



# GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA MUIR WOODS NATIONAL MONUMENT

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DRAFT GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

VOLUME I





# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Golden Gate National Recreation Area  
Fort Mason, San Francisco, California 94123

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
D18 (GOGA-PLAN)

JUN 27 2011

Dear Park Friend:

We are pleased to present the Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument for your review and comment. This plan is intended to guide management of the park over the next 20 years. We invite you to review the draft and share your thoughts with us, and to let us know how it addresses your aspirations for the future of the park.

Prepared over the last five years, the draft plan contains various ideas for future management of the park. Some of these came from the public and park partners, and others build upon earlier successes or from lessons learned by day-to-day management of the park since 1972 as directed by the 1980 General Management Plan. We employed a rigorous planning process to explore a range of alternatives and create the National Park Service's preferred alternative which encompasses what we believe are the best ideas. The preferred alternative is described in chapters four (for Alcatraz), five (for Marin, San Francisco and San Mateo Counties) and six (for Muir Woods). We hope you will give those chapters special attention.

We think you might be interested in a sample of some actions the draft plan identifies. Please bear in mind that implementation of the final general management plan will depend on many factors, including future National Park Service funding, service-wide priorities, and partnership funds, time, and effort.

In Marin County:

- Renovations to outdated visitor facilities at Stinson Beach and Tennessee Valley that will also incorporate restoration of the natural landscape.
- Improvements to the entrance of Muir Woods National Monument, including reorganizing parking and pedestrian paths, repurposing a historic building for use as an education center, and formalizing continued operation of the successful shuttle with development of an off-site intercept facility.
- Improvements to better serve visitors in the Marin Headlands, such as a visitor facility combining information and food service at Rodeo Beach.
- Solutions to long-standing inadequacies for park operations, including construction of a centralized maintenance facility in the Marin Headlands and dedication of a public safety office at Fort Baker.

In the City and County of San Francisco:

- Enhanced connections for visitors along the San Francisco Bay Trail between Aquatic Park (San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park) and Fort Mason Center.
- A course of action on Alcatraz Island that highlights its rich history, rehabilitates the Main Prison and historic barracks (which could include new exhibits and modest dorm-like overnight accommodations for volunteers) and opens the parade ground that overlooks the San

Francisco Bay. It also expresses the park's ongoing commitment to protect nesting water bird colonies, including the shoreline and offshore area.

- Collaboration with the City of San Francisco, California State Coastal Conservancy, and others to create and implement a long-range master plan for the Ocean Beach corridor—looking beyond the park's narrow boundary.
- Consolidation of museum collections into historic buildings in the Presidio.

In San Mateo County:

- Management guidance and improvements for new parklands, including a broad concept for Rancho Corral de Tierra that retains equestrian uses, restores habitat, and looks to create a sustainable system of public trails and trailheads that will serve future visitors.
- Partnerships to explore a shared multi-agency visitor center.
- New areas to be added to the park boundary, which include important small parcels and larger areas, such as the tidal zone along existing park sites, will enhance our ability to cooperate with other agencies in resource conservation and management.

We invite you to take this opportunity to help shape the future of the park by sending us your comments. You can do that online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>, by regular mail to the address above, or at one of the open houses we will host in communities around the park. These will be announced shortly. Your thoughtful comments are important to us and will make a difference as we finalize the plan in the coming year.

Thank you for your support and interest in this special place.



Frank Dean  
General Superintendent

Enclosures (1)

Draft GMP/EIS, Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument

## ABSTRACT

Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement  
Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument  
Marin County, San Francisco City and County, and San Mateo County, California

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Established in 1972, Golden Gate National Recreation Area has been operating under its first general management plan, approved in 1980. Since the park's establishment, it has doubled in size and a better understanding of the park's natural and cultural resources and recreational uses has been gained. Muir Woods was declared a national monument in 1908 and is currently managed as part of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. A new management plan is needed to guide these two parks for the next 20 years. This *Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* describes three action alternatives for managing Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument.

The no-action alternative consists of the existing park management and serves as a basis for comparison in evaluating the other alternatives. Alternative 1, "Connecting People with the Parks," would further the founding idea of "parks to the people," and would engage the community and other potential visitors in the enjoyment, understanding, and stewardship of the park's resources and values. Park management would focus on ways to attract and welcome people, connect people with the resources, and promote understanding, enjoyment, preservation, and health. **Alternative 1 is the National Park Service's preferred alternative for park lands in Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties.** Alternative 2, "Preserving and Enjoying Coastal Ecosystems," would place an emphasis on preserving, enhancing, and promoting the dynamic and interconnected coastal ecosystems in which marine resources are valued and prominently featured. Recreational and educational opportunities would allow visitors to learn about and enjoy the ocean and bay environments, and gain a better understanding of the region's international significance and history. Alternative 3, "Focusing on National Treasures," would place an emphasis on the park's nationally important natural and cultural resources. The fundamental resources of each showcased site would be managed at the highest level of preservation to protect the resources in perpetuity and to promote appreciation, understanding, and enjoyment of those resources. Visitors would have the opportunity to explore the wide variety of experiences that are associated with many different types of national parks—all in this park and monument. All other resources would be managed to complement the nationally significant resources and associated visitor experiences. **Alternative 3 is the National Park Service's preferred alternative for Alcatraz Island and Muir Woods National Monument.**

The impacts of implementing the various alternatives were analyzed. Potential impacts were analyzed in six broad topic areas: natural resources; cultural resources; visitor use and experience; the social and economic environment; transportation; and park management, operations, and facilities. Natural resources included both physical and biological resources. Cultural resources included archeological, ethnographic, and cultural landscape resources; historic structures; and park collections.

This *Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* has been distributed to other agencies and interested organizations and individuals for their review and comment. The public comment period for this document will last for 60 days after the Environmental Protection Agency's notice of availability has been published in the *Federal Register*.

## HOW TO COMMENT ON THIS PLAN

Comments on the *Draft Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/EIS)* are welcome and will be accepted during the 60-day public review and comment period. The easiest way to submit your comments is via the online form at <http://www.parkplanning.nps.gov/goga> (click on “General Management Plan” and then “Open for Public Comment”). We also accept written comments at the following address:

Superintendent  
Golden Gate National Recreation Area  
Attention: Draft GMP/EIS  
Fort Mason, Building 201  
San Francisco CA 94123

Comments will be accepted for 60 days after the publication of the Environmental Protection Agency’s notice of availability in the *Federal Register*.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

# **Golden Gate National Recreation Area Muir Woods National Monument**

Draft General Management Plan/  
Environmental Impact Statement



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### PURPOSE AND NEED

The last general management plan for Golden Gate National Recreation Area was completed over thirty years ago.

Generally, the overall need for a new general management plan includes the following:

- The park has significantly expanded in size and includes many new lands in San Mateo County. This planning process takes a comprehensive parkwide approach that will help ensure that the management of the natural and cultural resources and visitor experiences are consistent and thorough across all park areas.
- There is an increased public demand for access to, and use of, open spaces within the San Francisco Bay region. The general management plan provides a regional collaborative approach to open space preservation and recreation use.
- The changing demographics in the Bay Area are bringing notable shifts in park visitation, uses, and trends. The general management plan provides desired conditions that will guide the decision making needed to manage the anticipated visitation growth.
- Through research and park management that have occurred since the 1980 plan, the park staff has gathered a considerable amount of new information and knowledge regarding resources and visitor use. This new awareness is reflected in the desired conditions, proposed management actions, and policies of this general management plan.
- Since the 1980 plan, climate change has become better understood and its effects more evident on both ecological systems and cultural resources. The general management plan looks at the potential impacts of climate change to park operations and visitor use, and identifies direction and management actions to guide efforts to minimize the park's carbon footprint.
- How visitors access the park continues to evolve as the local transportation infrastructure changes. Strategies that were identified in 1980 continue to be explored. New ideas and techniques are also identified to help address sustainable options to reach the park, and strategies to reduce traffic congestion around and within the park.
- To comply with federal law, the plan indicates the types and intensities of projected development, including anticipated costs. This is important, as the availability of federal funds may be limited over time.

The implementation of the approved plan, no matter which alternative, will depend on future NPS funding levels and servicewide priorities, and on partnership funds, time, and effort. The approval of a general management plan does not guarantee that the funding and staffing needed to implement the plan will be forthcoming. Full implementation of the plan could be many years in the future.

## THE PLANNING AREA

This general management plan addresses NPS-administered lands within the legislative boundaries of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument. The new general management plan will provide park management guidance for the following park sites: 1) those park lands that are not covered by recent land use management plans and agreements; 2) those lands that are newly acquired or in the process of acquisition; and 3) lands and waters that are leased to the National Park Service or are under other management arrangements or easements, such as the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Peninsula Watershed. The total area of land and water addressed in this plan is approximately 50,000 acres.

Specifically these areas include the following:

- Alcatraz Island and the surrounding bay environment
- park lands in Marin County, including Stinson Beach north to the Bolinas-Fairfax Road; Slide Ranch; Muir Beach; Lower Redwood Creek; Golden Gate Dairy; Tennessee Valley; Marin Headlands; and the offshore ocean environment
- park lands in San Francisco, including Upper Fort Mason, China Beach, Lands End, Fort Miley, Ocean Beach, Fort Funston, and the offshore ocean and bay environments
- park lands in San Mateo County, including the coastal area bluffs extending south from Fort Funston to Mussel Rock; Milagra Ridge; Sheldance Nursery Area; Sweeney Ridge, including Cattle Hill and Picardo Ranch; Mori Point; San Pedro Point; Devil's Slide coastal area; Rancho Corral de Tierra; Montara Lighthouse; Phleger Estate; San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Watershed Easements; and the offshore ocean environment
- Muir Woods National Monument

Park sites with recent management plans are not addressed in this plan. In this category are the Presidio of San Francisco (including the Main Post, Crissy Field, and Baker Beach), Fort Point National Historic Site, Sutro Heights Historic District, Fort Baker (Cavallo Point), Lower Fort Mason (the Fort Mason Center), and the park's northern district (north of Bolinas-Fairfax Road) that is managed by Point Reyes National Seashore.

## FOUNDATION STATEMENTS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### Golden Gate National Recreation Area

#### Park Purpose

The purpose of Golden Gate National Recreation Area is to offer national park experiences to a large and diverse urban population while preserving and interpreting the park's outstanding natural, historic, scenic, and recreational values.

#### Key Interpretive Themes and Associated Resources and Values

**Recreational and Educational Opportunities:** The park provides for diverse recreational and educational opportunities from contemplative to active pursuits, including participation in stewardship and volunteer activities. Its proximity allows an urban population to connect with nature and history.

Fundamental resources and values associated with the recreational and educational opportunities include the diverse settings found within the park and access to the park that is supported by a system of trails and scenic park roads.

**Coastal Corridor:** In a world of diminishing biological diversity and threatened natural resources, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area preserves islands of biodiversity within and near a large urban area. The accelerating rate of global climate change threatens even these remnants.

Fundamental resources and values associated with the coastal corridor are the ocean and bay environment, the rich variety of coastal ecosystems, large numbers of threatened and endangered species, and fresh and salt water resources.

**Military Installations and Fortifications:** Coast defense posts are at the heart of park lands and are a major reason the park is preserved today. Although no hostile shot was ever fired, every major type of military fortification and architecture represented here demonstrates evolving defense technology. War, peace, and the nature of protection have shaped and will continue to shape the country.

The cultural landscapes, features, structures, and museum collections are the fundamental resources and values associated with military installations and fortifications.

**Alcatraz Island:** The layers of history so evident on the island present visitors with a chance to understand the 155-year span of Alcatraz history—from the U.S. Army period, through the federal penitentiary era and the Native American occupation to the current NPS management of the island. As a site of international notoriety, Alcatraz provides a powerful opportunity to provoke visitors to confront their personal views on crime and punishment, the judicial system, and freedom.

The cultural landscapes, historic structures, museum collections, and stories associated with the use of the island as a Civil War period fort, military prison, and federal penitentiary, and as the site of the Indian Occupation of 1969 to 1971 are the fundamental resources and values associated with Alcatraz Island.

