

	Preliminary Alternatives for Alcatraz Island	
	Current Conditions and Management	Connecting People with the Parks Alternative 1
Overview (see alternative maps on pages 28 & 29)	<p>Alcatraz is one of the most popular destinations in the park. The only former federal penitentiary open to the public, it attracts more than 1.4 million visitors each year. But the prison era is only part of its long and fascinating history. Alcatraz also was a Civil War era military fort, the home of the West Coast’s first lighthouse, and birthplace of the American Indian “Red Power” movement. There is also a natural side to Alcatraz. Gardens, tidepools, and wildlife are among its attractions, and a walk on the island promises panoramic views of the city skyline, ships, bridges, and bay.</p> <p>The island is managed to preserve the historic and natural resources, and provide public access to a variety of settings and experiences where appropriate and safe. The primary visitor experience is day use, centered on the federal penitentiary; however, other periods of the island history are also interpreted.</p> <p>The harsh island environment, deterioration of buildings and landscapes, and the use of these features as bird habitat, limit visitor access to much of the island. Rehabilitation of key public buildings and landscapes is ongoing, and subject to available funding.</p> <p>The island supports one of the largest concentrations of colonial nesting water birds in San Francisco Bay. Many areas of the island are closed during breeding season to protect the colonies from human disturbance. Western gulls are managed in areas open to the public through the use of bird exclusion measures and other deterrents to protect visitor health and safety. Education and outreach inform visitors about the significance of the island to nesting birds, and what the public can do to help protect the birds.</p>	<p>Many who visit Alcatraz are drawn by the island’s notorious prison reputation. Others want to see the crumbling ruins set against the spectacular scenery of San Francisco, the Bay and Golden Gate. Still others are looking for the island’s human dimension: the American Indian occupation or the gardens tended by guards and their families.</p> <p>In this alternative Alcatraz would be managed to provide an expanded variety of settings and experiences that will pleasantly surprise visitors attracted by the notoriety of the prison, and connect them to the greater breadth of the island’s resources and stories. The park would seek to enrich the scenic, recreational, and educational opportunities in the heart of San Francisco Bay.