

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *Purpose of the Plan*

The main function of a general management plan is to provide a clear definition of the park's purpose and management direction that will guide and coordinate all subsequent planning and management. The general management plan takes the long view: 15 to 20 years into the future. The National Park Service seeks to have all parks operate under approved general management plans. This ensures that park managers carry out, as effectively and efficiently as possible, the mission of the National Park Service.

### *Making Decisions*

In April 2004, the National Park Service planning team began to gather ideas from the public about the future of Sagamore Hill National Historic Site. The team held public meetings and published newsletters to share information about the planning process and invite feedback on various plan components. Based on an extensive analysis of resources and public input received, the team shaped three management alternatives, which are summarized in the following pages. One, Alternative 3 – Past Meets Present, has been selected as the Preferred Alternative and has also been identified as the environmentally- preferred alternative.

The three alternatives were presented in a draft general management plan/ environmental impact statement, which was released for public review and comment in January 2007. The final general management plan responds to both public and agency comments received during the formal public comment period, which ended in May 2007. Written public comments and the agency's response are published in Appendix I of the final plan.

### *Park Mission*

The park's purpose and significance statements, which are based on the park's authorizing legislation and its legislative history, form the foundation of the general management plan. The purpose statement explains why the park was established as a unit of the National Park System, while the significance statement defines the park's place within a broader national context.

### **Park Purpose**

Sagamore Hill preserves in public ownership and interprets the structures, landscape, collections, and other cultural resources associated with Theodore Roosevelt's home in Oyster Bay, New York to ensure that future generations understand and appreciate the life and legacy of Theodore

Roosevelt, his family, and the significant events associated with him at Sagamore Hill.

### **Park Significance**

Theodore Roosevelt bought land in Oyster Bay in 1880, where he built his family home and lived until his death in 1919. Throughout his life, Roosevelt attracted national and international figures from every walk of life to this home. Sagamore Hill was the summer White House between 1902 and 1908.

### ***Park Goals***

Goals articulate the ideal conditions that park managers strive to attain in perpetuity. In brief, the goals for Sagamore Hill National Historic Site assert that the site be protected, that the park audiences be informed and satisfied, and that the park work with others to foster stewardship. Following are specific goals for Sagamore Hill National Historic Site (not listed in priority order):

### **Resource Management**

- Park resources are preserved and maintained in good condition, and in a manner that supports a balanced approach to cultural and natural resource management.

### **Visitor Services/ Visitor Experience**

- Visitors traveling to Sagamore Hill experience well- marked routes with good directional signage, multiple transportation options, and a clear sense of arrival upon entering this National Park site.
- At Sagamore Hill, pathways and circulation within the park are well-marked and easy to navigate.
- Visitors receive orientation to Sagamore Hill that helps them understand the opportunities available at the park and provides an overview of the park's significance, the relevance of Theodore Roosevelt today, and the park's place in the National Park System.
- All people have opportunities to experience authentic, tangible resources that help them understand, draw inspiration from, and examine the larger meanings, concepts, themes, and stories about Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, Theodore Roosevelt, and his legacy.

- A wide range of interpretive offerings, educational materials, and outreach programs are available to meet the learning needs and styles of individuals, families, and organized groups.
- The park uses established and emerging technologies to provide new opportunities to enhance the visitor experience both on- site and virtually and to attract new audiences.

## **Research**

- The park encourages and disseminates scholarship that contributes to the continuing dialog about and understanding of Theodore Roosevelt, his contributions and accomplishments in the context of U.S. and world history, and his legacy.
- Students and scholars have access to opportunities for research in an environment that offers accessible, appropriate, and dedicated space.

## **Partnership**

- The park strengthens its network of partners and works cooperatively to preserve and interpret Sagamore Hill NHS within the context of U.S. history, and in relationship to the network of Theodore Roosevelt-related sites and organizations.
- The greater park community is engaged on a broad variety of issues affecting the park in an effort to generate effective public participation and better- informed decisions.
- The park continues and expands upon its positive working relationships with the Oyster Bay community.
- The park and its primary park partners – the Theodore Roosevelt Association, the Friends of Sagamore Hill, and the Sagamore Hill Volunteers – actively contribute to their collective success.

## **Operations**

- The park and its partners actively pursue park goals in a flexible and cost- effective manner, recognizing any budget constraints that may be evident during the life of this plan.
- The park provides a safe and healthy environment for both employees and visitors.
- The park capitalizes on existing and emerging technology to increase efficiency and enhance overall park operations.