**Scenic Beauty:** The powerful positive influences that park land and undisturbed open space can exert on urban settings—and residents—constitute a critical interpretive

message. The scenic beauty of the park's historic and natural undeveloped landscapes inspired a grassroots movement that led to their protection. Proposed development that would have destroyed these lands sparked Bay Area community members to organize and ultimately preserve the open spaces that contribute so much to their quality of life.

The fundamental resources and values associated with the scenic beauty of the park include the dramatic setting that provides a contrast between urban environments and undeveloped spaces and the compelling historical stage that contributes to understanding the history of the area.

**Physical Landforms:** The park's underlying natural geologic systems and processes, and the resulting effects on people and the environment, link the park to the highly visible and significant geologic forces around the world.

Geologic resources are the fundamental resources and values associated with this theme.

**Ohlone and Miwok People:** The natural features and resources of the park, along with its location on the San Francisco Bay estuary, sustained the Ohlone and Miwok people who lived on the lands now comprising the park for thousands of years before Europeans arrived. Archeological sites in the park link to these pre-European inhabitants and to their descendants who retain a vibrant culture to this day.

Archeological sites in the park document the traditional homelands of the Coastal Miwok and Ohlone people and are fundamental resources and values.

## **Muir Woods National Monument**

### **Park Purpose**

The purpose of Muir Woods National Monument is to preserve the primeval character and ecological integrity of the old-growth redwood forest for scientific values and inspiration.

### **Key Interpretive Theme and Fundamental Resources and Values**

The majestic, primeval old-growth redwoods of Muir Woods National Monument invite visitors, in the words of namesake John Muir, to “come to the woods, for here is rest.” The forest ecosystem of these towering trees and the creek beneath them supports an abundance of life. This remnant of the Bay Area's once abundant redwood forests inspires visitors through its seminal conservation story, today welcoming travelers from around the world to have what is, for many, their first wildlands experience.

The fundamental resources and values associated with Muir Woods National Monument are old growth forests and their associated processes and the conservation movement, including both the initial preservation of the redwood forests and ongoing actions.

## **Guiding Principles**

Some principles, forged through daily management of this new kind of national park over the last 40 years, are deeply rooted, distinctive, and will continue to provide direction and focus future park management. They include the park's commitments to

- sustainability
- community-based stewardship
- civic engagement
- partnerships
- regional collaboration
- inclusion

## **ISSUES ADDRESSED IN THE PLAN**

Planning issues identified during the public and internal scoping and analysis stages include the following:

- Visitor Access: Transportation and Trails
- Recreation Opportunities and Conflicts
- Sustainable Natural Resource Preservation and Management
- Sustainable Cultural Resource Preservation and Management
- Climate Change
- Land Acquisition
- Reaching New Audiences
- Operational Facilities
- Scenic Beauty and Natural Character
- Regional Cooperation
- National Park Service Identity
- Partnerships
- American Indian Values

## **ELEMENTS COMMON TO ALL ACTION ALTERNATIVES**

In the process of developing the management alternatives described in the next section, the planning team identified several elements as being appropriate for all of the action alternatives. Some of these elements are required by National Park Service policy, such as Ocean Stewardship. Others, like Native American Engagement, reflect an effective long-standing park practice. In other cases, alternatives were explored but were eliminated from further consideration for various reasons.

### ***Key Elements***

- **Boundary Adjustments:** Proposed adjustments are predominantly in San Mateo County. They consist of 4 undeveloped parcels (approximately 900 acres) and a strip of offshore areas, adjacent to lands already within the park boundary. They present opportunities to preserve critical resources and habitat links, aid in management, and

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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expand recreational opportunities in the park. Bolinas Lagoon, one of Marin County's most significant natural areas, is also proposed to be included in the park's authorized boundary.

- **Climate Change:** Guidance on managing resources and visitation in the face of climate change builds upon NPS policy, current science, and the park's "Climate Change Action Plan." The goals are to 1) reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, 2) educate and interpret the processes for visitors, and 3) assess the impacts and respond to changing conditions.
- **Facilities Not Directly Related to the Park Mission:** This summarizes analyses of facilities that can be removed from the park, generating substantial savings in annual operational and maintenance costs. Proposed actions are estimated to reduce costs by almost \$7,000,000.
- **Facilities for Park Maintenance, Public Safety, and Collection Storage:** Through an extensive focused planning effort the park identified the need for new maintenance facilities (at Kent Canyon shared with Mount Tamalpais State Park, in the Capehart housing area of the Marin Headlands, and in the Presidio), a single hub for park law enforcement (at Fort Baker), a network of multifunctional satellite offices (most of which is in place), and a central facility for the majority of the park's museum collection (in the Presidio).
- **Native American Engagement:** This section documents established commitments to working with Coast Miwok and Ohlone communities to 1) survey, identify and inventory archeological and ethnographic sites, 2) develop interpretive and educational activities for visitors, and 3) support the revitalization of native communities and their traditions.
- **Ocean Stewardship:** This policy addresses the park's responsibilities for managing its extensive offshore—ocean—resources. It focuses on four goals: supporting a seamless network of protected area, inventorying and mapping in the service of protection, engaging the public in stewardship, and increasing the park's technical capacity.
- **Park Collections:** Primary goals are to connect people with the park's extensive collection (the fourth largest collection in the national park system), and to strengthen, preserve, and maintain the collection.
- **Partnerships:** Distills the key goals employed by the park in developing powerful and successful partnerships.
- **Trails:** Broad goals and management strategies for the creation and maintenance of the extensive trails network which is one of the most important ways that visitors experience and enjoy the park. It includes brief summaries of future efforts in each county.
- **Transportation:** Broad goals and management strategies are identified for pursuing sustainable, multimodal access to park sites in partnerships with other organizations. The strategies include regional ferry access, ferry access to Alcatraz, trip planning and wayfinding, congestion management, the Muir Woods shuttle, intelligent transportation systems, and development of a long-range transportation plan.

- **User Capacity:** The park’s proposed commitments for managing user capacity, also known as carrying capacity, is described in the appendix. Indicators and standards are identified for Alcatraz and Muir Woods.

## THE MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

### No-action Alternative

Under this alternative, Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument would continue to be managed as outlined in the 1980 *General Management Plan*.

#### Key Elements

##### **Park Lands in Marin County**

In Marin County, Golden Gate National Recreation Area forms the southern core of a large network of regional, state, and federal protected lands and waters (many of which are recognized as part of the UNESCO Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve). Under the no-action alternative, the park would continue to manage this large expanse of preserved natural landscape, with scattered concentrations of developed facilities, to provide visitors with multiple opportunities for recreation; miles of trails, preserved historic military fortifications, and scenic and historic landscapes.

The county features some of the most varied landscapes in Golden Gate National Recreation Area, including lush woodlands, rugged coasts, sandy beaches, meadows, marshes, grasslands, and coastal shrubs. As a result, visitors can experience an array of wildlife and several different habitats in one brief hike.

Much of this area has been managed as part of Golden Gate National Recreation Area since the park was established in 1972. Management of this land would continue to be guided by the park’s 1980 general management plan and subsequent, more detailed, implementation plans.

A diverse set of park partners—many housed in historic structures—would continue to provide programs and facilities for visitors’ education and enjoyment. These facilities and programs currently include a hostel, environmental education and arts programming, equestrian facilities, and a marine mammal rehabilitation center. Park-managed visitor facilities would continue to include a visitor center, scenic overlooks, trails, campsites, and parking areas at recreational beaches.

National Park Service maintenance facilities, collections, staff housing, administrative offices, and various partner offices would also continue to operate where currently located in the park.

##### **Park Lands in San Francisco**

Park lands in San Francisco ring the northern and western shores of the City of San Francisco, preserving a coastal greenbelt next to dense urban neighborhoods. These lands would continue to be major attractions to tourists and central to the quality of life for local citizens. They offer city dwellers places to recreate, rejuvenate, and learn about the

fascinating natural and cultural history of the region. Management of these lands and marine/bay waters would continue to focus on preserving natural, cultural, and scenic resources, and providing for a variety of recreational uses in the varied settings along San Francisco Bay and the Pacific coast.

### **Park Lands in San Mateo County**

Stretching along the San Mateo coast to Rancho Corral de Tierra and inland to the Phleger Estate, the southern park lands feature a remarkable wealth of natural and historic resources. These lands support an abundance of plants and wildlife and tell the story of the people who have shaped this peninsula over generations.

Park lands in San Mateo County serve a large and diverse local population and present many opportunities for visitors to explore and appreciate these park lands.

Currently, the National Park Service's presence in San Mateo County is limited, sites are not always well identified, and there are few basic facilities to support access. Management of park lands in San Mateo County is guided by the park's authorizing legislation and the management policies common to units of the national park system. This management approach would continue under the no-action alternative, with the exception of Sweeney Ridge—for which a general management plan amendment was approved in 1985 to provide specific management guidance—and Mori Point—for which a detailed landscape restoration plan was recently executed.

Site planning for enhancing visitor facilities, such as the planning recently completed at Mori Point, would continue.

The park would also continue to consult with other agencies to achieve fundamental park goals regarding the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Peninsula Watershed, where the park holds scenic and recreational easements.

### **Alcatraz Island**

Under the no-action alternative, the island would continue to be managed to preserve historic and natural resources, and provide public access to a variety of settings and experiences where appropriate and safe. The primary visitor experience would be day use, beginning with a ferry ride from San Francisco. The island experience would continue to be centered on the federal penitentiary; however, other periods of the island history and bird life would also be interpreted. Scheduled evening tours of Alcatraz Island would continue to provide visitors with this unique opportunity.

The deterioration of buildings and landscapes (accelerated by the harsh island environment) and the protection of areas for bird nesting habitat would continue to limit visitor access to much of the island. Rehabilitation of historic buildings and landscaped areas would continue to be somewhat piecemeal and subject to available funding.

Many areas of the island would continue to be closed during breeding season to protect waterbird colonies from human disturbance. In areas open to the public, western gulls would continue to be managed under an existing agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in accordance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, through the use of bird exclusion measures and other deterrents to protect visitor health and safety. Education and stewardship opportunities would inform visitors about the importance of the island to nesting birds, and what the public can do to help protect them.

### **Muir Woods National Monument**

Under the no-action alternative, Muir Woods National Monument would continue to be managed to protect the primeval redwood forest in the larger Redwood Creek watershed, and to interpret the monument's natural history, as well as the establishment of the monument, which had a major role in the early American conservation movement.

Muir Woods National Monument would remain a popular international destination and ecological treasure, supporting a diversity of flora and fauna, in addition to *Sequoia sempervirens*, the old growth redwoods.

The park staff would continue to balance preservation of the redwood ecosystem with providing access to hundreds of thousands of visitors annually. For many visitors, Muir Woods National Monument would continue to provide their initial experience with the national park system. Overall management of the monument would continue to be guided by the 1980 general management plan. Key park objectives would include fostering a conservation ethic among visitors, preserving and restoring habitat for threatened and endangered species, supporting public transportation as a way to reduce congestion, and promoting a watershed perspective in land management that includes Mount Tamalpais State Park, two water districts, an organic farm, equestrian stables, and local communities.

### **Some Potential Impacts of the No-action Alternative**

- Current conditions would continue to cause loss of habitat integrity; however, restoration efforts and educational activities would result in some beneficial impacts.
- Continued piecemeal approach to preservation and maintenance of historic buildings and structures would result in long-term, minor to moderate, adverse impacts on those structures.
- Continuation of current conditions would result in long-term, moderate, adverse impacts on park collections.
- Continuation of existing opportunities would result in long-term, minor to moderate, beneficial impacts to the visitor experience; however, minor to moderate, adverse impacts would continue from congestion, use conflicts, and limited access to some areas.
- Existing transit service would have a long-term, minor to major, adverse impact on access to popular sites, and minor impacts to transportation in other areas.
- Existing staffing levels would result in continued long-term, moderate, adverse impacts to park operations; volunteer programs would continue to have beneficial impacts to operations.
- Existing funding would result in long-term, major, adverse impacts to park facilities; existing facilities would result in long-term, moderate, adverse impacts to operations.