</p> <p>Visitors would have access to the majority of the island’s historic structures and landscapes to experience all of the layers of island history, natural resources, and settings. The indoor and outdoor spaces currently inaccessible to visitors would be reopened to expand the range of available activities.</p> <p>All historic structures would be preserved; most would be rehabilitated and adaptively reused for visitor activities and park operations. Food service, meeting and program space, and overnight accommodations (possibly including a hotel, hostel, and camping) would be provided.</p> <p>Sensitive wildlife areas, like the shoreline, would be protected. Park managers would provide visitors with opportunities to see wildlife and to participate in resource stewardship activities. Gulls would be managed to reduce conflicts in core visitor use areas.</p>
Arrival area including the entry pier and Building 64 (Historic Barracks)	<p>The arrival area includes a mix of structures and landscapes that support the high volume of visitation. Building 64, the historic barracks, is adaptively used for administrative purposes and some visitor services, including a small gift shop, exhibits, and a theater. Parts of the building, including the upper floors, have not been rehabilitated and are unused.</p>	<p>Diverse Opportunities Zone</p> <p>This area would be managed to welcome visitors and provide orientation to the expansive opportunities on the island. Building 64 would be a centerpiece, rehabilitated as a multi-purpose facility to host an expanded variety of visitor services, which would include hospitality (food service and overnight accommodations), interpretation and exhibit space, an audiovisual site, and administrative areas.</p>
Main Prison Building and adjacent areas	<p>The Main Prison Building and several adjacent areas, like the Recreation Yard, have been rehabilitated to represent the federal penitentiary era. They are managed as part of the central visitor experience. Visitors have access to most of the building and yard. Several areas, like the Citadel (located below the Main Building) and part of the building’s hospital wing are closed. Visiting the Main Prison Building is primarily a self-guiding experience facilitated by an audio tour. Many adjacent landscape areas are minimally preserved and inhabited by seabirds both seasonally and year-round.</p>	<p>Historic Immersion Zone (Main Prison Building)</p> <p>The park would manage this area to immerse visitors in the federal penitentiary period. A variety of programming and exhibits would bring prison history alive. Rehabilitation or restoration, where appropriate, would enhance resource integrity.