

Chapter 4

MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

Management alternatives are created after a resource is found eligible for potential inclusion in the national park system. This chapter describes two management alternatives which involve action by the National Park Service to commemorate Harriet Tubman on a national level. It also spells out a “no-action” alternative, which means the continuation of current management. Each alternative includes estimates of cost and possible roles of partners.

This special resource study team developed alternatives for resource preservation, visitor services, national commemoration, and public awareness of Harriet Tubman. These alternatives offer three possible options with elements based on comments gathered from the public, site managers of existing Harriet Tubman and Underground Railroad sites, scholarly research, and site research at Tubman-associated places.

Many sites associated with Tubman have been identified, but only the Choptank River area of Maryland and Auburn, New York, contain a preponderance of resources that reflect the circumstances of her early life, her self-emancipation, her subsequent efforts to free other enslaved people, and her work for humanitarian causes throughout her life. In these places one finds context that reflects pivotal times in her life.

Fee acquisition of sites is not envisioned in the alternatives. Instead, the alternatives range from no NPS management to joint NPS management and assistance with partners.

ALTERNATIVE A: No Action

The Concept

Sites, organizations, and programs devoted to commemorating Harriet Tubman, including those in Auburn, New York, and the Choptank River Region of Maryland, would continue to operate independently without additional NPS management or assistance other than that available through existing authorities. Resources contained at the Harriet Tubman Home in Auburn, New York, would continue to be owned and managed by the AME Zion Church, and the Church would continue to preserve resources and provide programs and interpretive opportunities at the site. The State of Maryland would continue to plan and develop the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park in Dorchester County. State and local authorities would continue on an ad hoc basis to purchase agricultural and other open space easements that may preserve some portion of Harriet Tubman related resources in Dorchester, Caroline, and Talbot counties. Discussions would continue for creating an interstate commemorative byway among involved states. The private Harriet Tubman Organization, a nonprofit advocacy group that operates a Tubman museum and runs interpretive programs in Cambridge, Maryland, would continue its operations and seek to expand its efforts. It serves as a connecting facility to the large community of Tubman supporters on the Eastern Shore.

NPS Role

Staff and Operations

In Auburn, New York, there would be no NPS staffing or operational responsibilities. The Church would continue to be eligible for NHL assistance, Save America's Treasures grants, and other assistance provided under existing NPS authorities. In Maryland, NPS would have no additional roles other than those provided under existing authorities.

Resource Protection

In Auburn, the AME Zion Church would continue to be responsible for protecting the National Historic Landmark.

In Maryland the primary responsibility for preserving landscapes would fall to state and local authorities and nonprofit entities. The Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge would continue to protect Tubman related resources within its jurisdiction.

Visitor Experience

In Auburn, New York, public tours would continue to be available at the Harriet Tubman Home, which is managed by the AME Zion Church. Visitors view an orientation film and exhibits, and staff escorts them through the Home for the Aged. When rehabilitation on the brick home has been completed, visitors will be able to view Tubman's Residence as well. In the future, if funds permit, Thompson Memorial AME Zion Church will be rehabilitated to welcome visitors. The final stop on the tour would be at Tubman's gravesite in Fort Hill Cemetery.

In Maryland, visitors to the Choptank River region would drive the existing Underground Railroad Scenic Byway through Dorchester and Caroline Counties. There they would experience the setting in which Tubman was born, enslaved and spent her youth. They would travel through the terrain from which she launched her multiple escapes with freedom seekers. Visitors may also seek out the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park and visitor center (being developed) adjacent to Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge to view exhibits, avail themselves of interpretive programming, and collect information on driving and walking tours. Visitors may also visit the Harriet Tubman Museum in Cambridge operated by the Harriet Tubman Organization.

Cost Estimates

Funding would continue to come primarily from local, state, and private sources for preservation, interpretation, and operating costs. Limited federal funds and technical assistance may be available from programs such as the National Historic Landmarks Program; Save America's Treasures; National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program; Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network grants; Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) programs; and, transportation enhancement grants, among others. No new direct NPS costs, other than through existing authorities, are anticipated.

ALTERNATIVE B: An Affiliated Area in New York and a National Memorial in Maryland

The Concept

In Auburn, New York, resources related to Harriet Tubman owned by the AME Zion Church would be designated a National Historic Site and become an affiliated area of the national park system. NPS would be authorized to provide

technical and financial assistance to the National Historic Site for resource protection and interpretation. These resources would continue to be owned and managed by the AME Zion Church, and the Church would continue to provide programs and interpretive opportunities at the site. NPS would not provide staff to the site, and any technical assistance would be subject to available program capacity and available funding.