## **Alternative 1: Connecting People with the Parks**

**Alternative 1 is the National Park Service’s preferred alternative for park lands in Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties. The preferred alternative for Alcatraz Island and Muir Woods National Monument is alternative 3.**

### **Concept**

The emphasis of this alternative is to reach out and engage the community and other visitors in the enjoyment, understanding, and stewardship of the park’s resources and values. Park management would focus on ways to attract and welcome people, connect people with the resources, and promote enjoyment, understanding, preservation, and health—all as ways to reinvigorate the human spirit. Visitor opportunities would be relevant to diverse populations now and in the future.

### **Goals**

#### **Visitor Experience**

- Actively seek opportunities to respond to the needs and interests of the diversity of visitors.
- Encourage visitors to engage in a wide range of opportunities and experiences in a diversity of settings.
- Enhance outreach and access to and within park lands and make them welcoming places to visit.
- Foster the visitor’s deep personal connection to the park and discovery of the values and enjoyment of the natural environment.
- Encourage hands-on stewardship through visitor opportunities that promote personal health and responsibility.

#### **Cultural Resources**

- Maximize adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of cultural resources (structures, landscapes, and archeological sites) to support visitor enjoyment, understanding, and community connections.
- Work with interested groups and populations to preserve and protect cultural resources.
- Preserve and protect cultural resources so that visitors can connect with and appreciate these resources and their stories.

#### **Natural Resources**

- Maintain the integrity and diversity of natural resources and systems.
- Enhance public access to natural resources to promote visitor understanding and appreciation.

- Integrate natural resource preservation and concepts with visitor stewardship opportunities to deepen visitor understanding.

## **Key Elements**

### **Park Lands in Marin County (Preferred Alternative)**

Park managers would preserve the qualities that are enjoyed today and would improve access to the park for all visitors. They would work to preserve and restore interconnected coastal ecosystems through collaborative partnerships with other land management agencies in the region. A stronger national park identity and message would welcome people as they arrive, and improved orientation and information services would inform them of the variety of experiences available in the park. Important park operational uses would remain in the Marin Headlands, and the facilities at these sites would be improved.

Sustainable approaches to rehabilitating the visitor facilities that are in place today would improve trailheads and trails, as well as roads, parking lots, campsites, picnic areas, restrooms, and other structures at popular destinations. Some new facilities would be developed to improve visitor services and support the growing stewardship programs. Park partners would continue to have an important role in preserving resources and offering programs and services to visitors in support of the park's mission. Public transportation and multimodal access to park sites would be improved.

### **Park Lands in San Francisco (Preferred Alternative)**

The park lands in San Francisco would be managed to preserve and enhance a variety of settings, and improve and expand the facilities that welcome and support visitors.

The identity of these diverse park sites as part of the national park system would be strengthened. Visitors would be introduced to the park and the national park system through facilities, informational media, and programming at popular arrival nodes and recreational destinations.

This alternative would emphasize the importance of education, civic engagement, and healthy outdoor recreation, including offering nature experiences to city children and their families. Existing and new facilities, including a state-of-the-art museum collection facility, would support visitor enjoyment, learning, and community-based natural and cultural resource stewardship. Recreational and stewardship opportunities would promote healthy parks and healthy communities. This alternative would engage the community to revitalize coastal park areas such as Ocean Beach, Fort Funston, and Lands End, incorporating measures to address sustainability and climate change.

The park staff would continue to improve trails and trailheads throughout the San Francisco park lands to make the park accessible to the broadest array of visitors. Sites would be connected to each other and to communities by the trail system and the city's transit and multimodal access systems.

### **Park Lands in San Mateo County (Preferred Alternative)**

Park lands and ocean environments in San Mateo County would be managed as part of a vast network of protected lands and waters, some recognized as part of the UNESCO Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve. Park managers would emphasize connectivity, preservation, and restoration of the area's vital ecosystems through collaborative

partnerships with other land management agencies. Strategic adjustments to the park's boundary would enhance the long-term preservation of ecological values.

This alternative would focus on the importance of improving access and community engagement in these newest park lands. Key efforts would include improving the visibility and identity of National Park Service sites. Park trails would be improved to create a sustainable system that provides opportunities to enjoy park sites, connects with local communities, and contributes to an exceptional regional trail network. Equestrian facilities would continue to have an important role in recreation and stewardship. A comprehensive trail plan would be prepared to help achieve these goals. Park managers would work with county transit providers to improve transit connections to local trailheads and east–west transit between bayside communities and State Route 1.

The addition of signs and trailheads would help visitors find their way to various park sites and help them gain an understanding of the park's diverse natural and cultural resources. Equestrian needs would be incorporated in trailhead and trail design.

There could be additional facilities that welcome visitors to the park. This alternative would promote visitor information and orientation centers in Pacifica and in coastside communities. These facilities could be shared with San Mateo County Department of Parks, California State Parks, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, local governments, and other organizations.

### **Alcatraz Island**

Alcatraz Island would be managed to provide an expanded variety of settings and experiences that would connect visitors 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.

Visitors would have access to the majority of the island's historic structures and landscapes to experience the layers of island history and its natural resources and settings. Many of the indoor and outdoor spaces currently inaccessible to visitors would be reopened to expand the range of available activities.

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 hostel or camp site) would be provided.

Sensitive wildlife areas, such as the shoreline, would be protected. Park managers would provide visitors with opportunities to see wildlife and nesting waterbirds and to participate in resource stewardship activities. Gulls would be managed to reduce conflicts in visitor use areas.

### **Muir Woods National Monument**

The park would offer visitors the opportunity to experience and enjoy the primeval forest ecosystem and understand the monument's place in American conservation history through a variety of enhanced programs, facilities, and trails that access the forest and connect local communities to the park and surrounding open space.

While much of the present system of trails through the forest would be retained, some existing facilities and use areas, such as the entrance area and parking lots, would be

modified or relocated to reduce their impacts on the ecosystem and improve the park experience.

The monument would continue to welcome a diversity of visitors and support a range of experiences, better serving as a gateway or stepping stone to understanding the national park system.

An offsite welcome center for the shuttle system, with parking and visitor services, would be an important first point for orientation and a key to providing sustainable access to the monument.

Collaboration with other public land managers would continue to address watershed restoration and stewardship needs.

### **Some Potential Impacts of Alternative 1**

- Elimination of unneeded roads and removal of unneeded structures would result in long-term beneficial impacts on vegetation and wildlife; some construction activities would have short-term adverse impacts; education and stewardship programs would result in long-term, minor to moderate, beneficial impacts both locally and parkwide.
- Strengthening the integrity and adaptive use of historic structures would result in general overall long-term, beneficial impacts, although some localized loss of historic fabric would occur.
- Establishing a curatorial and research facility would have a long-term, beneficial impact on park collections.
- New facilities, increased diversity of opportunities, and purposeful effort to engage more diverse audiences would result in long-term, moderate, beneficial impacts to visitor services.
- Improved access to park sites, increased transit services, and improved trails would result in long-term, minor to major, beneficial impacts to transportation.
- An increase in park staffing would result in long-term, moderate, beneficial impacts to park operations.
- Activities that address deferred maintenance issues and proposed changes to facilities would result in long-term, moderate, beneficial impacts to park operations.

## **Alternative 2: Preserving and Enjoying Coastal Ecosystems**

### **Concept**

The emphasis of this alternative is to preserve, enhance, and promote dynamic and interconnected coastal ecosystems in which marine resources are valued and prominently featured. Recreational and educational opportunities would allow visitors to learn about and enjoy the ocean and bay environments, and gain a better understanding of the region's international significance and history. Facilities and other built infrastructure could be removed to reconnect fragmented habitats and to achieve other ecosystem goals.

## **Goals**

### **Visitor Experience**

- Connect visitors with resources and the park through expanded and diverse science and stewardship programs that are focused on preservation and restoration of coastal and marine resources and address the implications of climate change.
- Provide greater opportunities for visitors to explore wild areas and immerse themselves in nature.
- Manage low-impact visitor use that enhances the qualities of solitude, quiet, and naturalness in sensitive natural resource areas, and accommodate active recreational pursuits in other areas.
- Increase visitor understanding, awareness, and support for coastal resources through participation in stories and programs about human interaction with, and dependency on, natural resources.

### **Cultural Resources**

- Incorporate the history of conservation and the collections related to natural resources to raise awareness of ongoing efforts to conserve marine ecosystems.
- In park interpretation and education programs, emphasize sites and stories connected to coastal resources, including shipwrecks, archeological sites, agricultural lands and uses, coastal defense, and lighthouses, so visitors can connect with those resources.
- Maximize adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of cultural resources to support visitor enjoyment, understanding, and community connections.
- Work with interested groups and populations to preserve and protect cultural resources.
- Preserve and protect cultural resources so that visitors can connect with and appreciate these resources and their stories.

### **Natural Resources**

- Reconnect fragmented habitat within and adjacent to the park to strengthen the integrity and resiliency of the coastal ecosystem to respond to climate change and urban pressures.
- Optimize recovery of special status species and survival of wide-ranging wildlife.
- Restore natural processes and/or allow these processes to evolve unimpeded to the greatest degree feasible.
- Promote partnerships to help the park become a center for innovative coastal science, stewardship, and learning.

## **Key Elements**

### **Park Lands in Marin County**

In this alternative, management would strive to further preserve and restore the dynamic, interconnected coastal ecosystems at the core of protected lands through collaborative

regional partnerships. Partners would work on common goals to sustain the area's native biodiversity, reconnect fragmented habitats and migration corridors, minimize the impact of invasive species, manage for changing fire regimes, protect threatened and endangered species, and restore naturally functioning ecosystems. Proactive management would work to build resiliency to climate change into the natural environment.

Marin County's park lands and waters would be highlighted as living laboratories, engaging visitors in participatory science, education, and stewardship to nurture personal connections with nature and inspire advocacy.

Opportunities to explore trails and beaches would further highlight the park's coastal natural and cultural resources. Cultural resource sites and stories would emphasize human occupation of the coastal environment, as reflected in lighthouses, coastal defense structures, archeological sites, and agricultural land uses.

### **Park Lands in San Francisco**

While welcoming visitors to the park, this alternative would focus on engaging visitors, local communities, and partners in participatory science, education, and stewardship focused on the coastal environment.

Park management, in collaboration with community partners, would demonstrate leadership in proactive adaptation and management in the face of climate change and accelerated sea level rise. Interpretive messages would reach visitors enjoying the coastal environment along the San Francisco Bay Trail and the California Coastal Trail. Cultural resource sites and stories would also highlight the human connection to the coastal environment; sites and stories would include archeological sites, European exploration, maritime history, and coastal defense.

### **Park Lands in San Mateo County**

As in the other alternatives, park lands and ocean environments in San Mateo County would be managed as part of a vast network of protected lands and waters. In this alternative, however, park managers would emphasize work to preserve and restore these interconnected coastal ecosystems through collaborative partnerships with other land management agencies in the region. Together these groups would work to sustain the area's native biodiversity, reconnect fragmented habitats and migration corridors, minimize the impact of invasive species, manage for changing fire regimes, and restore naturally functioning ecosystems. Proactive management would build into the environment greater resiliency to climate change.

Park lands in San Mateo County provide an extensive wildlife corridor that includes habitat for threatened and endangered species. These lands would serve as living laboratories, engaging visitors in participatory science, education, and stewardship—activities that nurture personal connections with nature and inspire advocacy.

Exploration along the vast network of trails would further highlight the park's diverse ecosystems and rich cultural resources. Cultural resource sites and stories—archeological sites, European exploration, agricultural land uses, coastal defense sites, and the lighthouse—would emphasize human occupation of the coastal environment. Most cultural resources would be stabilized if not in conflict with natural resource restoration.

