per national standards. Keep the servicewide interpretation database updated and pursue a long-range interpretive plan.
- Assist with enhancing public recreation opportunities around the visitor center.

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR THE NATURAL AREA

Partner and Research Support

- Provide technical assistance to the US Fish and Wildlife Service and other partners, per the park's enabling legislation and as budget and staffing allow, to enhance natural and cultural resource conditions, interpretive programming, and public recreation opportunities at Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.
- Support and partner with researchers and scientists on monitoring flora and fauna and conducting scientific studies in the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site area.
- Work with professionals in coastal monitoring and sea level rise research to assess threats and vulnerabilities.
- Work with partner agencies to increase awareness of NPS lands where hunting is prohibited or closed through signage.

- Maintain and renew annually an interagency agreement with Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge for general partnership and law enforcement support and monitoring on NPS lands at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site.

Education and Interpretation

- Establish partnerships and working relationships with educational institutions in the region.
- Conduct educational outreach using social media posts to present information on park natural and cultural resources, landscapes, invasive species, wildlife habitat, and flora and fauna.
- Provide educational experiences to park visitors through a myriad of interpretation methods.
- Create educational programs about the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site and the broader Madison community, including programs about climate change projections and impacts on the surrounding areas.

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY AREA

Interpretation and Education

- Provide technical assistance, as budget and staffing allow, to land management partners for the design, implementation, and operation of interpretive media, wayfinding, and interpretive programming to enhance public understanding of the cultural and natural resources at the local historic sites.
- Provide visitor information related to the park and surrounding areas in NPS publications, both digital and hardcopy.
- Connect the story of the surrounding area and local landowners' stories with the story and footprint of Harriet Tubman and other freedom seekers who traveled the landscapes along the Underground Railroad.
- Coordinate interpretive and educational programs and events with civic organizations.

Partnership Coordination and Support

- Facilitate communications among partners to maintain a comprehensive and collaborative approach to management.
- Provide a staff presence, as available, at local partner events to supplement these events with legacy information about Harriet Tubman and the park's mission to tell her story through collaboration with the community.
- Inform and assist partners and local and state governmental organizations with federal grant opportunities as they become available, as well as formal agreement opportunities, as determined by park staff.
- Continue quarterly working group meetings with the Harriet Tubman Initiative Working Group.

- Maintain annual support of the Nanticoke River Jamboree, held at the Handsell House Museum in Dorchester County, Maryland.

Community Outreach

- Offer community listening sessions, which would involve park staff and legislated partners, with landowners and local stakeholders to engage in open dialogue about the future of the park's connection to the community.
- Connect and take part in key celebratory events spearheaded and hosted by the community that recognize the significance of the region's history.
- Develop ways to enhance community collaboration through multiple virtual platforms and in accordance with NPS digital community guidelines.
- Exercise the option to present findings of scientific research conducted on park property to local entities and landowners for the benefit of future collaboration on projects and programs.
- Encourage compatible land uses to the extent possible.

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS RELATED TO INDICATORS, THRESHOLDS, AND OBJECTIVES

This general management plan incorporates aspects of the Visitor Use Management Framework (IVUMC 2016) to develop long-term strategies for monitoring and managing visitor use in the park. Key aspects of visitor use management incorporated into the plan include the identification of desired conditions (chapter 2) and indicators, thresholds, and objectives.

Indicators are specific resource or experiential attributes that can be measured to track changes in conditions so that progress toward achieving and maintaining desired conditions can be assessed. Thresholds are the minimum acceptable conditions associated with each indicator. Objectives inform a positive direction, defining in measurable terms what will be achieved. Indicators, thresholds, and objectives provide park managers with monitoring tools to ensure desired conditions for resources and visitor experiences are achieved and maintained over time.

The planning team considered many potential indicator topics but ultimately identified three that are the most important to monitor the effectiveness of the strategies and actions in this chapter. The three issues or topics the indicators monitor include Educational Programming, Partnership Strength, and Visitor Understanding of Sites.

The planning team also identified management strategies associated with each indicator. Several of these management strategies are currently in use or are called for above in this chapter but may be increased in response to changing conditions. See appendix C for detailed descriptions of the indicators and thresholds, along with rationales for each indicator's selection, monitoring protocols, and potential management strategies.

Pursuant to Director's Order 2: *Park Planning* (signed January 11, 2021), stand-alone general management plans like this one

> *… initially address the requirement to identify visitor capacity by assessing current levels of visitor use and baseline conditions for resources and visitor experiences. They typically include qualitative statements about the types and levels of visitor use that a park could accommodate, while achieving and maintaining desired resource conditions consistent with park purposes.*

The desired conditions described in chapter 2 address the director's order's guidance to include "qualitative statements about the types and levels of visitor use," while the desired conditions, indicators, and thresholds together "assess current levels of visitor use and baseline conditions."

Director's Order 2: *Park Planning* goes on to state that:

> *The identification of and implementation commitments for visitor capacity will be addressed as part of a park's planning portfolio. For parks that do not identify visitor capacity and implementation commitments in a stand-alone GMP, these requirements will be met through plans that have a significant focus on visitor use …*

This stand-alone general management plan does not identify visitor capacity or related implementation commitments due to a general lack of current visitor use data beyond that which occurs in the Maryland Park Service's visitor center, the current closure of the park's only NPS-managed land to public use under the Superintendent's Compendium, and the National Park Service's lack of direct management over other park areas. As such, visitor capacity identifications are best left to future implementation-level plans focused on visitor use such as site plans, development concept plans, visitor use management plans, trail management plans, or similar.