In Dorchester County, Maryland, a Harriet Tubman National Memorial¹ would be established at the site of the State of Maryland's Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Center. NPS would be authorized to provide financial assistance to the state for the construction of a suitable memorial. The state would manage and operate the National Memorial. The State would continue to plan and develop the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Center in Dorchester County. State and local authorities would continue to purchase agricultural and other open space easements on an ad hoc basis that may preserve some portion of the landscapes associated with Harriet Tubman. The state, working with others, would continue to further the initiative to create an interstate commemorative byway dedicated to Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad.

NPS Role

Staff and Operations

There would be no NPS staffing or operational responsibilities other than to administer financial and technical assistance matters within existing capacities and available funding.

Agreements

NPS could be authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with the AME Zion Church for matching financial assistance and technical assistance for resource protection and interpretation, and with the State of Maryland to provide matching funding for the construction of the Memorial.

Planning

NPS could be authorized to fund and assist in the preparation of a general management plan for the National Historic Site in Auburn and to provide technical assistance to the State of Maryland for planning and continued management for the Memorial.

¹ A "National Memorial" is an official designation within the national park system that is most often used for areas that are primarily commemorative in nature.

Resource Protection

At the affiliated National Historic site in Auburn, NY, the primary entity responsible for protecting Tubman resources would be the AME Zion Church with limited financial and technical assistance from the NPS. Fort Hill Cemetery would continue to protect Tubman's gravesite. Should NPS capacity be available, technical assistance for conducting research studies, such as historic landscapes, archeology, historic structures, ethnography, and others, could help identify priorities for preservation and support interpretation.

In Maryland the primary responsibility for preserving cultural landscapes would fall to state and local authorities and nonprofit entities. The Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge would continue to protect Tubman related resources within its boundary. The State of Maryland would be responsible for protecting the Memorial. Should NPS capacity be available, technical assistance for research studies, such as historic landscapes, archeology, ethnography and others, could help identify priorities for land preservation.

Visitor Experience

In Auburn visitors to the National Historic Site would tour resources and be offered expanded interpretive programs and exhibits as funding may permit. Here, they would see the fabric of Harriet Tubman's domestic and civic life during the last four decades of her life, where she managed a small farm and provided a home for family members and others in need.

In Maryland visitors to the Choptank River region would visit the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park visitor center, experience interpretive programs provided by state park staff, view the national memorial, and drive the Underground Railroad Scenic Byway through Dorchester and Caroline Counties. Here, on self-guided tours, they would experience the setting in which Tubman was enslaved and worked for the freedom of others.

Cost Estimates²

AFFILIATED SITE IN AUBURN

Grants on a one-to-one matching basis would be proposed for resource protection and enhancement, not to exceed \$3 million. Technical assistance, as available, would be offered through existing programs.

NATIONAL MEMORIAL IN MARYLAND

A grant on a one-to-one matching basis for design and construction of the memorial would be proposed for this alternative not to exceed \$3 million. Technical assistance, as available, would be offered through existing programs.

ALTERNATIVE C: National Historical Parks in New York and Maryland

The Concept

In Auburn, New York, resources related to Harriet Tubman, owned by the AME Zion Church, would be established as the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park and become a unit of the national park system. NPS would be authorized to hold an easement on the property for resource protection and visitor access purposes.

The site would be managed jointly by the Church and the NPS. Resources subject to the preservation and visitor use easement would continue to be owned by the AME Zion Church, and the Church would continue to provide programs at the site in coordination with the NPS. The Church would continue to be eligible for other technical assistance provided through existing authorities. NPS management policies would be applicable to properties within the boundary of the park since NPS would have an ownership interest through the easement.

The proposed boundaries of the potential national historical park would include the properties containing the Harriet Tubman Home, the Home for the Aged, and the Thompson Memorial Church and Rectory. The Fort Hill Cemetery would not be included in the boundary of the park, although NPS would also be authorized to conduct interpretive tours of resources related to Tubman in Auburn, New

² The costs are presented as preliminary estimates and are not appropriate for budgeting purposes. Refined costs will be determined at a later date if a unit of the NPS is authorized by Congress. Potential additional cost sharing opportunities with partners could reduce the overall costs. Any costs ultimately associated with this alternative, if enacted, would be subject to available appropriations and NPS priorities.