Land protection strategies would seek to reconnect fragmented endangered species habitat and strive to remove features that impede movement or migration of species, or disrupt ecological function.

### **Alcatraz Island**

The island's inhospitable and isolated—yet strategic—location at the entry to the Golden Gate and San Francisco Bay would be highlighted. 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.

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 Island.

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 outdoor learning, and natural and cultural resource stewardship programming delivered in partnership with Bay Area nonprofits.

While access would be managed to protect sensitive resources, visitors would be able to more freely explore, discover, and experience nature reclaiming Alcatraz Island, 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.

### **Muir Woods National Monument**

Park management would seek to restore the primeval character of the old-growth redwood forest. Visitors would be immersed in the forest, and could experience the natural sounds, smells, light, and darkness of the forest. The experience would be more primitive than it is today; the majority of the built environment—buildings, parking lots, paved trails—would be removed, and all visitors would arrive by shuttle, bicycle, or on foot. The landscape would be “messier” than it is today, but the forest would function more naturally: Redwood Creek would be allowed to meander across the floodplain, flooding the valley bottom, uprooting trees, and opening gaps in the canopy.

Where not in conflict with natural resource goals, historic trails and structures could be retained or adapted for contemporary uses. A light-on-the-land, accessible trail would reach into the heart of the forest. Visitors would engage in participatory stewardship, education, and science that further the preservation of the forest and all its parts—the creek, salmon, spotted owls, bats, natural sounds—as part of the continuing history and evolution of the land preservation and conservation movement.

An offsite welcome center for the shuttle system, with parking and visitor services, would be an important first point for orientation and a key to providing sustainable access to the monument.

Restoration of the Redwood Creek watershed would be accelerated in collaboration with other land managers. Actions would include the removal of unneeded management roads, stabilization of sediment sources, and removal of invasive vegetation, as well as removal of streambank stabilization structures in Redwood Creek, removal and possible relocation of some pedestrian bridges, and restoration of natural floodplain function.

## **Some Potential Impacts of Alternative 2**

- Elimination of unneeded roads and removal of unneeded structures would result in long-term beneficial impacts on vegetation and wildlife; some construction and restoration activities (such as the removal of structures) would have short-term adverse impacts; education and stewardship programs would result in long-term, minor-to moderate, beneficial impacts both locally and parkwide.
- Actions could result in impacts to historic structures that range from long term and beneficial (because of improved treatment) to permanent and adverse because of adaptive use and potential for coastal erosion.
- This alternative would result in both beneficial and adverse, long-term, moderate impacts to the cultural landscape at Alcatraz Island
- Establishing a curatorial and research facility would have a long-term, beneficial impact on park collections.
- Regulation and restrictions on some visitor activities and access to some areas might have a long-term, moderate, adverse impact on the visitor experience. On Alcatraz Island, increased conflicts between visitors and an expanding bird population could result in long-term, moderate, adverse impacts to the visitor experience. At Muir Woods, exclusive access by shuttle could restrict the number of visitors to the monument.
- A reduction in parking at Stinson Beach could have a long-term, major, adverse impact or a long-term, moderate, beneficial impact on transportation, depending on concurrent efforts.
- An increase in park staffing would result in long-term, moderate, beneficial impacts to park operations.
- Activities that address deferred maintenance issues would result in long-term, moderate, beneficial impacts to park operations; difficulty for public safety personnel to reach more primitive areas would result in long-term, minor, adverse impacts to operations.

## **Alternative 3: Focusing on National Treasures**

**Alternative 3 is the National Park Service’s preferred alternative for Alcatraz Island and Muir Woods National Monument. The preferred alternative for park lands in Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties is alternative 1.**

### **Concept**

The emphasis of this alternative is to focus on, or showcase, the park’s nationally important natural and cultural resources. The fundamental resources of each showcased site would be managed at the highest level of preservation to protect the resources in perpetuity and to promote appreciation, understanding, and enjoyment of those resources. Visitors would have the opportunity to explore the wide variety of experiences that are associated with many different types of national parks—all in Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument. All other resources would be

managed to complement the nationally significant resources and associated visitor experiences.

## **Goals**

### **Visitor Experience**

- Provide visitors with opportunities to explore, learn, and enjoy the park's unique resources and stories.
- Allow the park's distinctive resources and associated stories to shape recreational opportunities.
- Emphasize active public participation in stewardship programs at the showcased sites.
- Provide visitors with opportunities for understanding and enjoying national park experiences.

### **Cultural Resources**

- Emphasize the preservation of fundamental cultural resources that contribute to the national significance of the park, including national historic landmarks. Manage all other resources to complement the significant resources and visitor experiences.
- Tie associated cultural resources, museum collections, and stories to the showcased sites.
- Preserve and protect cultural resources to highlight the interpretive and educational values and provide, wherever possible, direct contact with the resources.

### **Natural Resources**

- Emphasize the preservation of fundamental natural resources that contribute to the significance of each park unit. Manage all other resources to complement the distinctive resources and experiences.
- Protect or restore the integrity of fundamental natural resources and processes that support the significance of each park unit.
- Manage distinctive natural resources to ensure their ecological integrity while providing opportunities to engage the visitors in hands-on stewardship and exploration.

## **Key Elements**

### **Park Lands in Marin County**

The park would be a welcoming place with a vast network of open space that protects natural and cultural resources and offers many forms of recreation in a setting of national importance. The park would highlight several nationally important sites, including Muir Woods, the Golden Gate, the coastal setting of the State Route 1 National Scenic Byway, and the historic Army posts on the Marin Headlands.

Although this alternative shares many characteristics of alternatives 1 and 2, the management of the Marin Headlands' historic core would be very different. Sheltering the best-preserved collection of seacoast fortifications in the country, the Marin Headlands tell the story of two centuries of evolving weapons technology and the nation's unwavering efforts to protect the Golden Gate. As a result, this alternative would focus on immersing visitors in its compelling sites and history, actively using and interpreting preserved structures and landscapes ranging from Battery Townsley to the Nike Missile Launch Site.

Other important nonmilitary landmarks, such as the Point Bonita Lighthouse, also would be preserved and interpreted for visitors.

### **Park Lands in San Francisco**

The focus would be on the collection of historic sites and the dynamic coastal landscape that defines San Francisco's edge, from Fort Mason to Fort Funston. Visitors would be welcomed to the park, with a focus on the nationally important sites that are connected by the San Francisco Bay Trail and California Coastal Trail, thus creating a scenic and historic corridor.

Park lands in San Francisco encompass a significant collection of historic sites, ranging from the Civil War era at Black Point in Fort Mason to the World War II era military coastal fortifications at Fort Funston. These sites are located amid a windswept coastal environment, featuring rocky bluffs, acres of dunes, sandy beaches, and fragile native habitat.

Under this alternative, the park staff would expand interpretive programs and visitor services at these popular destinations to enable residents and visitors to further appreciate the significant landmarks and landscapes at the Golden Gate.

### **Park Lands in San Mateo County**

As in the other alternatives, park lands and ocean environments in San Mateo County would be managed as part of a vast network of protected lands and waters. This alternative, however, would highlight how this "quilt" of undeveloped land has been protected by numerous organizations. Over the past 25 years, the National Park Service, local governments, private land trusts, and dedicated individuals have worked together to acquire and preserve this "wilderness" next door.

Today, these lands are a national treasure of recreational, natural, and cultural resources. Several nationally significant historic sites are in San Mateo County, along with habitat for numerous endangered species. Many of these important resources are managed by other agencies on nearby sites. This alternative would focus on protecting resources in the park while developing recreational and interpretive connections between sites managed by other land managers.

Park management would also look beyond the immediate park lands to explore the potential to stimulate regional landscape management and enhance heritage tourism. To do so, park managers would work with communities between Pacifica and Santa Cruz to support strategies such as national scenic byway designation for the Pacific Coast Highway (State Route 1). The highway is one of the distinguishing and unifying features of the rural coast that is characterized by forested hills, small-scale agriculture, and seaside communities.

**Alcatraz Island (Preferred Alternative)**

This is the preferred alternative for Alcatraz Island. This alternative would immerse visitors extensively in all of Alcatraz Island's historic periods, including the Civil War military fortifications and prison, federal penitentiary, and American Indian occupation. Alcatraz Island's history would be interpreted, first and foremost with tangible and accessible historic resources, including the structures, cultural landscape, archeology, and museum collection. These resources contribute to the island's national historic landmark status and its recognition as an international icon.

The visitor's immersion in Alcatraz Island history would begin on a ferry from one or more embarkation points that could be expanded to include the original Alcatraz dock at Fort Mason. Passing a line of warning buoys, the experience would continue at the island's arrival dock area, where visitors would have greater access to restored portions of Building 64, the historic barracks. Visitors would ascend to the Main Prison Building through a landscape of preserved historic structures and features. While the primary visitor experience would focus on the federal penitentiary, visitors also would be exposed to other periods of history, literally and programmatically.

This alternative would require extensive stabilization, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic buildings and small-scale landscapes features, as well as creative interpretative and educational programs and visitor services. It would create additional opportunities for cultural resource stewardship programs.

Visitors would have opportunities to learn about the natural history of San Francisco Bay. The colonial waterbird habitat that has grown in regional importance would be protected, enhanced, and interpreted. Visitors could explore the island perimeter, managed to protect sensitive bird populations while providing opportunities to observe them or participate in stewardship activities. The large population of gulls would be managed to reduce conflicts in primary visitor use areas like the Parade Ground.

**Muir Woods National Monument (Preferred Alternative)**

This is the preferred alternative for Muir Woods National Monument. This alternative would present the monument as a contemplative outdoor museum where visitors would discover the primeval redwood forest and the monument's place in the early United States conservation movement.

A system of trails would lead visitors into the forest to feel, see, and learn, in different ways, about the essential qualities of the forest. These qualities include its giant trees, the ecology of Redwood Creek, and William Kent's generous donation of the forest to the American public. Rather than continue to concentrate visitation along a main trail, visitors would be encouraged to take different thematic interpretive trails, some new and some existing, to experience the different parts of the park. Other trails would link the monument with the surrounding Mount Tamalpais State Park.

Some existing facilities and use areas, such as the entrance area and parking lots, would be modified or relocated to reduce their impacts on the ecosystem and improve the park experience.

An offsite welcome center for the shuttle system, with parking and visitor services, would be an important first point for orientation and a key to providing sustainable access to the monument.

Visitors would continue to be drawn to the monument to see the trees, but they would leave with a richer understanding of this precious ecosystem and how the saving of these few acres helped spark conservation across the United States. They would be motivated to return and learn more of the story.

The National Park Service would continue to collaborate with the public and other land managers to address watershed restoration, stewardship, and recreation.

### **Some Potential Impacts of Alternative 3**

- Because nationally significant buildings would be rehabilitated and showcased, this alternative would have comprehensive, long-term, beneficial impacts to historic structures.
- There would be some loss of cultural landscape features, but historically significant cultural landscapes with integrity would be rehabilitated and showcased; this would result in long-term, beneficial impacts to cultural landscapes.
- Elimination of unneeded roads and removal of unneeded structures would result in long-term beneficial impacts on vegetation and wildlife; some construction activities would have short-term adverse impacts; education and stewardship programs would result in long-term, minor to moderate, beneficial impacts both locally and parkwide.
- Establishing a curatorial and research facility would have a long-term, beneficial impact on park collections.
- Establishing a preservation stewardship workshop on Alcatraz Island would have a long-term, beneficial impact on cultural resources.
- Improved access and connectivity and increased opportunities for visitors to understand, appreciate, and help preserve fundamental resources would result in long-term, moderate, beneficial impacts to the visitor experience; some changes to existing opportunities would result in long-term, minor to moderate, adverse impacts on those who use those areas now.
- Additional ferry embarkation points would have a long-term, moderate, beneficial impact on transportation to Alcatraz Island; trail expansion and improvement on the island would also have a long-term, beneficial impact.
- An increase in park staffing would result in long-term, moderate, beneficial impacts to park operations.
- Activities that address deferred maintenance issues and changes to facilities would result in long-term, moderate, beneficial impacts to park operations

### **ESTIMATED COSTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES**

The costs of the proposals within each alternative are summarized in the following table. The last column, titled “Total, Preferred Alternative” represents the costs associated with the implementation of the preferred alternative: alternative 3 for Alcatraz Island and Muir Woods National Monument and alternative 1 for park lands in Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties, as well as the costs common to all alternatives.