</p> <p>Diverse Opportunities Zone (Hospital Wing of Main Prison Building, Recreation Yard, Laundry Building, and Parade Ground)</p> <p>These buildings and outdoor spaces would be rehabilitated to provide a range of visitor activities that could include informal gatherings, interpretive programs, and special events. The Laundry Building would be rehabilitated as a multi-purpose facility. It would accommodate large group functions such as special events and conferences, and would include restrooms, a kitchen, and exhibit space. The rubble on the Parade Ground would be removed and bird populations would be managed to accommodate enhanced visitor access.</p>

Note: *A more detailed level of planning was required for both Muir Woods National Monument and Alcatraz Island due to their small size, the complexity of their natural and cultural resources; and the national and international reconition they receive.*

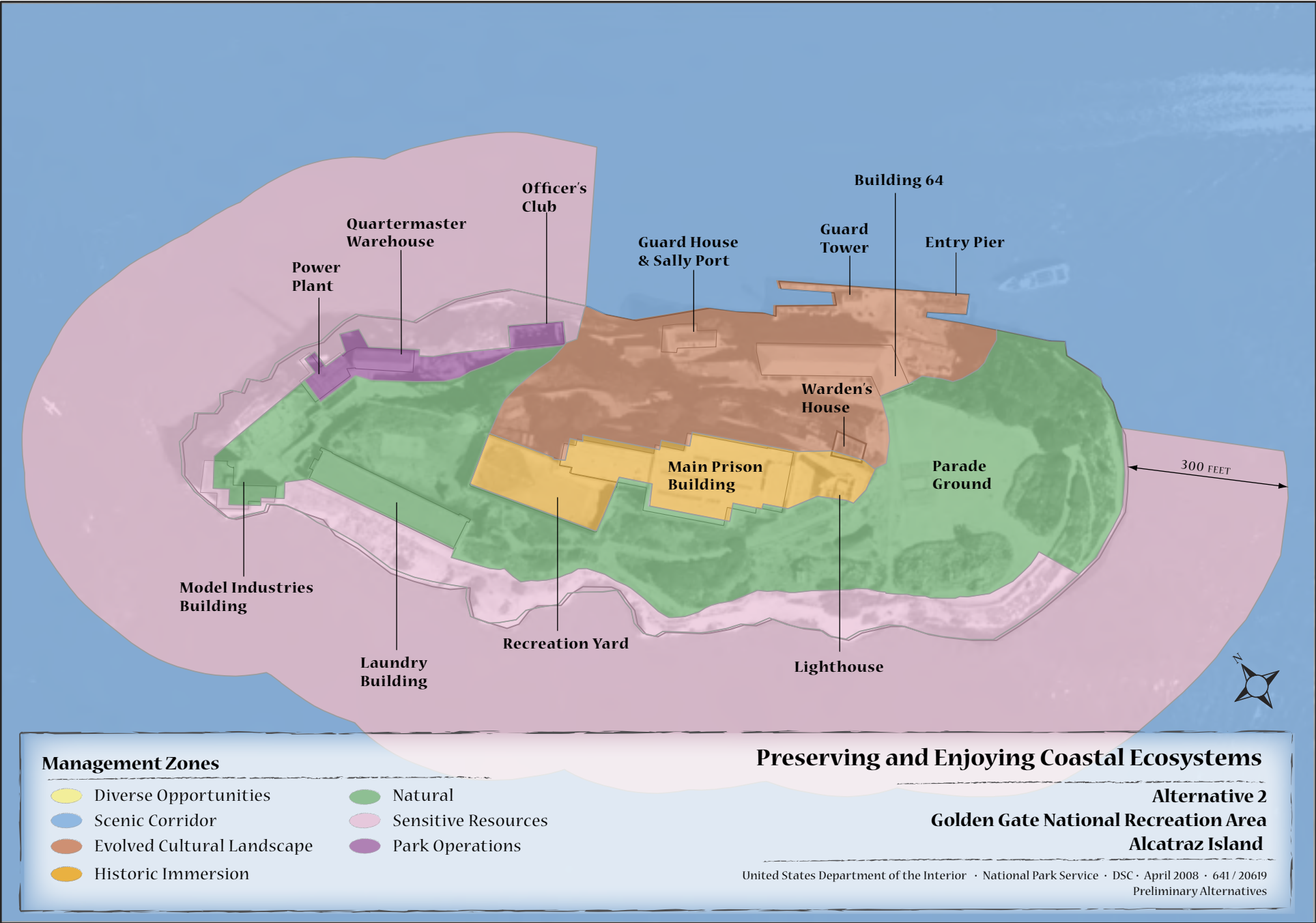
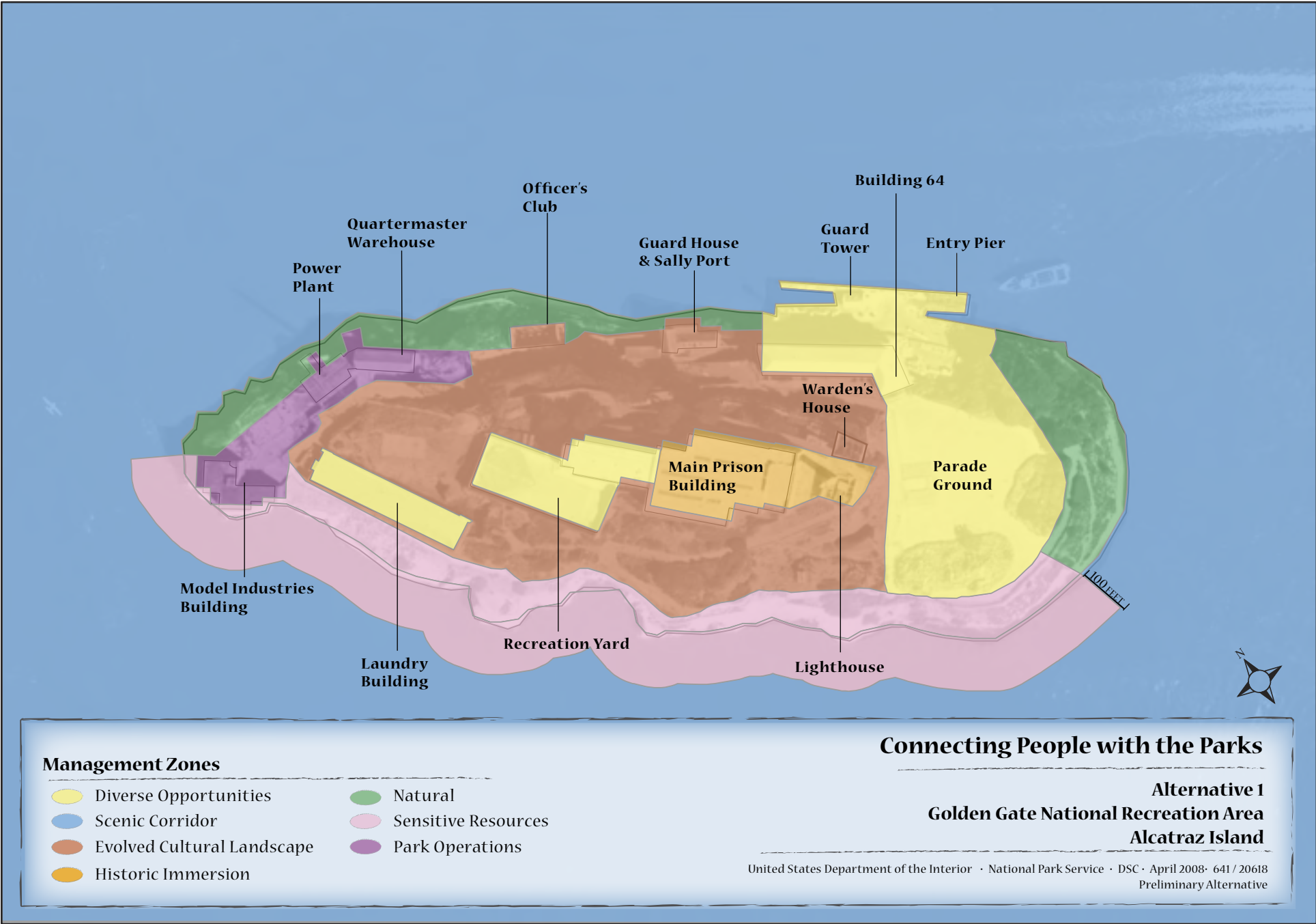
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Preserving and Enjoying Coastal Ecosystems Alternative 2	Focusing on National Treasures Alternative 3	
<p>Isolation—whether for soldiers, prisoners, birds, or plants—is a recurrent theme in the story of Alcatraz. This alternative would highlight the island’s inhospitable and isolated—yet strategic—location at the entry to the Golden Gate and San Francisco Bay. The island’s past and present significance to colonial nesting birds and its layers of human history—the Civil War fortress, the lighthouse, the prison and penitentiary—all derive from its position in the bay.</p> <p>The island’s changing natural and built landscape would continue to evolve, further enhancing habitat for nesting birds. Only those buildings and features necessary to maintain the island’s national historic landmark status would be preserved; the natural elements would reclaim other features as part of the wilding of Alcatraz.</p> <p>Visitors would be immersed in opportunities that showcase the island’s isolation, its natural resources, and all the layers of history that can be found at the Main Prison Building. Visitor experiences would include ecotourism, outdoor learning, and natural and cultural resource stewardship programming delivered in partnership with Bay Area nonprofits.</p> <p>While access would be managed to protect sensitive resources, visitors would be able to more freely explore, discover, and experience nature reclaiming Alcatraz, and understand the role the island plays in the broader marine ecosystem (reaching from San Francisco Bay to the Farallon Islands) as a result of its strategic location.