York, and would be authorized to provide assistance to the Fort Hill Cemetery for maintenance and interpretation of the grave site.

In Maryland, a Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park would be established comprising selected properties in Dorchester, Caroline, and Talbot counties, involving approximately 6,750 acres of farmland, forests, and wetlands of which approximately 1,980 acres are currently under easement. The proposed boundaries are adjacent to or include lands already protected by federal, state, local, and private land protection agencies and organizations. The boundary would not include Tubman related lands within the acquisition boundary of the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, nor would current authorities exercised by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service be altered.

Since further research is likely to identify additional resources critical to understanding Tubman's early life in the region, the Secretary of the Interior would be authorized to extend the boundaries of the park to include such resources that are within close proximity to the park.

The Tubman landscapes in Dorchester, Caroline, and Talbot counties are predominately used for active agricultural and forestry purposes and hunting and fishing – traditional uses that reflect those of the period of Tubman's presence. The lands would remain in individual private ownership, and a potential park objective should be to promote the continuation of these low intensity uses. Recognizing the conservation and interpretive values of these land uses, the study team would recommend that any NPS management policies which would inhibit such traditional land uses not apply to privately owned lands within the boundary of any potential unit.

NPS Role

Staff and Operations

Five to seven NPS full-time-equivalent staff would operate interpretive programs and assist with resource preservation activities at the National Historic Site in Auburn in cooperation with the Church. NPS staff would also be authorized to conduct tours to related Tubman sites in the City of Auburn.

Five to seven full-time-equivalent NPS staff would be based at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park visitor center and conduct interpretive programs and assist with resource preservation activities at the site in cooperation with state park employees and within the larger boundaries of the national historical park. NPS would also be authorized to conduct tours of related Tubman resources in

Dorchester, Caroline, and Talbot counties outside of the boundaries of the park and, subject to agreements with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, within the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.

To enhance the financial feasibility of operating both parks, administrative services including management supervision, personnel actions, contracting, etc. would be provided by already established nearby units of the national park system.

Financial Assistance

The Secretary of the Interior would be authorized to provide 1:1 matching grants to the Church for historic preservation, rehabilitation, exhibits, and maintenance of the national historical park. Additionally, cooperative agreements would be authorized to provide for joint operation and interpretation of the site. Cooperative agreements would be authorized with the Fort Hill cemetery for maintenance and interpretation of the grave site. Cooperative agreement authority would also provide opportunities to governmental and nonprofit organizations for preservation and interpretation of resources relating to Harriet Tubman in Auburn, for conducting research including archeology, and for stewardship programs, education, public access, signage and other interpretive devices.

The 1:1 matching grant program would apply to grants for preservation, restoration and/or rehabilitation of resources, design and development of exhibits, interpretive devices and maintenance costs at the park. Matching contributions would be in the form of cash or in-kind services.

In Maryland, NPS would be authorized to provide up to 1:1 matching financial assistance grants to the State of Maryland, local governments, and nonprofit entities for fee or less than fee purchases of interests in properties from willing sellers within the boundaries of the national historical park. While NPS would be authorized to acquire lands by donation or by fee or less than fee purchases from willing property owners, it is not the intention of the NPS to own fee simple interests in land within the boundaries of the park due to their continuing value as privately operated agricultural and forestry landscapes. NPS would additionally be authorized to provide 1:1 matching financial assistance to the State of Maryland for the design and construction of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad visitor center at the state park. The State of Maryland would provide space for NPS staff and operations at the site. NPS would also share in the operational costs of the facility.

Map 2. Maryland Regional Setting

Map 3. Blackwater Component

Map 4. Poplar Neck Component

Map 5. Auburn, New York: Harriet Tubman Home



Thompson Memorial AME Zion Church
33 Parker Street, Auburn, New York



Not to Scale

Legend:
A Church
B Rectory

Agreements

In Auburn, NPS would be authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with the AME Zion Church for operations at the site and the Fort Hill Cemetery for interpretation and maintenance.

In Maryland, NPS would be authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with the state for operations of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad visitor facility, with organizations such as the Harriet Tubman Organization in Cambridge, Maryland, educational institutions and private property owners for research and interpretation, and with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through an interagency agreement for the protection and interpretation of Tubman resources at the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.

Planning

NPS would be authorized to prepare general management plans for both national historical parks and to assist the State of Maryland in planning for the construction and operations of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad visitor facility. Discussions for creating an interstate commemorative byway among involved states would continue. NPS is authorized to cooperate with the States by providing technical assistance under existing authorities.