APPENDIX A: FOUNDATION ELEMENTS

The *Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park Foundation Document* provides the underlying basis for the general management plan and includes relatively stable components that will not change much over time. These components are the legislated purpose of the park unit, the significance the unit holds, the focus of the unit's interpretation (interpretive themes) and education program, and the unit's fundamental resources and values. In addition, the foundation document contains dynamic components (e.g., special mandates and administrative commitments, key issues and associated planning and data needs) that can be updated. The special mandates and administrative commitments identify the legal requirements that must be followed in the management of the park unit. A foundation document can be used in all aspects of park management to ensure that the most important objectives are accomplished before turning to items that are also important but not directly critical to achieving the park purpose and maintaining its significance.

The park purpose, significance, fundamental resources and values, other importance resources and values, and special mandates and administrative commitments are provided below, as they contain information pertinent to the "Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park Draft General Management Plan."

PARK PURPOSE

The purpose statement conveys the reasons the area was set aside as a national park. Grounded in an analysis of park legislation and legislative history, purpose statements also provide primary criteria against which the appropriateness of plan recommendations, operational decisions, and actions are tested.

The purpose of Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park is as follows:

> Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park preserves and interprets the historical, cultural, and natural resources associated with the life, work, and legacy of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad for the benefit of current and future generations.

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

Significance statements capture the essence of the national park system unit's importance to the nation's natural and cultural heritage. They describe the unit's distinctiveness and describe why an area is important in regional, national, and global contexts. These statements help managers focus their efforts and limited funding on the protection and enjoyment of attributes that are directly related to the purpose of the park unit.

The following significance statements have been identified for Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park:

- **Harriet Tubman's Life.** The park encompasses the cultural landscape where Harriet Tubman was born and enslaved and where she forged relationships, practiced skills, escaped from enslavement, rescued family members and others, and experienced events that affected her for a lifetime.

- **Integrity of the Rural Landscape.** The rural landscapes of Dorchester, Caroline, and Talbot Counties within the park boundary are exceptionally valuable in illustrating the narratives of enslavement and escape that played out over their environment. Although the people working the land are different today, the 21st-century rural working landscape maintains an agricultural character that Harriet Tubman and her contemporaries witnessed in her time in the region. This landscape supported a community that demonstrated self-reliance and resistance in the face of oppression.

- **Underground Railroad.** The Underground Railroad was a resistance movement by enslaved people who self-liberated and those who helped them. The landscapes of Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park serve as a regional example of this larger and diverse international network to freedom that involved freedom seekers and their allies.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to warrant primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance. Fundamental resources and values are closely related to a park's legislative purpose and are more specific than significance statements. Fundamental resources and values help focus planning and management efforts on what is truly significant about the park. One of the most important responsibilities of NPS managers is to ensure the conservation and public enjoyment of those qualities that are essential (fundamental) to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance. If fundamental resources and values are allowed to deteriorate, the park purpose and/or significance could be jeopardized.

The following fundamental resources and values have been identified for Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park:

- **Cultural Landscape.** Within the park boundary, landscapes in Dorchester, Caroline, and Talbot Counties are reminiscent of the working agricultural and forested landscapes of Harriet Tubman's time in the region. Watercourses and forested landform prominent features help to frame and separate farmsteads and farmland from the surrounding landscape. The distinctive loblolly pine and oak-hickory forests were an important commercial resource during the period of significance, and timbering operations used Stewart's Canal, known today as Parson's Creek, is still a prominent landscape element today. The flat, tillable land with fertile soils and easy access to fresh water is still ideal for agricultural production. Although planted with a different mix of crops and worked with mechanized equipment, many of the sites and farms that were significant during Harriet Tubman's life on the Eastern Shore are still extant today, including the Brodess Farm, James Cook Farm, Polish Mills Farm, Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site, Scotts Chapel, the site of the Bazel Church and African American Graveyard (the existing church structure postdates Harriet Tubman's time), the Bucktown Crossroads in Dorchester County, and the Dr. Anthony Thompson Home Site on Poplar Neck in Caroline County. Only the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site is owned by the National Park Service. Stewart's Canal (Parson's Creek), a 7-mile waterway in Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, was constructed in the 1830s by enslaved and free African American people and served as a connection to the Chesapeake

Bay and the Blackwater River for the transport of goods and lumber, as well as an avenue toward freedom for those seeking emancipation. The sites, coupled with the patterns of development, roadways, waterways, and continuation of traditional lifeways and uses and potential archeology in the landscape, contribute to a cultural landscape that Harriet Tubman and her contemporaries could recognize today.

- **Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site. T**he Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site consists of 480 acres of brackish marshes and woodlands of oak, pine, and sweet gum that were donated to the United States in concert with the presidential proclamation creating the national monument. The Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site is owned by the National Park Service. Jackson was a free Black man to whom Harriet Tubman appealed for assistance in 1854 in an attempt to free her brothers from bondage and help her brothers escape enslavement. As a literate man, Jackson was an important link to the local Underground Railroad community network. He was also a friend and neighbor of Tubman's parents, Ben, and Harriet "Rit" Ross. A 2017 archeological investigation of the Jacob and Dinah Jackson parcel documented six potential structures and one cemetery but was not successful in identifying a domestic structure that could definitively be attributed to Jacob and Dinah Jackson. The site includes historic road traces of the historic alignment of Taylors Island Road (before it was adjusted in the 1960s) and Martin's Lane, a road constructed in 1806. Originally known as Martin's Lane after William Martin, a white, 18th-century landowner in the area, the route was called Vince Green Road by the early 20th century. Vincent Green was an African American landowner and neighbor of Jacob and Dinah Jackson. Some of the road traces/tracks in the forested portion of the Jackson Home Site date to the development of the site for forestry in the mid-20th century, which postdates the Jackson family's residency. In addition, limited field work suggests there may be a system of historic drainage ditches on the property, used to drain agricultural fields of excess water during the period of significance, though further investigation is necessary. The Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site also includes at least three building/home sites of other families that were contemporary to the Jackson family's tenancy. Much, though not all, of Jackson's formerly open farmland is now wooded. In addition, the Tall family cemetery is on the site near Taylors Island Road. Richard Tall and family were neighbors of the Jackson family. Little evidence of human habitation is visible on the site—at least evidence that has been discovered so far. Much of what has been found are historic archeological ruins of historic 19th- and early 20th-century habitation sites, and further investigation is warranted.