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The alternatives describe the maximum potential capital improvements; lesser improvements may be implemented, or built in phases if necessary. The implementation of the approved plan will depend on future funding. The approval of this plan does not guarantee that the funding and staffing needed to implement the plan will be forthcoming. Full implementation of the actions in the approved general management plan could be many years in the future. Additionally, some of the future long-term funding needed to implement the various actions called for in the alternatives is anticipated to come from nonfederal partners, consistent with the park's current practices.

**Summary of Costs Associated with the Implementation of the Alternatives**

	<b>No-action Alternative</b>	<b>Alternative 1</b>	<b>Alternative 2</b>	<b>Alternative 3</b>	<b>Total, Preferred Alternative</b>
<b>Recurring Costs</b>					
Annual Operating Costs	\$28,030,000	\$32,000,000	\$31,090,000	\$31,630,000	\$32,000,000
Muir Woods Shuttle Operations	\$340,000	\$600,000- \$1,400,000	\$4,000,000- \$9,500,000	\$600,000- \$1,400,000	\$600,000- \$1,400,000
Staffing (additional FTE)	334 (+0)	380 (+46)	369 (+35)	377 (+43)	380 (+46)
<b>One-time Capital Costs</b>					
Alcatraz Island	\$4,260,000	\$61,190,000	\$37,440,000	\$54,380,000	\$54,380,000
Park Lands in Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties	\$5,280,000	\$46,710,000	\$47,250,000	\$78,210,000	\$46,710,000
Muir Woods National Monument	\$920,000	\$15,900,000	\$16,870,000	\$17,790,000	\$17,790,000
Common To All Action Alternatives	\$0	\$31,020,000	\$31,020,000	\$31,020,000	\$31,020,000
<b>Total One-time Capital Costs</b>	<b>\$10,460,000</b>	<b>\$154,820,000</b>	<b>\$132,580,000</b>	<b>\$181,400,000</b>	<b>\$149,900,000</b>

All costs in 2009 dollars

NOTES REGARDING SUMMARY OF COSTS TABLE:

1 Annual operating costs are the total costs per year for maintenance and operations associated with each alternative, including utilities, supplies, staff salaries and benefits, and leasing.

- 2 The total number of FTEs (full-time equivalents) is the number of person-years of staff required to maintain the assets of the park at a good level, provide acceptable visitor services, protect resources, and generally support the park's operations. The FTE number indicates ONPS-funded NPS staff only, not volunteer positions or positions funded by partners. (ONPS funds are funds designated for the "Operation of the National Park Service.") FTEs are from the 2010 Green Book, adjusted to reflect loss of 32 structural fire positions.
- 3 One-time costs for the no-action alternative only include costs associated with projects already approved and fully funded.
- 4 Total includes costs for both Essential/Priority and Desirable/Lower Priority Projects. Essential/Priority projects are required to preserve fundamental resources and experiences and would likely require federal funding. Desirable/Lower Priority projects are important to full implementation of the alternative but may be accomplished with nonfederal funds or in later phases.
- 5 Acquisition costs for proposed boundary adjustments are not included in this presentation of costs.

**Essential/Priority\* One-time Capital Costs for the Preferred Alternative**

	Facility Rehabilitation	Historic Preservation	Natural Resource Restoration	Facility Removal	New Construction	Total
Alcatraz Island	\$0	\$38,300,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$38,300,000
Park Lands in Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties	\$11,500,000	\$8,430,000	\$4,470,000	\$250,000	\$980,000	\$25,630,000
Muir Woods National Monument	\$9,150,000	\$340,000	\$4,700,000	\$720,000	\$2,230,000	\$17,140,000
Common to All Action Alternatives	\$0	\$12,560,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$12,560,000
Total One-time Capital Cost	\$20,650,000	\$59,630,000	\$9,170,000	\$970,000	\$3,210,000	\$93,630,000

\*Essential/Priority projects are required to preserve fundamental resources and experiences and would likely require federal funding.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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**Desirable/Lower Priority\* One-time Capital Costs for the Preferred Alternative**

	<b>Facility Rehabilita- tion</b>	<b>Historic Preservation</b>	<b>Natural Resource Restora- tion</b>	<b>Facility Removal</b>	<b>New Con- struction</b>	<b>Total</b>
Alcatraz Island	\$0	\$16,080,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$16,080,000
Park Lands in Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties	\$8,980,000	\$8,730,000	\$0	\$0	\$3,370,000	\$21,080,000
Muir Woods National Monument	\$0	\$650,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$650,000
Common to All Action Alternatives	\$0	\$1,830,000	\$0	\$0	\$16,630,000	\$18,460,000
Total One- time Capital Cost	\$8,980,000	\$27,290,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000,000	\$56,270,000

\*Desirable/Lower Priority projects are important to full implementation of the alternative but may be accomplished with nonfederal funds or many years in the future.

## THE NEXT STEPS

After the distribution of the *Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement*, there will be a 60-day public review and comment period. The National Park Service welcomes comments on the draft plan and will host a series of public meetings to facilitate public involvement in refining the draft plan. After this comment period, the planning team will evaluate comments from other federal agencies, tribes, organizations, businesses, and individuals regarding the draft plan and incorporate appropriate changes into a final plan. The final plan will include a summary of any substantive comments received and the National Park Service's responses to those comments.

Following distribution of the *Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* and a 30-day no-action period, a record of decision approving a final plan will be signed by the National Park Service, Pacific West Regional Director. The record of decision will document the selection of an alternative for implementation. With the signing of the record of decision, the plan can then be implemented.

Once the planning process is completed, the selected alternative will become the new management plan for the park and will be implemented over the next 20 years. It is important to note that all of the actions in the selected alternative will require more detailed study and implementation planning.

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# Background 1





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## INTRODUCTION

Over 30 years ago, the National Park Service (NPS) adopted a plan outlining the future of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, then a new and different park that brought the national park system to a large urban area. Because of the size and diversity of the San Francisco Bay Area community and the National Park Service's commitment to a pioneering public involvement process, it took five years to prepare the plan. This diligence paid off and the final plan won the unanimous support of the community. This plan, along with several amendments, has firmly guided the preservation and enhancement of Golden Gate National Recreation Area for three decades.

It is not unusual for many long-range plans to just sit on the shelf and gather dust—usually as a result of inadequate funding to implement the dreams they offer, but also because of changing conditions and fading public support. When the future of the Presidio's Crissy Field was being discussed early in the planning process, one member of the park's advisory commission confided that the National Park Service would never get the funds to improve it, especially considering demolition and toxic cleanup costs. Today Crissy Field stands as an international standard for waterfront restoration and is a top tourist destination.

Success stories like Crissy Field happen because of the appeal and popularity of the park's resources, enhanced by the efforts of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, and the resultant financial support of generous members of the community.

When considering the transformational expectations offered by the 1980 general management plan, it has been a remarkable success. The visions for Alcatraz Island, Fort Mason, Crissy Field, the Cliff House, Fort Baker, and much of the Marin Headlands have been achieved.

Today, Golden Gate National Recreation Area constitutes one of the largest urban national parks in the world, extending north of the Golden Gate Bridge to Tomales Bay in Marin County and south to Half Moon Bay in San Mateo County. These lands are coastal preserves that encompass many miles of bay and ocean shorelines.

The park contains an abundance of historical and cultural assets, including sites such as early fortifications on Alcatraz Island, Forts Cronkhite and Barry in the Marin Headlands, Fort Mason, Fort Point, and the Presidio of San Francisco. These contain a variety of archeological resources, military batteries, and other historic structures that present a rich history. Chronicles of Native American settlements, the Spanish Empire frontier, the Mexican Republic, evolution of American coastal fortifications, maritime history, 19th century and early 20th century agriculture and ranching, the U.S. Army in World Wars I and II, the California Gold Rush, Buffalo Soldiers, and the growth of San Francisco are told in the settings in which they occurred.

Golden Gate National Recreation Area is also rich in natural resources. The park is comprised of 19 types of ecosystems in numerous distinct watersheds and is home to over 1,200 known plant and animal species. The park provides habitat for many sensitive, rare, threatened, or endangered species, including the mission blue butterfly, northern spotted owl, and California red-legged frog. Coho salmon and steelhead trout inhabit the clean waters of Redwood Creek as it flows through Muir Woods National Monument.

Each year 16 to 20 million visitors explore the park, with over 1.4 million touring Alcatraz Island and approximately 750,000 visiting Muir Woods National Monument. Trips to the park account for nearly 50% of all visits to the 29 national park system units in California.

In looking back at the 1980 general management plan and where the park is today, there appears to be only one major goal yet to be accomplished—the ambitious transportation proposals contained in the document. Lack of funding and jurisdictional issues have hindered their accomplishment. However, one of the principal goals of this element of the plan was to provide access to the park to under-represented populations—other strategies have apparently made progress in reaching that goal.

General observations indicate that increasing numbers of young people—many of them minorities—have been visiting the park. It can be safely assumed that this apparent trend is strengthened by the many educational and volunteer programs managed by the park and park partners.

It is our goal to continue this trend. Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument are situated in one of the most demographically diverse regions in America. In addition, demographic trends forecast a dramatic increase in the diversity of the statewide population and in the number of residents who are less than 18 years of age. As a result, the park is uniquely situated to reconnect people with their national parks, with a goal of reaching a 21st century audience—more diverse and younger than today’s national park visitor—and sustaining their engagement.

Even before the 1980 plan was approved, the park was growing. Legislation for a boundary expansion was passed by Congress in 1978 and since then various acts of Congress have added many additional acres to the park. Research and management activities have revealed new resource values, both cultural and natural. Visitation has increased and new activities have put pressures on park resources not anticipated in the original plan. In short, today’s park is quite different from the one covered in the 1980 plan. The first plan served to shape a new park and reach a consensus on the definition of its identity. This new document will serve to fine tune and expand the vision for an already mature national park and will shape and define new areas coming into the park. Although different in many ways, the new plan will follow the same basic directive outlined for the 1980 plan by the park’s first Superintendent, Bill Whalen, “Our job is just to polish the jewels.”

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## PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of this general management plan is to guide planning and decision making at Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument for the next 20 years. The first general management plan, completed in 1980, is now more than 30 years old. Since the completion of that first plan, the issues, opportunities, and challenges associated with the park and monument have significantly changed. In addition, park managers have had 30 years to better understand the natural and cultural resources of the park and monument and the changing needs of park visitors.

This new general management plan will serve as a foundation and framework for the management of these park lands. The plan articulates the desired future conditions for park resources and visitor experiences that will best fulfill the legislative and presidential mandates that established these units as part of the national park system.

This plan has been developed by an interdisciplinary team in consultation with NPS offices; park partners; tribal, federal, state, and local agencies; and other interested parties. There has been substantial input and participation from the general public. These public involvement and consultation efforts helped to ensure that the decisions made through this planning process are widely supported and sustainable over time. A completed general management plan represents an agreement with the citizens of the United States about how these lands and facilities will be managed. The plan will be a blueprint for the future.