Resource Protection

At the national historical park in Auburn, the AME Zion Church and the NPS would share responsibilities for resource protection and enhancement.

At the national historical park in Maryland, NPS, the State of Maryland, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, local governments, nonprofit entities, and private property owners would undertake joint efforts in preserving historic Tubman landscapes.

NPS-conducted studies and technical assistance to others for research endeavors would advance current research concerning Harriet Tubman and her related resources leading to potential additional resource protection at both potential units.

Visitor Experience

At the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, visitors would explore a rich palette of interpretive programs and experiences focusing on the full life and contributions of Harriet Tubman, enhanced by the presence of NPS interpretive rangers. Increased resource protection opportunities at the Tubman Residence, the Home for the Aged, and Thompson Memorial AME Zion Church would provide the base for

exploring Tubman's surroundings in Auburn. The enhanced interpretive programs and resource preservation activities will help visitors better understand Tubman's life, beliefs and contributions, and the resources that were so much a part of her later years.

At the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park in Maryland, visitors would begin their interpretive experiences at the State and NPS staffed Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad visitor facility and drive themselves or enjoy ranger led tours of the park. Interpretive waysides and technological advances in interpretation would guide visitors into and through the park and to related resources in the Choptank region. The enhanced interpretive programs and resource preservation activities will help visitors better understand Tubman's formative years and contributions, the harshness of enslavement, and the quest of freedom seekers in the early to mid 19th century.

Through enhanced programming and preservation efforts focused on resources related to Tubman's formative and later years, this alternative seeks to offer visitors a full presentation of the life, contributions, and legacies of Harriet Tubman and her significance to the history of the United States.

Cost Estimates³

HARRIET TUBMAN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK IN AUBURN

Costs for this park assume the establishment of five to seven full-time equivalent positions including a GS-12 level Site Manager/Chief of Interpretation, and a resource preservation specialist, and four to five additional interpretive rangers in mixed GS levels between GS-5 and GS-11. The NPS annual operational cost is estimated at \$400,000 to \$550,000.

The estimated maintenance contribution would be \$100,000 annually.

The federal share for exhibits and preservation, restoration, and/or rehabilitation activities is estimated at up to \$7.5 million

Preparation of a general management plan for the park is estimated at \$600,000.

TUBMAN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK IN MARYLAND

Costs for this park assume the establishment of five to seven full-time equivalent (FTE) positions including a GS-12 level Site Manager/Chief of Interpretation, and

³ See Footnote 2.

a resource preservation specialist/liaison, and four to five additional interpretive rangers in mixed GS levels between GS-5 and GS-11. The NPS annual operational cost is estimated at \$400,000 to \$550,000.

The estimated maintenance contribution would be \$100,000 annually.

The federal share for the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad visitor center and grants for land protection are estimated at up to \$11 million.

Preparation of a general management plan for the park is estimated at \$700,000 due to its size and segmented locations.

Summary of Alternatives

The table below provides a summary comparison of the management alternatives presented in this special resource study.

Alternative A: NO ACTION	Alternative B: AFFILIATED AREA IN AUBURN, NY & MEMORIAL IN MARYLAND	Alternative C: NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARKS IN AUBURN & MARYLAND
<p>The Concept</p> <p>Sites, organizations, and programs devoted to commemorating Harriet Tubman, including those in Auburn, New York, and the Choptank River Region of Maryland, would continue to operate independently without additional NPS management or assistance other than that available through existing authorities.</p>	<p>The Concept</p> <p>In Auburn, New York, resources related to Harriet Tubman owned by the AME Zion Church would be designated a National Historic Site and become an affiliated area of the national park system.</p> <p>In Dorchester County, Maryland, a Harriet Tubman National Memorial would be established at the site of the State of Maryland’s Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park</p>	<p>The Concept</p> <p>Resources related to Harriet Tubman, owned by the AME Zion Church in Auburn, New York, would be designated a national historical park and become a unit of the national park system.</p> <p>In Maryland, the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park would be designated in Dorchester, Caroline, and Talbot counties involving approximately 6,750 acres, including c.1,980 under easement.</p>
<p>NPS role in Staffing and Operations</p> <p>There would be no NPS staffing or operational responsibilities other than to provide assistance under existing authorities.</p>	<p>NPS role in Staffing and Operations</p> <p>There would be no NPS staffing or operational responsibilities other than to administer financial and technical assistance matters.</p>	<p>NPS role in Staffing and Operations</p> <p>In Auburn, NY, five to seven NPS staff would conduct interpretive programs and assist with resource preservation activities.</p> <p>In Maryland five to seven NPS staff would be based at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park and conduct interpretive programs at the visitor center and assist with resource preservation activities in the region.</p>
<p>Resource protection</p> <p>In Auburn, the AME Zion Church would continue to protect the National Historic Landmark.</p> <p>In Maryland the primary responsibility for preserving landscapes would fall to state and local authorities</p>	<p>Resource protection</p> <p>In Auburn, the AME Zion Church would continue to protect resources with limited financial and technical assistance from the NPS.</p> <p>In Maryland the primary responsibility for preserving landscapes would fall to State,</p>	<p>Resource protection</p> <p>In Auburn, both the AME Zion Church and the NPS would share responsibilities for resource protection and enhancement.</p> <p>In Maryland NPS would assist the State of Maryland, the Blackwater National Wildlife</p>