    - **Working Landscapes and Traditional Lifeways.** Residents of Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot Counties of Maryland's Eastern Shore have been living off the land and water of the region for centuries. The natural environment of fresh and brackish water, marshland, and forests provides a variety of habitats for aquatic and terrestrial species that have been fished, trapped, farmed, and hunted since Tubman's day, including fish, crabs, oysters, waterfowl, deer, muskrat, and other animals. The region is known today for its unique culinary traditions derived from the resources of both sea and land. The landowners who continue to keep large acreage in agricultural use are stewards of a cultural landscape that facilitates a valuable immersive experience and understanding for visitors to the park.

    - **Partnerships.** A landscape that is evocative of Harriet Tubman's time would not be possible without a commitment from and the understanding of a broad spectrum of partners. Key

partners include Maryland Park Service, which operates the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park, and Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, a portion of which is included within the boundary of the national historical park and has been under protection since 1933. Other partnering agencies include the State of Maryland Department of Transportation, Maryland Office of Tourism Development, and local governments. In addition, nonprofits, such as the Harriet Tubman Organization, Bucktown Village Store, and academic partners, provide critical scholarship, research, interpretive exhibits, and media necessary to bridge the gap between the 19th-century stories and the existing landscape that requires interpretation for visitors to further understand. Many of the park's partners, including the landowners within the park boundary, have been protecting the landscapes of Dorchester, Talbot, and Caroline Counties for decades and can be credited for the views that visitors see today. With limited NPS ownership, this wide range of cooperative formal and informal partnerships are fundamental to the interpretation of the stories of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad and to the preservation of related resources.

OTHER IMPORTANT RESOURCES AND VALUES

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park contains other resources and values that are not fundamental to the purpose of the park and may be unrelated to its significance but are important to consider in planning processes. These are referred to as "other important resources and values." These resources and values have been selected because they are important in the operation and management of the park and warrant special consideration in park planning.

The following other important resources and values have been identified for Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park:

- **Natural Resources.** The land within the park boundary, including portions of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, offers inspiring scenery and the opportunity to view different ecosystems. The park's fields, forests, and waterways are a mosaic of mature and maturing woodlots, agricultural fields, pasturelands, streams, and wetlands that provide habitat for numerous birds, mammal, reptile, amphibian, and insect species, as well as vascular plants.
- **Night Sky.** The visibility of the "midnight sky and silent stars," as noted by renowned 19th-century abolitionist and author Frederick Douglass, is also a critically important resource because the sky and stars guided Harriet Tubman and other freedom seekers more than a century ago. The dark night sky continues to be part of the natural environment and cultural landscape today.

SPECIAL MANDATES AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITMENTS

Many management decisions for a park unit are directed or influenced by special mandates and administrative commitments with other federal agencies, state and local governments, utility companies, partnering organizations, and other entities.

Special mandates are requirements specific to a park that must be fulfilled. Mandates can be expressed in enabling legislation, in separate legislation following the establishment of the park, or through a judicial process. They may expand on park purpose or introduce elements unrelated to the purpose of

the park. Administrative commitments are, in general, agreements that have been reached through formal, documented processes, often through memorandums of agreement. Examples include easements, rights-of-way, and arrangements for emergency service responses. Special mandates and administrative commitments can support, in many cases, a network of partnerships that help fulfill the objectives of the park and facilitate working relationships with other organizations. They are an essential component of managing and planning for Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park.

The following are key provisions among the special mandates contained in the park's enabling legislation:

- "The National Park Service shall have the general responsibility for administration of the monument, including the Jacob Jackson Home Site, subject to the responsibility and jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to administer the portions of the National Monument within the National Wildlife Refuge System.
- When any additional lands and interests in lands are hereafter acquired by the United States within the monument boundaries, the Secretary shall determine whether such lands will be administered as a part of the National Park System or the National Wildlife Refuge System.
- Hunting and fishing within the National Wildlife Refuge System shall continue to be administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in accordance with the provisions of the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act and other applicable laws.
- In the midst of this landscape, the State of Maryland has developed and now operates Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park on a 17-acre parcel. The State of Maryland and the Federal Government will work closely together in managing these special places within their respective jurisdictions to preserve this critically important era in American history.
- Consistent with applicable laws, the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service shall enter appropriate arrangements to share resources and services necessary to properly manage the monument.
- Consistent with applicable laws, the National Park Service shall offer to enter appropriate arrangements with the State of Maryland for the efficient and effective cooperative management of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center." (Federal Register, Vol. 78, No. 60)
- "Not later than one year after [December 19, 2014], the Director of the National Park Service and the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service shall enter into an agreement to allow the National Park Service to provide for archeological research and the public interpretation of historic resources located within the boundary of the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge that are associated with the life of Harriet Tubman, consistent with the management requirements of the refuge." (128 Stat. 3778 PL 113–291)

The following are key administrative commitments:

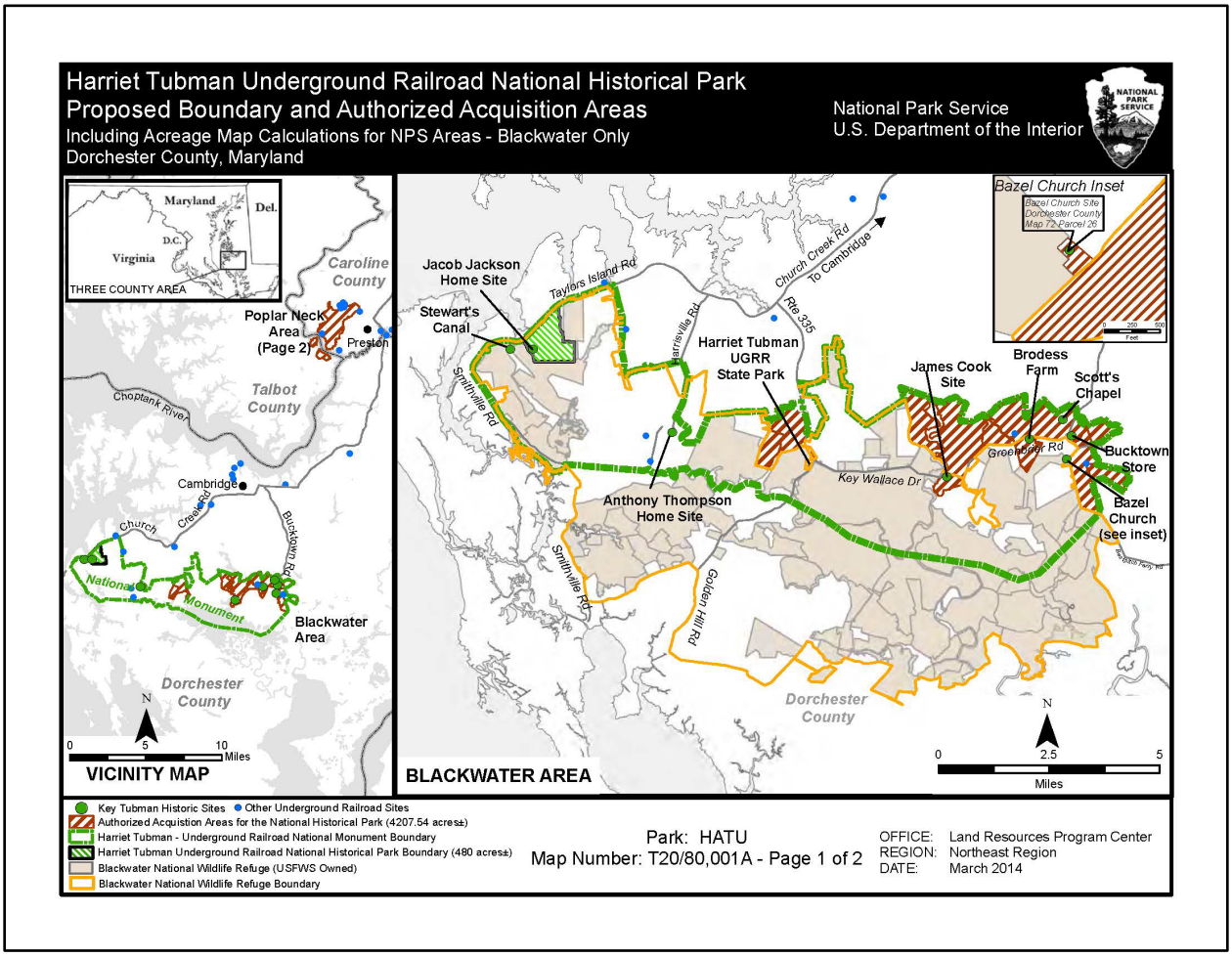
- **Interagency agreement with US Fish and Wildlife Service**. The US Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service will collaborate on archeological research and the public interpretation of historic resources within the boundary of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge that are associated with the life of Harriet Tubman, consistent with the management requirements of the refuge. The US Fish and Wildlife Service provides law enforcement, resource protection, maintenance and operations associated with projects, events, and programs.

- **Cooperative management agreement with Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Park Service**. Maryland Park Service established and owns the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center. Through a cooperative management agreement, the National Park Service comanages the visitor center by contributing financial assistance to support the building's operations and maintenance and by providing interpretative support that includes NPS interpretive staffing.