</p>	<p>For more than 150 years, Alcatraz has been reworked and altered by human activity. This alternative would immerse visitors extensively in all of Alcatraz’s historic periods, including Civil War military fortification and prison, federal penitentiary, American Indian occupation, and National Park Service historic site. Alcatraz’s history would be interpreted, first and foremost with tangible and accessible historic resources, including archeology, museum collections, ruins, buildings, and cultural landscapes. These cultural resources contribute to the island’s national historic landmark status and its recognition as an international icon.</p> <p>The visitor’s immersion in Alcatraz history would begin at the original Alcatraz dock at Fort Mason. At this park site, visitors could file aboard prison-themed ferries. Passing a network of warning buoys, the experience would continue at the island’s arrival pier, marching up to the Main Prison Building through a landscape of fences and guard towers. While the primary visitor experience would focus on the federal penitentiary, visitors also would be exposed to the other layers of history, literally and programmatically, on “The Rock.”</p> <p>This alternative would require extensive stabilization, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic resources, as well as extensive and creative interpretation programs and visitor services. This high level of cultural resources stewardship would create opportunities for formal on-island education and conservation programs. The large population of gulls would be managed in the primary visitor use areas, but outside those areas, bird habitat would be protected and enhanced.</p>	<p>Overview (see alternative maps on pages 28 & 29)</p>
<p>Evolved Cultural Landscape Zone</p> <p>Similar to Alternative 1, this area would welcome visitors while protecting the layers of cultural resources; however, Building 64 would be adaptively reused to support the science, education, and stewardship programs. It would include space for offices, classrooms, minimal food service, and hostel-like overnight facilities for program participants. Co-locating these functions would promote interactive learning and association among the scientists, teachers, and student participants. Administrative functions would also be housed in this building.</p> <p>In this alternative, the park would also manage the structures and landscaped areas (such as the Guardhouse and gardens) between the entry pier and the Main Prison Building to protect and interpret the layers of history.