Alternative A: NO ACTION	Alternative B: AFFILIATED AREA IN AUBURN, NY & MEMORIAL IN MARYLAND	Alternative C: NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARKS IN AUBURN & MARYLAND
<p>and nonprofit entities. The Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge would continue to protect Tubman related resources under its jurisdiction.</p>	<p>local and nonprofit entities. The Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge would continue to protect Tubman related resources under its jurisdiction.</p> <p>The State of Maryland would be responsible for construction and maintenance of the Memorial, with NPS assistance with construction for up to \$3M.</p>	<p>Refuge, local governments, nonprofit entities, and private property owners in protecting landscapes.</p>
<p>Visitor experience</p> <p>In Auburn public tours would continue to be available at the properties owned by the AME Zion Church, Additional opportunities for interpretation would be afforded at the restored residence.</p> <p>In Maryland visitors to the Choptank River region could engage in interpretive programs at the state park visitor center and drive the Underground Railroad Scenic Byway.</p>	<p>Visitor experience</p> <p>In Auburn visitors would tour resources at the national historic site and be offered expanded interpretive programs and exhibits as funding may permit.</p> <p>In Maryland visitors would engage in interpretive programs at the state park visitor center, view the memorial, and drive the Underground Railroad Scenic Byway.</p>	<p>Visitor experience</p> <p>In Auburn visitors would explore improved facilities and a rich palate of interpretive programs accompanied by NPS interpretive rangers on and off site in Auburn.</p> <p>In Maryland visitors will experience interpretive programs at the state park visitor center provided by state park and NPS interpreters, as well as tours of resources related to Harriet Tubman at the national historical park and outside of the park boundary.</p>
<p>Cost Estimates</p> <p>In Auburn, funding would continue through existing resources supplemented by grants from private and public sources as they may become available.</p> <p>In Maryland, the State would continue to fund the construction and operation of the visitor facility at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park</p>	<p>Cost Estimates</p> <p>In Auburn, grants would be available for resource protection and enhancement up to \$3 million. Technical assistance would be provided through existing programs according to NPS capacity.</p> <p>In Maryland, a grant for construction of the memorial would be available up to \$3 million. Technical assistance would be provided through</p>	<p>Cost Estimates</p> <p>In Auburn, there would be 5 to 7 staff (FTE), for annual cost of \$400,000 - \$550,000. An annual maintenance contribution would be \$100,000.</p> <p>Federal share of capital improvements would be up to \$7.5 million.</p> <p>A general management plan would be budgeted at</p>

Alternative A: NO ACTION	Alternative B: AFFILIATED AREA IN AUBURN, NY & MEMORIAL IN MARYLAND	Alternative C: NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARKS IN AUBURN & MARYLAND
	existing programs and NPS capacity.	<p>\$600,000.</p> <p>In Maryland, there would be 5 to 7 staff (FTE), for annual cost of \$400,000 - \$550,000. An annual maintenance contribution would be \$ 100,000.</p> <p>Federal share of capital improvements would be up to \$11 million.</p> <p>A general management plan would be budgeted at \$700,000.</p>

Alternatives Considered but Dismissed

The designation of a national heritage area, while considered by the study team, was not pursued as an alternative because the team believes the collection of Tubman related resources along the eastern seaboard does not exist in or constitute a cohesive and nationally distinctive landscape required by the criteria for such designations.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

The NPS is required to identify the environmentally preferred alternative in its NEPA documents for public review and comment. The NPS, in accordance with the Department of the Interior policies contained in the Departmental Manual (516 DM 4.10) and the Council on Environmental Quality’s (CEQ) NEPA’s Forty Most Asked Questions, defines the environmentally preferred alternative (or alternatives) as the alternative that best promotes the national environmental policy expressed in NEPA (Section 101(b) (516 DM 4.10). In their Forty Most Asked Questions, CEQ further clarifies the identification of the environmentally preferred alternative, stating “Ordinarily, this means the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment; it also means the alternative which best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources” (Q6a).