APPENDIX B: MAPS

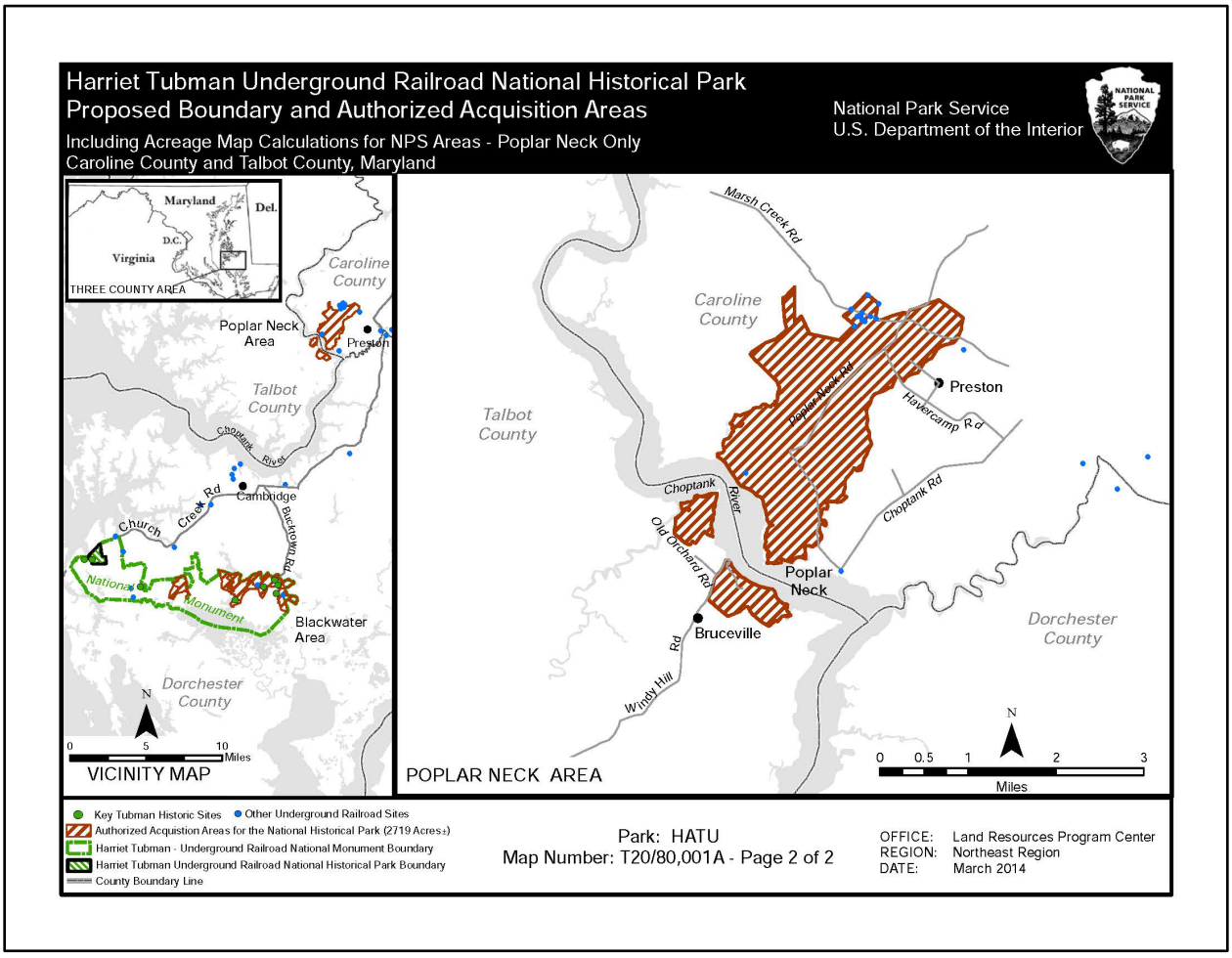
2014 Legislative Boundary Map (page 1 of 2)

This map was referenced in 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 113-291)



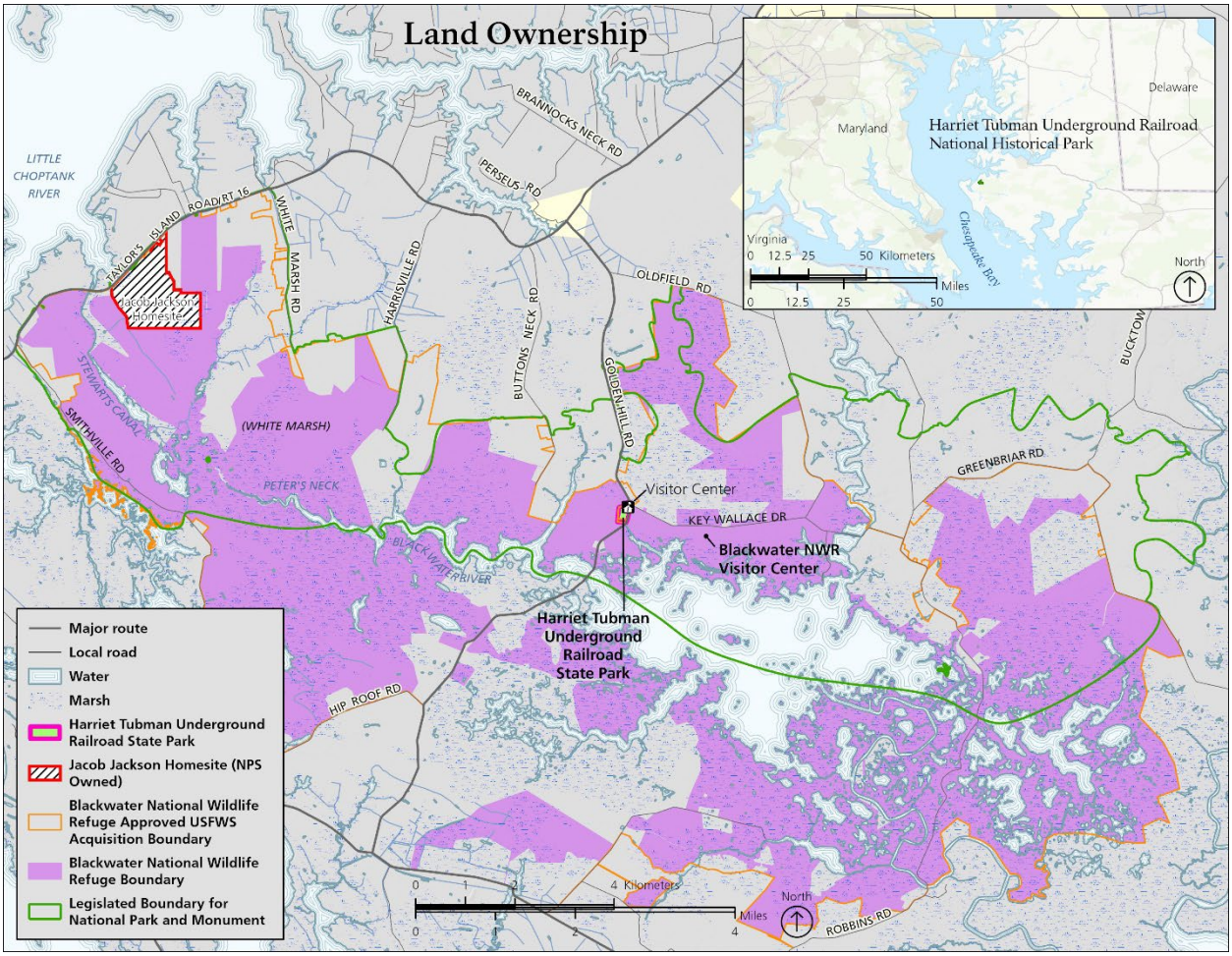
2014 Legislative Boundary Map (page 2 of 2)