The “Planning Issues” section of this general management plan provides details of these issues, opportunities and challenges. Generally, the overall need for a new general management plan has arisen because of the following:

- The park has significantly expanded in size and includes many new lands in San Mateo County. This planning process is based on a comprehensive look at the park as a whole rather than its individual pieces. This comprehensive parkwide approach will help ensure that the management of the natural and cultural resources and visitor experiences are consistent across all park areas.
- There is an increased public demand for access to and use of open spaces within the ever-growing urban development of the San Francisco Bay region (Bay Area). The general management plan provides a regional collaborative approach to open space preservation.
- The changing demographics in the Bay Area are bringing notable shifts in park visitation, uses, and trends. The general management plan provides desired conditions that will guide the decision making needed to manage the anticipated increase in visitation.
- Through research and park management over the years the park staff has gathered a considerable amount of new information and knowledge regarding resources and visitor use. This new awareness is incorporated into the desired conditions, proposed management actions, and policies of this general management plan.
- In recent years, climate change has become better understood and its effects more evident on both ecological systems and cultural resources. The general management

plan looks at the potential impacts of climate change to park operations and visitor use, and identifies direction and management actions to guide efforts to minimize the park's carbon footprint.

- Visitor access to the park continues to evolve as the local transportation infrastructure changes. The strategies that were identified in 1980 continue to be explored; new ideas and techniques are also identified to help address sustainable options to reach the park, and strategies to reduce traffic congestion around and within the park.
- To comply with federal law, the plan indicates the types and intensities of projected development, including anticipated costs. This is important, as the availability of federal funds may be limited over time.

This general management plan addresses these overall issues and the detailed issues identified in the "Planning Issues" section; the alternatives suggest ways to address these issues over the next 20 years.

The implementation of the approved plan, no matter which alternative, will depend on future NPS funding levels and servicewide priorities, and on partnership funds, time, and effort. The approval of a general management plan does not guarantee that the funding and staffing needed to implement the plan will be forthcoming. Full implementation of the plan could be many years in the future.

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## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PARK MANAGEMENT**

In addition to the many laws, policies, and directives that govern management of all units of the national park system, the leadership at Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument has highlighted some of the principles that are most deeply rooted and distinctive at this park. These originate from the 1916 act that established the National Park Service to “...*promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations...by such means and measures as 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.*”

### **SUSTAINABILITY**

We will continue to learn about and use practices that help sustain the resources of our park. Sustainability will be fundamental to the facilities, projects, programs, and operations of the park, using sound environmental management practices. We will seek opportunities to promote sustainability and stewardship to park visitors, neighboring communities, and the stakeholders we serve.

### **COMMUNITY-BASED STEWARDSHIP**

We are committed to ongoing involvement of individuals and organizations in understanding, caring for, and preserving the park’s natural habitats, historic places, and trails. This community stewardship brings the commitment to preserve our common heritage and public lands—national treasures that can best be sustained with the efforts of many.

### **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

We are dedicated to ongoing, dynamic conversations about the contemporary relevance of park resources. We will also provide opportunities for meaningful involvement to promote better understanding and communication, discuss concerns, and express values and preferences when park decisions and policies are being developed and implemented.

### **PARTNERSHIPS**

We will continue to build on the legacy of the many partnerships that have enhanced our ability to protect resources and serve the public since the park was established. Through mutual collaboration, shared values, and learning, these partnerships have created outcomes beyond any one organization’s individual capacity. Partnerships will continue

to be an important way to accomplish the park’s mission and build a community of stewardship.

## **REGIONAL COLLABORATION**

In working to preserve our park’s resources unimpaired for future generations, we will establish and maintain cooperative relationships with managers of adjacent public lands and watersheds; tribal, state, and local governments; community organizations; and private landowners. We will collaborate with others to ensure that watersheds, ecosystems, viewsheds, and trail and transportation systems that extend beyond park boundaries are considered holistically, in order to best preserve important park resources, provide equitable and sustainable access, and advance the goal of creating a seamless network of protected lands.

## **INCLUSION**

Recognizing the special opportunities and obligations resulting from our location within a region of great demographic and socioeconomic diversity, we will strive to assure that Golden Gate National Recreation Area is a “park for all.” Working *with*, rather than *for*, various community partners, we will undertake proactive strategies that make the park welcoming and accessible to those at every economic strata, people with disabilities, and ethnic and cultural communities who have not traditionally visited national parks in numbers proportionate to the changing demographics of California and the nation.

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## THE PLANNING AREA

This new general management plan addresses the lands administered by the National Park Service within the legislative boundaries of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument. Over the last 15 years, the park staff has completed numerous land use and site plans for areas in Golden Gate National Recreation Area. These plans and associated environmental impact documents are current and therefore these areas are not included in the planning area for this updated general management plan.

The new general management plan will provide park management guidance for the following park sites: 1) those park lands that are not covered by recent land use management plans and agreements; 2) those lands that are newly acquired or in the process of acquisition; 3) lands and waters that are leased to the National Park Service or are under other management arrangements or easements (such as the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Peninsula Watershed). The total area of land and water addressed in this plan is approximately 50,000 acres.

Specifically these areas are the following:

- Alcatraz Island and the surrounding bay environment
- park lands in Marin County, including Stinson Beach to Bolinas-Fairfax Road; Slide Ranch; Muir Beach; Lower Redwood Creek; Golden Gate Dairy; Tennessee Valley; Marin Headlands; and the offshore ocean and bay environment
- park lands in San Francisco, including Upper Fort Mason, China Beach, Lands End, Fort Miley, Ocean Beach, Fort Funston, and offshore ocean and bay environment
- park lands in San Mateo County, including the coastal area extending south from Fort Funston to Mussel Rock; Milagra Ridge; Sheldance Nursery Area; Sweeney Ridge, including Cattle Hill and Picardo Ranch; Mori Point; San Pedro Point; Devil's Slide coastal area; Rancho Corral de Tierra; Montara Lighthouse; Phleger Estate; San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Peninsula Watershed easements; and the offshore ocean environment
- all lands within Muir Woods National Monument

The following are Golden Gate National Recreation Area sites that have recently completed new land use management plans, and therefore are not included in the GMP planning area. These park areas will not be revisited in this plan.

- Presidio of San Francisco and Crissy Field
- Baker Beach
- Lobos Creek Valley
- Fort Point National Historic Site
- Sutro Historic District, including the Cliff House, Sutro Heights Park, Sutro Baths, and Lands End

## PART 1: BACKGROUND

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- Fort Baker
- Lower Fort Mason (Fort Mason Center)
- Golden Gate National Recreation Area Northern District, north of Bolinas-Fairfax Road—(These lands are managed by Point Reyes National Seashore and are being addressed in the *Point Reyes National Seashore/Golden Gate National Recreation Area Northern District General Management Plan*.)

The park staff is currently working on a variety of detailed project and program implementation plans. The implementation plans cover topics such as detailed actions for natural and cultural resource restoration and preservation, visitor use, transportation, and park operations. There are several major project and program implementation plans that are in the process of being prepared or implemented. In the preparation of this general management plan, the planning team coordinated with the development of these plans to ensure consistency. Ongoing planning efforts include the following:

- Marin Headlands and Fort Baker Transportation Infrastructure and Management Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement
- Wetland and Creek Restoration at Big Lagoon, Muir Beach Final Environmental Impact Statement
- Marin Equestrian Plan / Environmental Assessment
- Headlands Institute Campus Improvement and Expansion Plan
- Dog Management Plan for Golden Gate National Recreation Area / Environmental Impact Statement
- Doyle Drive – South Access to the Golden Gate Bridge
- Point Reyes National Seashore General Management Plan



**GMP Planning Area**

- GMP Planning Area\*
- GGNRA Legislative Boundary
- Other Open Space

0 1 2 4  
Miles

★ The planning area includes an off shore distance of approximately 1/4 mile.

U.S. Department of the Interior · National Park Service  
DSC · December 29, 2009 · XXX / XXXXX



# *Foundation Statements: Guidance for Planning*

In 1916, with the passage of the National Park Service Organic Act, Congress established the National Park Service to oversee and manage the national parks of the United States. Individual national parks continue to be established by Congress or by presidential proclamation. The legislation that authorizes a new national park system unit guides its management. (See appendix A for legislation related to the National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and Muir Woods National Monument.)

The following pages present foundation statements for Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument, respectively, as they are two distinct units of the national park system.



## **PARK PURPOSE**

The park purpose is a statement that summarizes why Congress and/or the president established the area as a unit of the national park system. It is based on the enabling legislation and the legislative history of the unit. The purpose statement provides the most fundamental criteria against which the appropriateness of all plan recommendations, operational decisions, and actions are tested.

## **PARK SIGNIFICANCE**

Statements of park significance define what is *most important* about a park's many resources and values. In developing these significance statements, the planning team was guided by the park's legislation and knowledge acquired through management, research, and civic engagement. The significance statements focus on the attributes that make the area's resources and values important enough to be included in the national park system. Each unit in the national park system contains many significant resources, but not all of these resources contribute to the purpose for which the park or monument was established as a unit of the national park system.

The park purpose and significance statements are used to guide all planning and management decisions. This ensures that the resources and values that Congress and the president wanted preserved are understood and are the park's first priority.

## **FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES**

The National Park Service works to ensure the conservation and public enjoyment of those resources and values that are fundamental to the park significance. Fundamental resources and values are those resources and values that directly contribute to the significance for which the park was established.

## **PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES**

Primary interpretive themes describe the key stories and concepts of the park that help visitors understand and appreciate the park purpose and significance. The development and interpretation of primary interpretive themes provide the foundation on which the park's educational and interpretive program is based.

# *Foundation Statements for Golden Gate National Recreation Area*

The founders of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, established in 1972, intended to bring national park experiences to urban populations. The park's extensive collection of natural, historic, and scenic resources and diverse recreational opportunities fulfill the purpose of bringing "parks to the people"—particularly to the 7 million people who live in the Bay Area. Today, however, the resources of Golden Gate National Recreation Area are nationally and internationally recognized as well, extending their value to all of America and beyond.

## **PARK PURPOSE**

The purpose of Golden Gate National Recreation Area is to offer national park experiences to a large and diverse urban population while preserving and interpreting the park's outstanding natural, historic, scenic, and recreational values.



# *Recreational and Educational Opportunities*

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

The continuum of park resources at the doorstep of the San Francisco Bay Area provides an abundance of recreational and educational opportunities.

## **FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES**

- **Diverse Park Settings** – The diversity of settings, from remote to urban, provides visitors with active and passive recreational and educational opportunities, including participation in park stewardship.
- **Park Access** – A system of designated trails and scenic park roads supports access to settings that provide visitors with a broad range of activities and varied experiences.

## **INTERPRETIVE THEME**

The park provides for diverse recreational and educational opportunities from contemplative to active pursuits, including participation in stewardship and volunteer activities. Its proximity allows an urban population to connect with nature and history.