The environmentally preferred alternative is Alternative C – National Historical Parks in Auburn, New York, and Maryland. This alternative best promotes the national environmental policy expressed in NEPA Section 101(b), causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment and best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, natural, and cultural resources in both locations. Cultural resources in Auburn, New York, will be better protected under Alternative C through joint management by the AME Zion Church and the NPS. In Maryland, cultural and agricultural resources will be better protected through additional partnerships and financial assistance provided by the federal government to supplement land protection programs currently operated by state and local agencies. At both locations, increased interpretive and educational programs would increase public awareness of the need to protect the resources at both locations for the enjoyment of future generations.

Most Effective and Efficient Alternative

Alternative C – National Historical Parks in Auburn, New York, and Maryland also represents the NPS “most effective and efficient” alternative. The alternative offers the most effective and expeditious way to protect the larger nationally significant landscapes associated with Harriet Tubman in Maryland—landscapes that may otherwise be lost to development over time—through the use of grants to state and local governments and nonprofit organizations for the purchase of permanent protective easements. It also increases the potential for preservation, restoration and rehabilitation of extant Tubman related structural resources and cultural landscapes in Auburn, New York.

Alternative C provides the most effective way to tell the entire story of Harriet Tubman through coordinated park general management and interpretive planning and through the use of NPS interpretive staff in both locations. The Harriet Tubman and Underground Railroad Road stories are and will continue to be journeys of discovery and research. The partnership nature of this alternative with state and local governments, nonprofits, and academic institutions maximizes the opportunities for on-going and collaborative research.

While more costly, Alternative C is the most efficient due its ability to increase the leveraging potential of federal financial resources that will be matched by other State of Maryland, local government and private financial sources for wider resource protection objectives. Alternative C sustains the desired land use in the Choptank region of Maryland while leaving the land in private ownership, on the tax roles, and without any continuing NPS land management costs. In

Auburn, New York, a partnership with the Harriet Tubman Home, Inc. promotes efficiencies through a financial and interpretive relationship that ensures resource protection and sustains the AME Zion Church's century old stewardship of Harriet Tubman's Home for the Aged and other more recent additions to the National Historic Landmark properties at that location.

The proximity of Harriet Tubman related resources to the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge provides the opportunity for the NPS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to share in the protection of these resources in a cooperative manner compatible with the missions of both agencies. Alternative C eliminates unnecessary overlap, and the park planning effort would maximize both the efficiency and the effectiveness of the NPS in fulfilling its protection and interpretive responsibilities.

Potential Harriet Tubman Themes

While the development of themes for units of the national park system are best undertaken through the development of a park's general management plan and further refined in a park's comprehensive and long range interpretive plans, it is useful to explore illustrative themes relating to Harriet Tubman in this special resource study.

Famous people typically live on through the places they occupied, the things they touched, and the narratives they inspired. For Harriet Tubman it is through narrative interpretation that her legacy is most vibrantly expressed. Tubman left stories – her own stories and those told by others. Her exploits inspired a body of children's heroic literature, she is the subject of a growing number of biographies, and the recognition of her name has lasted more than a century. She embodied courage and the stories of her courage continue to inspire current generations. The physical reminders of Tubman are fewer than the narratives in which she is the central character, and it is the narrative that predominates today.

The NPS study team convened a group of two dozen experts for a workshop to propose primary interpretive themes that could be used to communicate Harriet Tubman's significance to the public. These themes were confirmed at subsequent site-specific workshops in Auburn and Maryland. Participants represented a spectrum of interests, from grass-roots organizers, a professional playwright, an archeologist, directors of Tubman commemorative sites, a folklorist, to professional historians. Their work is summarized in Appendix 4. Additional specific workshops on interpretation held in Auburn, New York, and Dorchester, Maryland, begin to connect Tubman with the two key places of her life.