This map was referenced in 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 113-291)



2025 Land Ownership Map

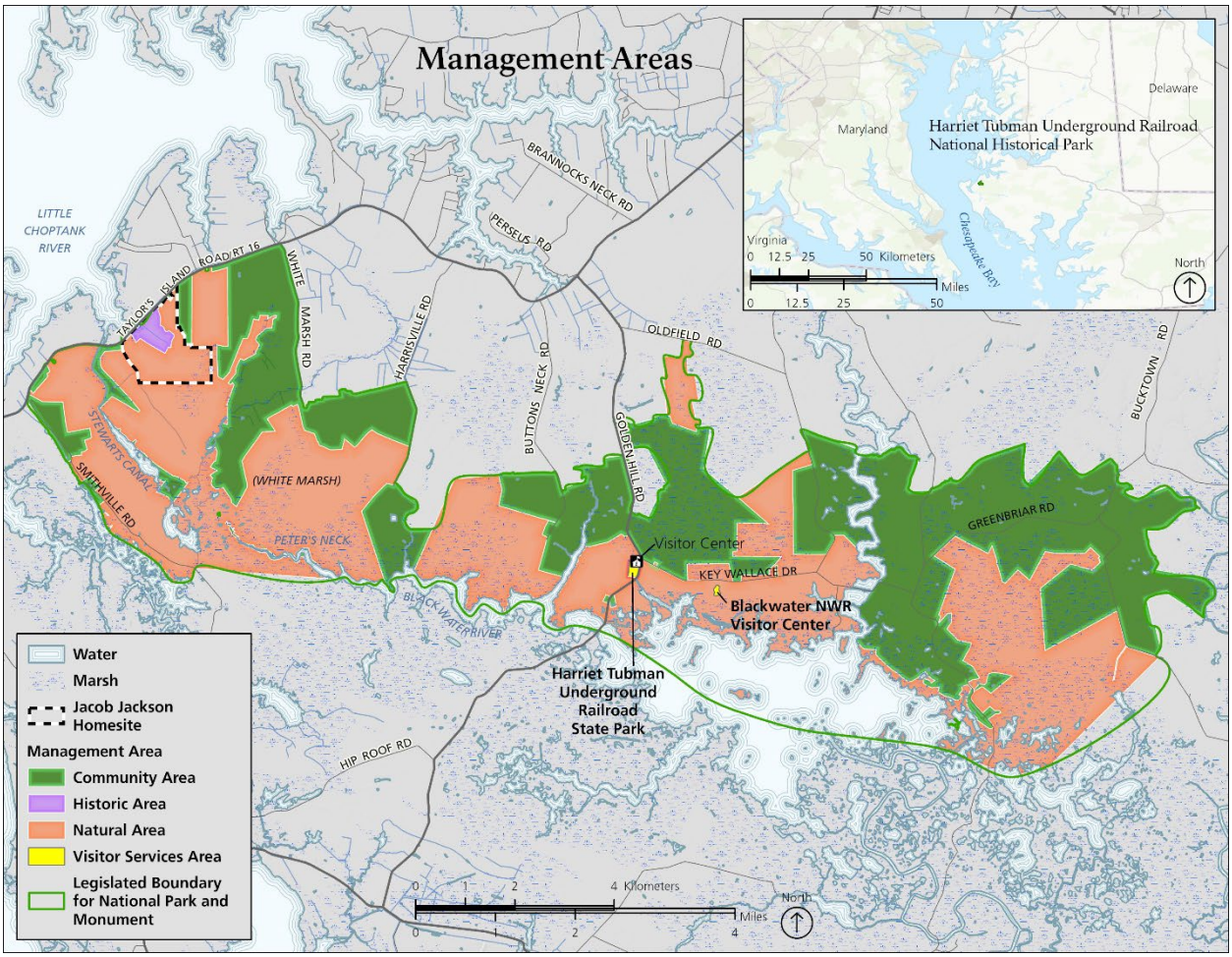
NPS Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park



The US Fish and Wildlife Service's Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge administration and management of the Refuge pre-dates the establishment of the national park and monument. The Refuge's land management authorities and services within the US FWS boundary remain unchanged, including operating a visitor center (2145 Key Wallace Dr, Cambridge, MD) and managing allowable land uses such as hunting in some areas. The NPS' national park and monument boundary does not supersede the Refuge's or Maryland Park Service's (4068 Golden Hill Road, Church Creek, MD) land and resource management decisions or powers on their properties within the NPS boundary. All decisions about property management and activities on lands outside of the 480 acres that the National Park Service owns at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site remain within each property owner's purview, including privately owned properties.

2025 DRAFT General Management Plan – Management Areas Map

See Chapter 2 ‘General Management Plan Direction’ and Chapter 3 ‘Management Actions and Strategies’ for descriptions of desired conditions and management strategies in each management area.



The US Fish and Wildlife Service's Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge administration and management of the Refuge pre-dates the establishment of the national park and monument. The Refuge's land management authorities and services within the US FWS boundary remain unchanged, including operating a visitor center (2145 Key Wallace Dr, Cambridge, MD) and managing allowable land uses such as hunting in some areas. The NPS' national park and monument boundary does not supersede the Refuge's or Maryland Park Service's (4068 Golden Hill Road, Church Creek, MD) land and resource management decisions or powers on their properties within the NPS boundary. All decisions about property management and activities on lands outside of the 480 acres that the National Park Service owns at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site remain within each property owner’s purview, including privately owned properties.

Notes about the proposed Management Areas continue on next page.

Notes about Management Areas Map continued

The following notes refer to the “management zones” map on the previous page and on page 32, Chapter 2, Figure 2.