# *Coastal Corridor*

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

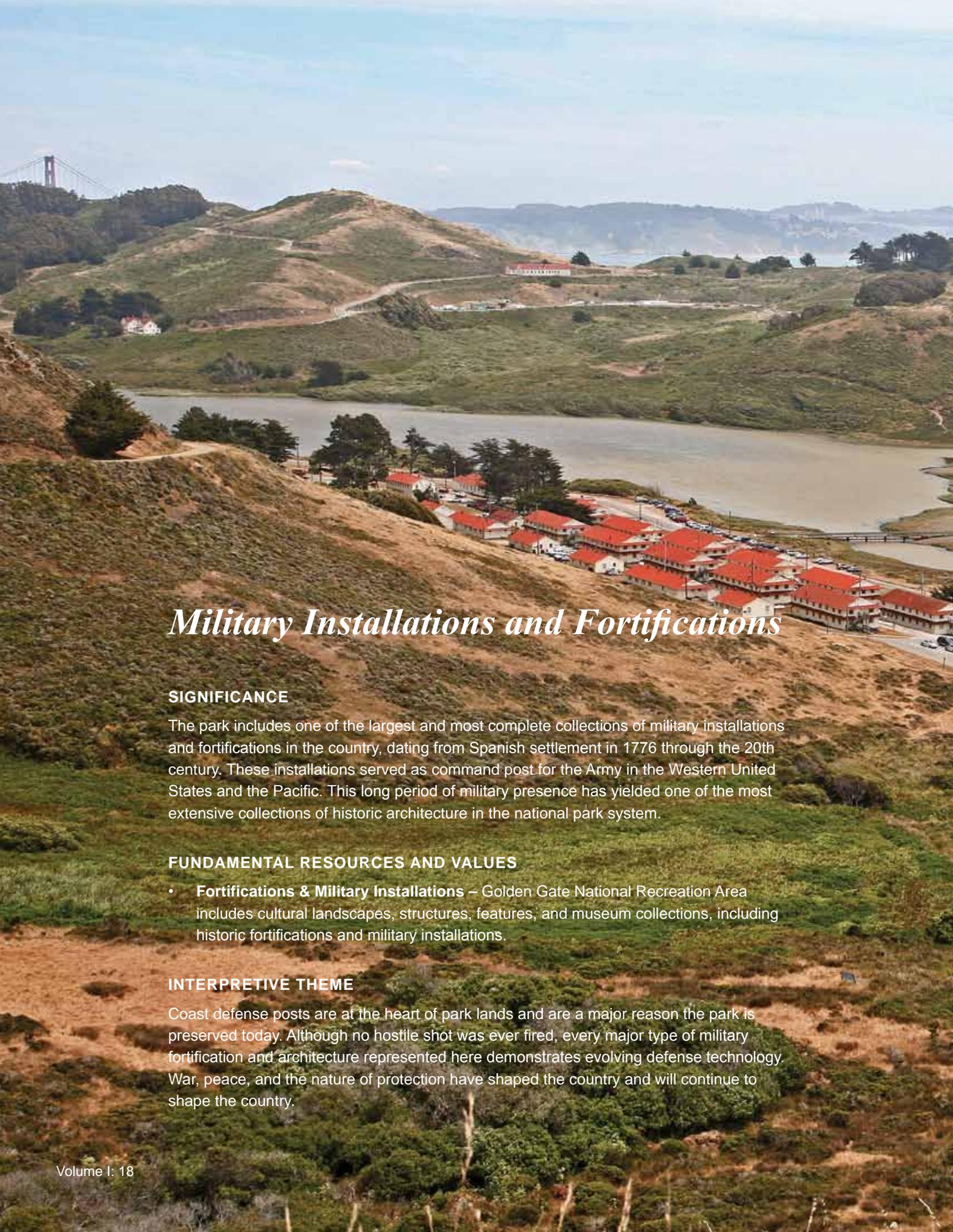
The remnant undeveloped coastal corridor of marine, estuarine, and terrestrial ecosystems supports exceptional native biodiversity and provides refuge for one of the largest concentrations of rare, threatened, and endangered species in the national park system.

## **FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES**

- **Ocean and Bay Environment** – Oceanic conditions, such as tides, currents, waves, surf, upwelling, and sea level, influence Golden Gate National Recreation Area's coastal environment, including climate and the land.
- **Coastal Ecosystems** – Golden Gate National Recreation Area contains a rich assemblage of coastal native plant and animal habitat that includes forests, coastal scrub, grassland, freshwater, estuarine and marine habitats, beaches, coastal cliffs, and islands.
- **Threatened and Endangered Species** – Golden Gate National Recreation Area supports one of the largest numbers of federally listed threatened and endangered species in the national park system. This island of refuge is due to the protected confluence of unique and diverse habitats adjacent to the urban Bay region.
- **Water Resources** – Golden Gate National Recreation Area's water resources support coastal corridor ecosystems and these consist of groundwater sources (aquifers and springs); freshwater systems (streams, lakes, and ponds); coastal, estuarine, and marine water resources (the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay); and other wetlands.

## **INTERPRETIVE THEME**

In a world of diminishing biological diversity and threatened natural resources, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area preserves islands of biodiversity within and near a large urban area. The accelerating rate of global climate change threatens even these remnants.



## *Military Installations and Fortifications*

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

The park includes one of the largest and most complete collections of military installations and fortifications in the country, dating from Spanish settlement in 1776 through the 20th century. These installations served as command post for the Army in the Western United States and the Pacific. This long period of military presence has yielded one of the most extensive collections of historic architecture in the national park system.

### **FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES**

- **Fortifications & Military Installations** – Golden Gate National Recreation Area includes cultural landscapes, structures, features, and museum collections, including historic fortifications and military installations.

### **INTERPRETIVE THEME**

Coast defense posts are at the heart of park lands and are a major reason the park is preserved today. Although no hostile shot was ever fired, every major type of military fortification and architecture represented here demonstrates evolving defense technology. War, peace, and the nature of protection have shaped the country and will continue to shape the country.

# *Alcatraz Island*

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

Alcatraz Island, the site of pre-Civil War fortifications, was the nation's first military prison, later became the most notorious maximum security penitentiary in the United States, and subsequently was the site of the occupation that helped ignite the movement for American Indian self determination.

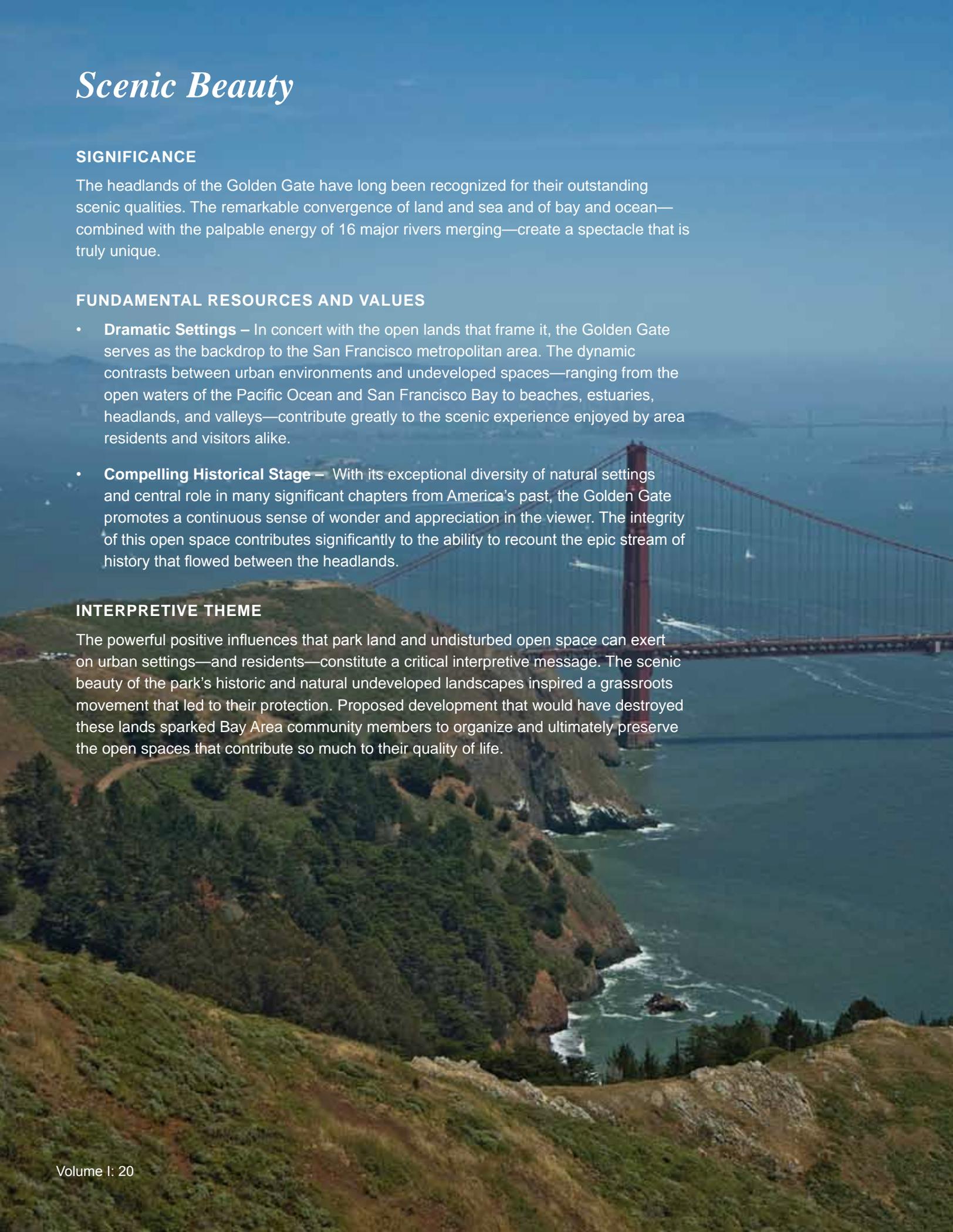
## **FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES**

- **Alcatraz Island** – Alcatraz Island has cultural landscapes, historic structures, museum collections, and stories associated with its use as a Civil War period fort, a military prison, a federal penitentiary, and as the site of the American Indian Occupation of 1969 to 1971.

## **INTERPRETIVE THEME**

The layers of history so evident on the island present visitors with a chance to understand the 155-year span of Alcatraz history – from the U.S. Army period, through the federal penitentiary era and the Native American occupation to the current NPS management of the island. As a site of international notoriety, Alcatraz Island provides a powerful opportunity to provoke visitors to contemplate their personal views on crime and punishment, the judicial system, and freedom.

# Scenic Beauty



## SIGNIFICANCE

The headlands of the Golden Gate have long been recognized for their outstanding scenic qualities. The remarkable convergence of land and sea and of bay and ocean—combined with the palpable energy of 16 major rivers merging—create a spectacle that is truly unique.

## FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- **Dramatic Settings** – In concert with the open lands that frame it, the Golden Gate serves as the backdrop to the San Francisco metropolitan area. The dynamic contrasts between urban environments and undeveloped spaces—ranging from the open waters of the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay to beaches, estuaries, headlands, and valleys—contribute greatly to the scenic experience enjoyed by area residents and visitors alike.
- **Compelling Historical Stage** – With its exceptional diversity of natural settings and central role in many significant chapters from America’s past, the Golden Gate promotes a continuous sense of wonder and appreciation in the viewer. The integrity of this open space contributes significantly to the ability to recount the epic stream of history that flowed between the headlands.

## INTERPRETIVE THEME

The powerful positive influences that park land and undisturbed open space can exert on urban settings—and residents—constitute a critical interpretive message. The scenic beauty of the park’s historic and natural undeveloped landscapes inspired a grassroots movement that led to their protection. Proposed development that would have destroyed these lands sparked Bay Area community members to organize and ultimately preserve the open spaces that contribute so much to their quality of life.



## *Physical Landforms*

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

The convergence of the San Andreas Fault, San Francisco Bay at the Golden Gate, and the California coastline creates a dynamic environment of exceptional scientific value.

### **FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES**

- **Geologic Resources** – Golden Gate National Recreation Area's geologic resources include faults, plate margins, and a subduction zone; a diversity of rock types and deposits representing more than 100 million years of the earth's history; and complex geologic processes that continue to shape the landscape.

### **INTERPRETIVE THEME**

The park's underlying natural geologic systems and processes, and the resulting effects on people and the environment, link the park to the highly visible and significant geologic forces around the world.



## *Ohlone and Miwok*

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Park lands are within the traditional homelands of Coast Miwok and Ohlone people. They contain indigenous archeological sites with native heritage, historic, and scientific values.

### **FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES**

- **Archeological Sites** – Sites in the park document the traditional homelands of the Coast Miwok and Ohlone people.

### **INTERPRETIVE THEME**

The natural features and resources of the park, along with its location on the San Francisco Bay estuary, sustained the Ohlone and Miwok people for thousands of years before Europeans arrived. Archeological sites in the park link to these pre-European inhabitants and to their descendants who retain a vibrant culture to this day.