Our understanding of Harriet Tubman comes from multiple sources. In her lifetime, two authors, who knew and admired her, published biographies.⁴ Forty years after her death, another publication presented her story,⁵ and after a hiatus of 60 years, three biographies were published in 2003 and 2004.⁶ Two more volumes were published in 2007, each with new approaches to Tubman's life.⁷ As a result of the most recent scholarly research, we now have a much fuller picture of the historical Tubman and her contributions to society. For most of the past century Tubman was the central character in legendary stories, especially for children. Historian Milton C. Sernett looks at the intersection of myth and fact, finding richness and value in both:

There are many stories told about Tubman which depart from what can be documented and/or substantiated. Some of these are base fabrications and need to be placed in the category of legend. But others are riffs or elaborations of aspects of the core historical story and therefore reveal as much about the myth makers as they do about Tubman herself...even the distortions, for these too speak to the durability of Harriet Tubman in the American cultural memory and of her canonization as the all-comprehending American for the third millennium.⁸

Examining the strands of Tubman's long life reveals strong narrative themes that help tell her story meaningfully to a public eager to learn more about her. The following primary interpretive themes were developed to communicate Harriet Tubman's significance generally, without connection to a particular place (or to a particular management alternative). This broad-brush approach started the process which was subsequently refined during workshops at the two main Tubman locations. Should Congress ultimately designate resources associated with Tubman as a unit(s) of the national park system, a general management plan and long-range interpretive plans will use the themes presented below as a basis to fully develop interpretive programming that specifically connect the person, the site(s), and visitors. The workshop participants produced the four primary themes presented below:

⁴ Franklin Sanborn, "Harriet Tubman," *The Commonwealth* (Boston, Massachusetts), July 17, 1863; and Sarah H. Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman* (Auburn, NY: W.J. Moses), 1869.

⁵ Earl Conrad, *General Harriet Tubman* (Washington, DC: Associated Publishers). Originally published 1943, reprinted 1990.

⁶ Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, a Portrait of an American Hero* (New York, NY: Random House Publishing Group), 2004. Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman, the Life and Life Stories* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press), 2003. Catherine Clinton, *Harriet Tubman: The Road to Freedom* (New York: Little, Brown), 2004.

⁷ Milton C. Sernett, author of *Harriet Tubman: Myth, Memory, and History*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007, and Beverly Lowry, *Harriet Tubman: Imagining a Life* (New York: Doubleday), 2007.

⁸ Communication from Milton C. Sernett, 2003.

Interpretive Theme 1. Harriet Tubman was an enslaved African American woman who overcame overwhelming obstacles to become an internationally significant activist and humanitarian. Among the obstacles were her illiteracy, physical disability, and the political, social, and economic barriers for blacks. Despite these, she was a committed humanitarian who fought for racial and gender equality, exhibiting canny ability to enter networks of influential people to enable her to effect change.

Interpretive Theme 2. Harriet Tubman fought for freedom for herself and other enslaved African Americans before, during, and after the Civil war and helped abolish the institution of slavery in the USA. While many enslaved people escaped to safe regions, Tubman was among the few who returned time and again to lead others out of servitude. During her decade of Underground Railroad work, she was a hero who acquired the name “Moses” from her admirers. After war broke out, she again abandoned safety and ventured deep into Confederate territory to spy and scout for the Union army, nurse troops, and even guided troops commanded by Colonel James Montgomery on a successful raid from Port Royal up the Combahee River in June 1863.

Interpretive Theme 3. Harriet Tubman’s spirituality was a central force of her life and led her to help countless others: the enslaved, the sick, the aged, the disabled, and those less fortunate. She typically attributed her success to God, and asked for his blessing before undertaking any challenge. In her later years, she founded a home for aged and indigent blacks, an undertaking she turned over to the AME Zion Church before her death.

Interpretive Theme 4. Harriet Tubman’s actions influenced others in both the United States and Canada and over time she has come to/ be seen as an international symbol of the struggle for freedom and human dignity. She influenced and was influenced by a remarkable list of notables in the second half of the 19th century. Over the years, her legendary status has ebbed and flowed through stories that became embedded in American culture. Her status as a hero has made her into a universal figure.

Auburn, New York

Auburn, New York, is the place Harriet Tubman called home for nearly half her life. It was the base from which she undertook much of her Civil War activities, her humanitarian efforts, her support for the church, and her fight for women’s rights. It is where she lived with family members and where she died.

Auburn reveals the character of Harriet Tubman as a free person. Everything she did here, and from here, was by personal choice, rather than by coercion. She had

already escaped from enslavement and could have settled down to a more ordinary existence like most other freedom seekers, but she did not.