</p>	<p>Historic Immersion Zone</p> <p>The park would manage this area to immerse visitors in the island’s prison landscape, re-creating the atmosphere of confinement where movements are restricted and visitors are under observation. The park would restore Building 64 and other historic features. Portions of Building 64 would provide visitors with a feel and appearance that is evocative of its different layers of history. The rest of the building would be used for visitor services and administrative functions. Possible historic functions in Building 64 would include a post office, general store, and overnight accommodations, possibly in restored guard apartments, that extend the immersive experience.</p> <p>In this alternative the park would also manage most of the adjacent areas, such as the Guardhouse, Warden’s House, and Parade Ground, to reinforce the sense of immersion as visitors move around the island.</p>	<p>Arrival area including the entry pier and Building 64 (Historic Barracks)</p>
<p>Historic Immersion Zone (Main Prison Building, including the Hospital Wing and Recreation Yard)</p> <p>These historic structures would be managed to provide visitors with access to the widest range of resources in historically accurate conditions, from the military period through the Indian occupation. Rehabilitation or restoration of historic resources would enhance their historic integrity.</p> <p>Natural Zone (Laundry Building, Model Industries Building, Parade Ground and western side of island)</p> <p>The park would manage these adjacent areas to enhance bird habitat and protect sensitive resources. Visitor use would be managed and controlled to support natural resource management goals. The Laundry Building and Model Industries Building would not be stabilized or rehabilitated, but would provide expanded habitat for nesting birds. No efforts would be made to avoid the loss of these buildings to coastal erosion. They would eventually be managed as ruins. Visitor access could be provided for wildlife viewing, research, and education but would be highly controlled. The rubble piles on the Parade Ground would be retained to maintain and enhance seabird habitat. The National Park Service also would manage the island’s southern perimeter for its natural values. The existing Agave Trail would protect natural habitat while providing seasonal access for visitors along the shoreline.