1. The NPS management zone entitled a "Natural Area" (orange color) refers to the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge ('Refuge'). The US FWS' administration and management of the Refuge pre-dates the establishment of the National Park System unit's boundary which encompasses the US FWS Refuge as well as numerous publicly and privately owned parcels in Dorchester County, MD. The Refuge's land management authorities and services within the US FWS boundary remain unchanged, including operating a visitor center (2145 Key Wallace Dr, Cambridge, MD) and managing allowable land uses such as hunting in some areas. The NPS' overlapping boundary does not supersede the Refuge's land and resource management decisions or powers.

2. Similarly, the "Visitor Service" (yellow color) management area refers to the Maryland Park Service lands. The State of Maryland owns the land and manages visitor services and associated resources in partnership with the NPS.

3. The 480-acre Jacob Jackson Homesite (dashed black and white line) is the only area within the national park and monument's boundary that is owned and directly managed by the NPS. It includes all of the "Historic Area" (purple color) management zone and a small portion of the "Natural Area" management zone (orange color).

4. The "Community Services" management area throughout the national park and monument's expansive boundary are owned and directly managed by others. Local land use regulation and ownership is unchanged by the establishment of the national park and monument's management areas. Some landowners and public and private entities within the boundary have developed voluntary partnerships and agreements with the NPS to fulfill the park and monument's legislative purpose, including the US FWS, Maryland Park Service, and many local public and private entities. However, all partnerships are voluntary.

5. All decisions about property management and activities on lands outside of the 480 acres that the National Park Service owns at the Jacob and Dinah Jackson Home Site remain within each property owner’s purview.

APPENDIX C: INDICATORS, THRESHOLDS, AND OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

Monitoring at Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park would be accomplished through the establishment of "indicators" and "thresholds." Indicators are specific resource or experiential attributes that can be measured to track changes in conditions so that progress toward achieving and maintaining desired conditions can be assessed. The planning team considered visitor use-related issues and developed related indicators that would help identify when a level of impact becomes cause for concern and when management action may be needed. The indicators described below were considered the most critical, given the importance and vulnerability of the resource or visitor experience affected by types of visitor use. The planning team also identified management strategies associated with each indicator.

Thresholds are the minimum acceptable conditions associated with each indicator. Thresholds represent the minimum acceptable condition for each indicator and were established by considering qualitative descriptions of the desired conditions, information on existing conditions, and staff management experience. Although defined as "minimally acceptable," thresholds still represent acceptable conditions. In addition, establishing thresholds does not imply that actions would not be taken before reaching the threshold. Thresholds identify when conditions approach unacceptable levels and accordingly serve as a "line in the sand," letting managers and the public know that corrective action must be taken to keep conditions acceptable and ultimately allowing goals and objectives to be met and tracked over time.

In contrast to thresholds, "objectives" inform a positive direction, defining in measurable terms what will be achieved. In situations in which managers want to define measurable outcomes for what should be achieved within specified time frames, objectives linked to desired conditions are often established. Like thresholds, objectives include an indicator and involve monitoring change over time.

Together, indicators and thresholds/objectives provide park managers with monitoring strategies to ensure that desired conditions for resources and visitor experiences are achieved and maintained over time.

The planning team considered many potential indicators but ultimately three are the most important to monitor the effectiveness of the strategies and actions in this chapter. The three issues or topics the indicators monitor include the following:

- Educational programming
- Partnership strength
- Visitor understanding of sites

Visitor use management is an iterative process in which management direction is continuously informed by new information and improved. Indicators are monitored and adjustments are made as appropriate. As monitoring of conditions gets underway, park managers may decide to modify or add indicators if better ways are found to measure important changes in resource and experiential conditions.

Monitoring indicators helps NPS staff determine the most effective way to manage visitor use to attain desired visitor experiences and resource conditions.

The following are detailed descriptions of the indicators and thresholds, associated rationales and monitoring strategies, and descriptions of the management strategies and actions. Any compliance needs associated with implementing management strategies and actions as part of future planning have been identified, where necessary.

INDICATOR TOPIC: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

Indicators

1. The number of primary, secondary, and higher educational institutions park staff interact with on an annual basis
2. The number of participants in the park's educational programs on an annual basis

Objectives

1. Park managers will work with 10 educational institutions during the first year of monitoring and add 2 schools each year for the next 5 years. Thereafter, the park will serve at least 20 educational institutions each year.
2. The park will serve at least 250 students during the first year of monitoring and will increase the number of students served each year by 10% after that for the next 5 years. Thereafter, the park will serve at least 375 students each year.

Rationale for Indicators and Objectives

These indicators monitor how many institutions and students are reached each year through the park's educational outreach. The indicators are closely related to the diversity of educational institutions those students come from, and by extension, the overall outreach success of the park. This indicator is important, as it allows park managers to evaluate its progress toward achieving the park's education mission and the desired condition that "… educational groups have access to comprehensive education materials and programs that focus on fundamental resources and values … " Park managers are committed to adjusting its programming based on the success and reach of its educational programming. Park managers have been working to elevate its educational outreach program to the next level, and this indicator is intended to monitor the success of this effort. This indicator is easily monitored, is reliable over time, and is sensitive to changes in the scale of the park's outreach.

Monitoring Strategies

Interpretation staff would monitor this indicator and would track the institutions the park interacts with (typically by hosting a virtual or in-person program), as well as the number of participants in each program in a shared spreadsheet. The total number of institutions and students interacted with would be counted and reviewed on an annual basis.