In Auburn, one finds the most tangible, authentic resources personally connected to Tubman. Here visitors can stand on the land she owned, touch the walls of the house she actually lived in, enter the seniors' home she founded, visit the church she supported, and kneel at her gravesite. They can tour the nearby grand home of her famous friend, William H. Seward, and wonder how she managed to get to know him and gain his confidence. They can see the small vernacular houses of the African-American community, side by side with their white neighbors, and consider the unusual bi-racial harmony of this town at a time when much of America was divided. Only 15 miles away, visitors can find out more about Tubman's contributions to the fight for women's suffrage at Women's Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls.

What is particularly interesting about Auburn from an interpretive perspective is the chance for the public to discover Harriet Tubman as a multi-faceted person with a life and achievements that go beyond being the legendary "Moses of her People." The bricks and mortar of Auburn remind us that she was a real person who lived a long and accomplished life, influencing not just America but the world with her achievements.

All the high-level interpretive themes developed for Harriet Tubman are connected to Auburn and can be told here. The Auburn sites lend themselves more to the telling of her achievements after her own flight to freedom, than they do to her formative years. In addition, at Auburn, it would be important to present a theme of the role of the AME Zion Church in protecting Tubman's property and her legacy. While it would be necessary to develop a long-range interpretive plan to develop themes that connect Harriet Tubman, Auburn, the Church, and visitors, it is safe to say that they could include her social activism, her humanitarianism, her Underground Railroad fame, her Civil War exploits, her spirituality, her national and international influence, and her personal, family, and community situation. Interpretation could also explore the myth and reality of Harriet Tubman.

Choptank River Region, Maryland

Harriet Tubman was born and grew up enslaved working on the farms of the Choptank River Region of Maryland. Her formative years in the region shaped her character, gave her many of the skills she needed to succeed, and instilled in her the values of freedom and human dignity that inspired the rest of her life's work.

Viewing the wetlands, forests, and open fields of the Choptank River Region, and learning about ante-bellum life there, visitors could vividly imagine Harriet Tubman's youth and the forces which drove her to escape and then to return to free others. By understanding the overwhelming obstacles she faced, visitors would be better able to appreciate the tremendous scope of Tubman's achievements. They may also be inspired to think that anyone, no matter how humble their beginnings and how daunting their circumstances, can choose to make a difference

All the primary interpretive themes for Harriet Tubman could be told in Maryland as they are connected to the situation she was born to and the personal strength and values that took root here. A long-range interpretive plan could be developed to identify particular themes connecting the region to Harriet Tubman's overall significance.

The Choptank River region lends itself particularly to the interpretation of Harriet Tubman's formative years as an enslaved person, her personal and family situation, and the obstacles she had to overcome to succeed. There is great potential to interpret the conditions of enslaved people, the Underground Railroad network, and the movement to abolish slavery in America. There are also important opportunities to explore the communities, the agricultural land use of her period, and the local families that owned the landscape.

One interesting thematic angle for interpretation might be the historical challenges faced in trying to piece together the stories of enslaved people whose lives were rarely recorded in official documents. The very fact that one cannot be sure when and where Harriet Tubman was born speaks volumes about the situation she was born into. Visitors could be involved as history detectives trying to weigh competing theories of Tubman's early life.

The most compelling interpretive resource in the Choptank River Region is the landscape itself. Much of it relatively unchanged from Tubman's day, it is a powerful visual reminder of the environment that shaped Tubman—the land she lived in, worked upon, escaped through, worshipped in, and returned to in order to help others seek freedom. The natural setting, preserved in Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, and the land and road patterns in Dorchester and Caroline counties, provide a basis for understanding both the lives of enslaved people, and the challenges they faced in traversing it in their flight to freedom, as well those who owned the land and held slaves. There is a strong sense of place here, which can have a powerful emotional impact on visitors.

The region boasts a number of sites and places related to Tubman, her family, and the Underground Railroad. Most of these are linked in a newly established Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway. The sites are dispersed from one another, and there are relatively few structures dating to Tubman's time. Moreover, it is difficult to definitively determine where key events in Tubman's life took place. It would be important to interpret why these facts are not known, in order to avoid visitor disappointment.

Regardless of whether resources associated with Harriet Tubman are designated by Congress as a unit(s) of the national park system or continue to be managed as they are today, coordinated interpretation of these sites would provide for significantly increased public understanding of the complexities of her life story and the full value of her contributions to the American story.