</p>	<p>Historic Immersion Zone (Main Prison Building and adjacent areas)</p> <p>These historic resources would provide visitors with the opportunity to be immersed in, and explore, the federal penitentiary’s history. Visitors would also have access to the widest range of historic structures and features, in historically accurate conditions, that tell stories about the different layers of island history. Park managers would look for opportunities to expose visitors to the tangible resources (including artifacts in the park’s museum collection) of the federal penitentiary and military eras. Restoration of historic structures would continue with the goal of re-establishing historic uses where appropriate. For example, food could be prepared in the prison kitchen and served to visitors in the adjacent prisoner dining room.</p> <p>The Laundry Building would be preserved as a multi-purpose facility. It would include space for interpretation, special events, and exhibits that are tied to the historic immersion concept. A conservation lab would also be developed that would support artifact preservation and volunteer stewardship. The Parade Ground would be restored to evoke historic periods and support visitor exploration of this area. The rubble piles would be removed. The Officer’s Club would be stabilized as a ruin while providing visitors with opportunities to explore this historic structure. Additional research about the historic uses and functions of the building and its period of significance may suggest additional preservation necessary to appropriately interpret the building.</p>	<p>Main Prison Building and adjacent areas</p>

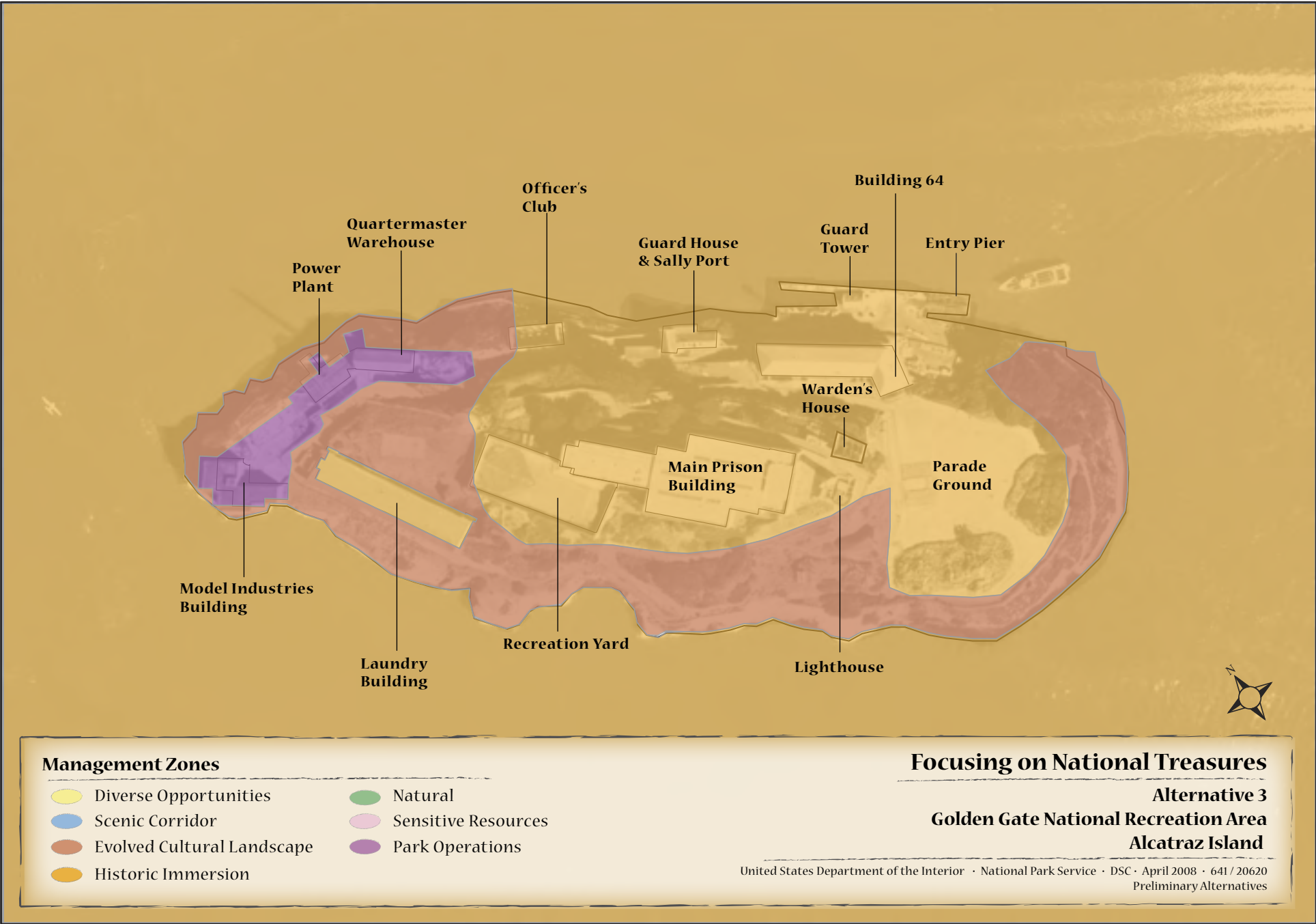
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Lighthouse	The lighthouse is managed for its historic function as an early aid to navigation in San Francisco Bay. Visitor access is highly controlled.	Historic Immersion Zone The lighthouse and surrounding area would be preserved to give visitors opportunities to learn about the maritime history of Alcatraz and its strategic location in the bay. Access and interpretation would be enhanced.
Power Plant and Quartermaster Warehouse	These buildings and adjacent areas house the generators that power the island. They are presently used by the park staff for park operations and maintenance. The state of preservation is minimal and visitors are not generally permitted in this area.	Park Operations Zone These historic structures, including the nearby Model Industries Building, would be rehabilitated and adaptively reused for maintenance and public safety functions. They could house green, sustainable infrastructure technologies. Where appropriate, visitor access would be provided to showcase the technology and interpret the island’s energy history.