## *Interpretive Themes*

### **Sagamore Hill as Family Home: A Private Place for a Public Man**

*Sagamore Hill was Theodore Roosevelt's home—his primary residence and the place where he lived his married life and reared his children. The property was his personal center, a place for renewal, and reflects his way of life and great love for family and home.*

### **The Presidency in a Changing World—Sagamore Hill as the Summer White House**

*During the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt (1901- 1909), the world, the United States, and the community of Oyster Bay all changed rapidly. Life at Sagamore Hill, as the Roosevelt residence outside Washington, D.C., reflects how change affected society and how Roosevelt harnessed change to redefine the office of President.*

### **Theodore Roosevelt's Legacy and Relevance—Sagamore Hill as Catalyst**

*Theodore Roosevelt's leadership had far- reaching impact on many facets of national and international life, including government, diplomacy, conservation, and literature. Sagamore Hill offers opportunities to focus on his career and his legacies, examining the meaning and relevance of his contributions over time.*

## *Key Park Partners*

The Theodore Roosevelt Association (TRA) was founded in 1919 and chartered by Congress in 1920 to preserve the memory and ideals of the 26<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. The national Association includes a number of local chapters, including the Friends of Sagamore Hill. The TRA purchased Sagamore Hill in 1950 and opened it to the public in 1953. In 1963, the TRA donated Sagamore Hill, along with the Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace, to the American people, also creating a \$500,000 endowment for the sites. The TRA continues to play a role in the administration of the endowment.

## *Management Alternatives*

The planning team carefully analyzed public input, the park's legislation, the conditions of park resources, NPS asset management strategies, the park purpose and significance, the park's goals, and the planning issues. The team determined that there were two central questions to be addressed: what should Sagamore Hill's visitors be able to see and do, and how does that influence the treatment and development of the site? The

planning team used these questions to develop three alternative approaches to park management at Sagamore Hill.

Implementation of the final plan will depend on the availability of funds. Proposed construction projects must compete for funds through the National Park Service's normal priority-setting processes for funding. Substantial financial contributions from the park's primary partners and other non-federal sources may accelerate the implementation of the final plan.

### **Alternative 1: Status Quo**

Sagamore Hill would continue to be managed in accordance with existing plans and in compliance with legal and NPS policy mandates. This approach would allow for limited incremental actions to enhance park management but would not result in any major change to the park's current management practices. The status quo alternative serves as the baseline for evaluating and comparing the other alternatives.

### **Alternative 2: Building Capacity.**

This alternative is geared toward building the park's capacity to address its basic visitor services and operational needs. A visitor orientation facility would be established within the historic core. The New Barn would be modestly expanded and used to accommodate basic orientation and visitor services, with the exterior rehabilitated to its appearance during the Roosevelt family's residence. The existing visitor contact station would be improved and would continue to house the bookstore and upgraded restrooms. In support of specific interpretive objectives, selected features of Sagamore Hill's cultural landscape and much of its historic architecture would be rehabilitated to reflect the period of the Roosevelt family's residence. A new collection storage facility would be constructed in combination with the new maintenance facility proposed under "Common to All." The new collection storage facility would also include dedicated research space as well as NPS staff offices. The garage at Old Orchard would be converted from its current use as maintenance facility and rehabilitated for use as program space.

### **Alternative 3: Past meets Present.**

Under this alternative, visitors to Sagamore Hill would be offered an experience that combines the opportunity to explore the site's contemporary relevance in the same context in which one explores its history. However, under this alternative, greater emphasis is placed on rehabilitation of the cultural landscape and historic structures. As in Alternative 2, people would begin their tour at a visitor orientation facility located in the historic core – in this case, the New Barn would be expanded

and rehabilitated to provide visitor services. The existing visitor contact station – a structure from the mid- 20<sup>th</sup> century– would be removed to make way for the rehabilitation of a portion of the historic farmyard. A newly constructed addition to Old Orchard would provide appropriate climate-controlled storage for the park’s collections as well as a large education and program space. The Old Orchard garage (current maintenance facility) would be rehabilitated for use as staff housing.

### *Common to All*

Regardless of which alternative is ultimately chosen and implemented, numerous objectives for management will be applicable to the park as a whole. For example, the park would continue to consult and work closely with the Theodore Roosevelt Association in park programming and other management initiatives. The Theodore Roosevelt Home would be preserved as a furnished historic home viewed by guided tour. The park would continue to pursue the development of a new maintenance facility on park property and remove the maintenance function from the Old Orchard garage. Further, the park would work with state and local officials to improve directional signage, both from the major highways and along secondary roads. The park also would expand its capacity to manage the natural resources on the property.

### *Potential Environmental Impacts*

An analysis of the potential environmental impact of each alternative is included in the draft environmental impact statement. Potential impacts on cultural resources, natural resources, visitor use and experience, park operations, and the socioeconomic environment were considered in the environmental analysis. Potential cumulative and unavoidable adverse effects were also evaluated. Overall, Alternative 3 provided the greatest number of beneficial impacts in comparison to other alternatives. While the number of adverse impacts associated with Alternative 3 was comparable to the other alternatives, most were negligible or minor. Alternative 3 has been identified as the environmentally preferred alternative.

### *Next Steps*

The final general management plan/environmental impact statement will be available for public review during a final 30- day No Action period. If, at that time, there are no substantial objections to the proposal, the plan will become final. A Record of Decision will be prepared and will be made available to the public through publication in the Federal Register and other media, as appropriate.