Potential Management Strategies

- Collaborate with other parks that have similar interpretive themes to expand reach of the park's educational programming.
- Reach out to teachers, professors, and other educators to increase the awareness of educational opportunities at the park.
- Ensure that educational programming meets best practices for interpretation and education.
- Establish and build a partnership with educational institutions to assess how effective and well received the park's programming is for students. As the indicators are more focused on the quantity of the educational outreach, this strategy would help to understand the quality of the programs. Working with the educational institutions to informally seek feedback on the park's programming would avoid the need to undertake a burdensome survey approach while still providing the park's interpreters with useful feedback to improve educational quality. The park's interpreters would also provide informal feedback opportunities for students to share their insights on the educational value of the program.
- If informal feedback is not positive overall, park staff would follow up with individual educators to discuss where the park's programming might be falling short and what opportunities for improvement may exist.

INDICATOR TOPIC: PARTNERSHIP STRENGTH

Indicators

1. Percentage of legislated partners park managers contact per quarter
2. Number of non-legislated partners park managers contact per year

Thresholds

1. Park managers contact all legislated partners every quarter.
2. Park managers contact at least 10 non-legislated partners per year.

Rationale for Indicators and Thresholds

These indicators monitor whether park managers are in contact with all of the park's legislated partners every quarter of the year and how many additional non-legislated partners park managers are in contact with every year to conduct programs, provide services, or advance the park's mission. These indicators are crucially important to the park, as they establish a framework for compliance with specific segments of the park legislation based on Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park being designated as a "Partnership Park." This indicator monitors progress toward the desired condition, "Various formal and informal partnerships continue to expand and strengthen so that the visitor can understand and explore a complex diversity of connected stories across space and time such as other Underground Railroad sites as well as connected civil rights themes like women's rights, segregation, and other subjects regarding the equitable application of appropriate laws." The park's success in reaching visitors is directly tied to partnership strength, as partner activities are how many visitors

experience the park and gain further knowledge and enrichment of the legacy of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad. Park managers have learned that collaboration with partners is a proven way to measure effectiveness when it comes to visitor use and visitor understanding of the park and its partners' collaborative storytelling, indicating that it is reasonable and reliable.

Monitoring Strategies

Park managers will track the park's contacts and collaborations with its legislated partners as a part of its quarterly partner meetings. If a partner is not present at a quarterly meeting, park managers will document connections and collaborations with that partner over the previous three months and reach out if necessary. Park managers will track contacts and collaborations with informal partners as they occur and aggregate them at the end of the year. Connections could include scheduled meetings (both virtual and in-person), park programs, workshops, and conferences.

Potential Management Strategies

- Continue to strengthen and bolster existing partnerships (including legislated partners, informal partners, and service providers) and develop new ones based on the needs, growth, and shared stories of the legacy of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad.
- Host quarterly meetings with legislated partners and document attendance. If a legislated partner misses a quarterly meeting, follow up with that partner directly to bring them up to date.
- Conduct an annual review of the park's relationship with each partner to measure the effectiveness of the working relationship. This could be done simply through informal surveys or through direct communication with partners at meetings set aside for this purpose. Any issues with the partnership would be addressed and adjusted accordingly.
- Park managers will ensure that each partner, as well as potential partners, are educated on NPS park partnerships and guidelines for establishing and maintaining these relationships. Partners will become familiar with a variety of opportunities such as formal agreements, grant opportunities, and partnership and tourism updates.

INDICATOR TOPIC: VISITOR UNDERSTANDING OF THE PARK

Indicators

1. Visits to key pages on the park website per year
2. Total dissemination of key printed materials on-site per year

Objectives

1. Upon establishing the baseline condition for visits to designated key pages of the park website in the first year, park managers will increase the number of visits to the designated key pages each year by 10%.

2. Upon establishing the baseline condition for dissemination of key printed materials in the first year, park managers will increase the number of printed materials distributed each year by 10% for five years.

Rationale for Indicators and Objectives

Visitor consumption of the park's digital and printed interpretive media is used as a proxy to monitor visitor understanding of the park. These indicators help track how many people are being educated by the literature and web content that park staff produce. These indicators are important, as they monitor progress toward the desired condition, "Visitors understand how to and are inspired to explore sites within the park boundary and along the broader Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway and have the opportunity to engage with and connect to its stories." Changes and trends associated with the park's literature dissemination and website visitation will inform the superintendent of any operational needs and changes in direction. These indicators are reasonable, as park staff already actively use web analytics to track website usage, and consumption of printed materials is important to track for printing purposes.

Monitoring Strategies

Monitoring of these indicators will begin with the designation of key pages on the park website and key printed materials that are routinely distributed. The key pages will likely be two to four pages that highlight the story of Harriet Tubman and provide interpretation and education related to key park interpretive themes. Similarly, the key printed materials will include interpretive and educational media such as the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway Guide and Map, park brochures, and rack cards related to park interpretive themes. Interpretive staff will use online analytics to gauge visits to the key pages of the website and in-house means (i.e., storage inventory) for tracking the use of printed materials. During the first year of monitoring, the park staff will establish two baseline figures: one that aggregates the visits to all the designated key park web pages and another that aggregates the distribution of the designated key printed materials. These baseline figures will serve as a basis for comparison in future years as park managers aim to reach the objectives. The schedule of counts will be determined by park staff based on best practices, and they will compile a shared spreadsheet that tracks the type and number of interpretive media that is being disseminated. Consistency of pages and printed materials figured into the count will be essential for indicator reliability over time.

Potential Management Strategies

- Ensure that all park staff, particularly interpretive staff, are trained and knowledgeable on how to access the online data tracking system and are familiar with the process for counting hard copy inventory materials.
- Monitor the analytics system to detect any downward trends regarding the virtual literature on the park website (e.g., page bounces indicating unsatisfactory material). The park's web author will take the lead in this effort and will present findings to park management for resolution.
- Report findings and trends, as well as suggested corrective actions to management for review and implementation.
- Incorporate innovative techniques to make park materials effective and engaging.

- Use social media to drive web traffic to the key park web pages.
- Make printed interpretive materials available at locations visitors frequent.

APPENDIX D: REFERENCES

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