Island Perimeter	The perimeter of the island, including the steep cliffs and immediate shore, is managed to preserve habitat for birds and marine wildlife. Visitor access is on primary trails that are open year-round, and on seasonal trails such as the Agave Trail. Other areas are closed year-round for visitor safety and seabird habitat protection.	Natural Zone (Northeastern and southern perimeter of the island) This area would be managed to protect natural habitat values while providing an opportunity for visitors to walk on trails around more of the island’s perimeter at all times of the year. Sensitive Resources Zone (Western coastal cliffs) Visitor access along the western coastal cliffs and tide pools would be highly managed to protect natural habitat values. Seasonal closures would protect sensitive seabird habitat.
Offshore Marine Environment	The GGNRA has jurisdiction over the marine environment extending approximately 1,000 feet from the island’s shore. This area is not actively managed, although access to the island is only through the park’s ferry concessionaire.	Sensitive Resources Zone (Extending 100 feet from the island’s western shore) This area would be managed to protect marine resources. The park would prohibit boat landing in this area and exclude boat tours from this area. Scenic Corridor Zone (Extending beyond the Sensitive Access Zone and along the island’s eastern shore) The park would manage this area to accommodate ferry service to the island, boat tours around the island, and other forms of nonmotorized water-based recreation. The area adjacent to the entry pier would be managed to expand the capacity and range of uses that may occur. This would enable the island to be part of the San Francisco Bay Water Trail, welcoming nonmotorized boats via permits or reservations.



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Preserving and Enjoying Coastal Ecosystems Alternative 2	Focusing on National Treasures Alternative 3	
Historic Immersion Zone Same as Alternative 1.	Historic Immersion Zone Same as Alternative 1.	Lighthouse
Park Operations Zone Similar to Alternative 1, except that the park operations zone would include the Officer’s Club and exclude the Model Industries Building. The Officer’s Club would be stabilized as a ruin to preserve the exterior of the structure. An interior shell could be constructed within the ruin to support park operational functions if needed. Maintenance activities and visitor access outside and nearby these structures would be managed to prevent disruption of nearby sensitive natural resources.	Park Operations Zone Same as Alternative 1.	Power Plant and Quarter-master Warehouse
Sensitive Resources Zone (Majority of the island perimeter) The majority of the perimeter of Alcatraz Island would be preserved to protect natural habitat values. Visitor use and access would be highly managed.	Evolved Cultural Landscape Zone (Majority of the island perimeter) The perimeter of the island, including the coastal cliffs, would be managed to support interpretation of the evolved cultural and natural history, and to provide greater access for visitors. Significant historic resources would be stabilized. A discovery trail would lead visitors around the island to see cultural areas (including the historic gardens) and natural areas. Seasonal closures of the trail would protect sensitive nesting bird habitat.	Island Perimeter
Sensitive Resources Zone (Extending 300 feet from the island’s western shore) Similar to Alternative 1, but extending out 300 feet, this area would be managed as a marine reserve to protect marine resources and seabird colonies. The area would be closed to visitors during seabird breeding season. Scenic Corridor Zone (Extending beyond the Sensitive Access Zone and along the island’s eastern shore) As in Alternative 1, this area would be managed to accommodate ferry access to the island as well as some forms of water-based recreation. Enforcement of resource protection measures and visitor access regulations would be strengthened. For example, tours near the island would be regulated.	Historic Immersion Zone (Extending 1,000 feet from the island’s shore) Park managers would re-institute the historic no trespass zone that was in place during previous periods and would recreate the feeling of exclusion and isolation. The zone would be demarcated by a line of historic buoys circling the island. Only approved vessels, like the visitor ferry, would be allowed to approach and use the island’s dock. Managers would also provide enhanced protection from boating disturbance to seabird colonies.	Offshore Marine Environment







Your notes