# *Foundation Statements for Muir Woods National Monument*

Until the 19th century, redwood trees were in abundance in the many coastal valleys of northern California; however, logging soon removed most of them to supply the building materials for a growing population. In 1905, when William Kent and his wife, Elizabeth Thacher Kent, realized that Redwood Canyon, a popular hiking and recreation destination, contained one of the San Francisco Bay Area's last uncut stands of old-growth redwood, they bought 612 acres there for \$45,000. To protect the trees, the Kents donated 298 acres containing the core of the forest to the United States government. President Theodore Roosevelt declared the area Muir Woods National Monument in 1908. The proclamation states that the tract contains "an extensive growth of redwood trees (*Sequoia sempervirens*)" that was "of extraordinary scientific interest and importance because of the primeval character of the forest in which it is located, and of the character, age and size of trees." At Kent's suggestion, the monument was named for conservationist John Muir. Due to circumstances surrounding its founding, Muir Woods National Monument holds a significant place in conservation history. It was the tenth national monument to be designated under the Antiquities Act, the first to be located in proximity to a major city, and the first to consist of formerly privately owned lands.

## **PARK PURPOSE**

The purpose of Muir Woods National Monument is to preserve the primeval character and ecological integrity of the old-growth redwood forest for scientific values and inspiration.



# *Muir Woods National Monument*

## **PARK SIGNIFICANCE**

Muir Woods National Monument preserves the last remnant old-growth forest close to metropolitan San Francisco that retains its primeval character.

The establishment of the monument is an important manifestation of early 20th century conservation history.

## **FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES**

- **Old Growth** – Muir Woods National Monument preserves plant and animal species and the natural processes associated with the once abundant coastal redwoods ecosystem.
- **Conservation Movement** – The efforts of the people who ensured the preservation of this old-growth redwood forest continue to inspire conservation and stewardship actions today.

## **INTERPRETIVE THEME**

The majestic, primeval old-growth redwoods of Muir Woods invite visitors, in the words of namesake John Muir, to “come to the woods, for here is rest.” The forest ecosystem of these towering trees and the creek beneath them supports an abundance of life. This remnant of the Bay Area’s once abundant redwood forests inspires visitors through its seminal conservation story, today welcoming travelers from around the world to have what is, for many, their first wildlands experience.

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## **SPECIAL MANDATES AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITMENTS RELATED TO GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA**

Special mandates are park-specific requirements that expand on the park's legislated purpose. These mandates generally require the National Park Service to perform some particular action as directed through congressional legislation. Administrative commitments are agreements that have been reached through formal, documented processes, and include agreements such as a conservation easement. The ongoing mandates and commitments for Golden Gate National Recreation Area are described in this section.

### **LAND ACQUISITION**

Several pieces of legislation specify how Golden Gate National Recreation Area will conduct land acquisition activities.

- Public Law 92-589, the enabling legislation for Golden Gate National Recreation Area, specifies that “any lands or interests owned by the State of California, or any political subdivision thereof, may only be acquired by donation” (see appendix A).
- Public Law 95-625, Sec. 317(e), specifies that Golden Gate National Recreation Area (through the Secretary of the Interior) “shall accept and manage any land and improvements adjacent to the recreation area which are donated by the State of California or its political subdivisions.”
- Public Law 96-199, Sec. 103(b), specifies spending limits on land acquisition.

### **MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

- Public Law 95-625, Sec. 317(f), specifies that “no fees or admissions shall be charged, except to portions under lease or permit for a specific purpose. The Secretary [of the Interior] may authorize reasonable charges for public transportation.”
- Public Law 106-291, Sec. 140, gives the park authority for fee-based education, interpretive, and visitor service functions within the Crissy Field and Fort Point areas of the Presidio.
- Public Law 96-199, Sec. 103(b), specifies spending limits on park development.
- Golden Gate National Recreation Area signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve that requires the recreation area to cooperate with the reserve partners and promote reserve activities.

## **PENINSULA WATERSHED CONSERVATION EASEMENT**

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission's Peninsula watershed is home to three drinking water reservoirs. Located in San Mateo County, 13 miles south of San Francisco, the Peninsula watershed consists of 23,000 acres of forested hills, coastal scrub, and grasslands.

On January 15, 1969, the United States of America was granted conservation easements on 23,000 acres of watershed lands owned by the City/County of San Francisco. Two separate easements, a scenic easement and a scenic and recreation easement, were granted by San Francisco and accepted by the Secretary of the Interior. In 1972, Golden Gate National Recreation Area was charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the conditions of the easements are upheld.

The scenic easement generally includes the area within the watershed west of the Crystal Springs and San Andreas reservoirs. The primary purpose of this easement is to preserve the property in its natural state while permitting "the collection, storage, and transmission of water and protection of water quality for human consumption."

The scenic and recreation easement generally includes the area within the watershed east of the Crystal Springs and San Andreas reservoirs. The primary purpose of this easement is to preserve the property in its natural state while permitting "the collection, storage, and transmission of water and protection of water quality for human consumption; outdoor recreation; and other [compatible] uses."

Both easements contain numerous restrictions on use or modifications of the property. The scenic and recreation easement also grants the public "the right, subject to rules and regulations as may be imposed and published by [the Public Utilities Commission], to enter the premises for recreational purposes." Golden Gate National Recreation Area has the right and obligation to monitor use of the land for consistency with the terms of the two easements.

## **OTHER EASEMENTS**

Golden Gate National Recreation Area is required to recognize numerous title encumbrances, including easement rights for access, utilities, and other purposes. These publicly and privately held rights can affect park operations and resources. Park managers cooperate with easement holders to protect park resources and provide visitor access.

## **TIDELANDS AND SUBMERGED LANDS LEASE**

Golden Gate National Recreation Area leases tidelands and submerged lands from the California State Lands Commission. These include all offshore areas adjacent to park lands in Marin and San Francisco counties. The current term of the lease began June 1, 2009 and extends through May 31, 2058. Under the conditions of the lease, public access to and use of the existing beaches and strands shall remain open and available for public

use subject to reasonable regulation. The recreation area is required to notify the state within 10 days in the event that the public is charged any direct or indirect fee for the use and enjoyment of the leased areas. The lease also specifies that hunting on leased lands is prohibited.

The primary management purposes are to

- enhance public safety, use, and enjoyment of the subject lands and waters;
- protect and conserve the environment and any cultural and historical resources that may be present;
- preserve the subject lands in their natural state and protect them from development and uses that would destroy their scenic beauty and natural character;
- provide for recreation and educational opportunities; and
- manage the subject lands consistent with the administration and management of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, so long as it is not inconsistent with California state law.

## **LIGHTHOUSES**

In September 2006, the United States Coast Guard notified the park of their plan to excess and transfer five lighthouses and navigational aids to the Department of the Interior in compliance with the park's enabling legislation (Public Law 92 as amended under Public Law 96-607) and the 2000 National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act. The properties include Point Bonita Lighthouse, Point Diablo, and Lime Point in Marin County; the Montara Lighthouse in San Mateo County; and the Alcatraz Island lighthouse in San Francisco.

Following transfer to the park, the U. S. Coast Guard will continue to use the five sites as navigational aids under an NPS permit. The properties require substantial environmental cleanup and structure safety improvements to ensure public safety and visitor access in the future. The Park Service and the Coast Guard are cooperating to complete due diligence reports including environmental testing and analysis, building condition assessments, and developing cost estimates to determine remediation and structural safety requirements.

The park staff anticipates additional planning for the long-term preservation and use of the five lighthouses and is seeking funding prior to transfer. At the time of this writing, the timeframe and milestones for the property excess and transfer from the Coast Guard have not been established.

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## PLANNING ISSUES

Just as citizens helped to establish Golden Gate National Recreation Area, citizens helped identify the needs and opportunities that will shape the future management of the park. In 2006, more than 4,000 copies of the first GMP newsletter were distributed through a mailing list and park partners and at park visitor centers, popular park destinations and park events. The newsletter asked people for their opinions on what they value and enjoy most about the park, their concerns and suggestions for management, their ideas for the future of the park, and for any other comments they wanted to provide to the planning team. The park staff held six public open houses in April 2006 to gather additional input from the public. A scoping roundtable was attended by representatives of many local and regional jurisdictions, resource and regulatory agencies, and other public land managers. Discussion groups with environmental, historic, and community organizations and meetings with American Indian tribal representatives, park partners, and park founders were held to gather information. In addition, meetings with NPS staff were conducted as part of the scoping process.

The information gathered during these activities was used to develop and clarify the important planning issues. Exploring different ways to address the issues was the basis for developing the range of management concepts and the creation of the different management alternatives. The planning issues are summarized as follows:

### ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

#### **Visitor Access: Transportation and Trails**

The current system of access to the park and monument do not fully address the needs of some park visitors or adequately protect park resources. The high reliance on cars and the lack of affordable transit options excludes some visitors, adds to roadway congestion, and increases emissions, resulting in a greater carbon footprint. This also creates problems with informal parking, public safety, visitor experience, and access for the park's neighbors. In some places, the condition of trails and their lack of connectivity to desired destinations do not meet all visitor and resource protection needs. Connections from communities within the region to the park are not adequate. There is a need for improved, safe trail connections among park sites and communities to provide seamless, safe, direct access alternatives. Visitor information and directional signs are inadequate; this leads to visitor frustration and the underutilization of park resources. The general management plan will address visitor access to and within the park in order to improve visitor experiences, improve connections among park sites and the larger community, and protect resources

#### **Recreation Opportunities and Conflicts**

Park use has increased in recent years, especially by traditional recreational users such as hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians. New activities such as boardsailing and mountain biking have developed and evolved since the 1980 *General Management Plan* was completed. There is interest in expanding current uses, including bicycling, hang gliding,

dog walking, individual and group camping, group day-use/picnicking, and hiking, and introducing new and different types of recreation. Requests to use the park and monument as venues for special events continue to increase. Conflicts between users—primarily between equestrians, mountain bikers, dog walkers, and hikers—have increased as overall park use has increased. There is concern about resource impacts associated with existing recreation activities, including habitat fragmentation, eroding trails, wildlife disturbance and harassment, litter, vandalism and graffiti, and vegetation trampling. The general management plan will address recreational opportunities by identifying the types of use, desired experiences, and support facilities that are appropriate for different park areas and sites in response to visitor demand and resource sensitivity.

### **Sustainable Natural Resource Preservation and Management**

Golden Gate National Recreation Area is rich in natural resources: it comprises 19 types of ecosystems in numerous distinct watersheds and is home to rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species. The park is incorporated into the UNESCO Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve, designated by UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program—a program that provides a global network of sites representing the world's major ecosystem types. Historically, the lands within the park have been used for ranching, dairy farming, and military activities; this use has resulted in the modification of many of the area's natural ecosystems. Fire suppression and other management activities have also influenced natural ecosystems. Invasive plants from adjacent urban communities have taken root within the park.

The general management plan will address how park staff can preserve fundamental natural resources, as the fragility of those resources becomes better understood at the same time that visitation is increasing. The plan will provide direction for preserving and managing fundamental natural resources of the park in a sustainable manner and will provide direction for encouraging ongoing public stewardship.

Ocean resources, including natural marine resources and submerged cultural resources, are at risk due to a variety of threats. Global climate change has begun to cause sea level rise, change storm patterns, and affect ocean acidification. Natural sediment transport, which affects shoreline and beach dynamics, is affected by activities outside of park boundaries, including sand mining, dredging, dredge disposal, shoreline stabilization structures, and altered flow regimes. Overflights, boating, and other uses of marine habitats cause disturbance to marine species. Invasive exotic species inhabit the park's ocean and estuarine waters, displacing native species. Recreational and commercial fisheries may impact nearshore fish populations and ecosystem dynamics. Water quality is threatened by pollution from runoff, landslides, shoreline development, sewage outfalls, vessel traffic, oil spills, and contaminants exposed from dredging. Potential wave and tidal energy developments may alter habitat and disrupt physical processes. Numerous aquatic environments are in need of restoration. Currently the park has limited enforcement capacity for marine and estuarine resource protection.

- Alcatraz Island is a unique part of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Accounts of early explorers describe the island as having little plant life and being covered with bird guano. Construction of fortifications during the Civil War and later the federal penitentiary changed the landscape significantly, sharpening the incline of the shoreline cliffs and flattening the slopes. Most of the existing plants on Alcatraz

Island are a result of prison gardens or other means of importation, including soils brought from Angel Island during fort construction. Since the closure of the prison, many bird species have made the island home. Waterbirds and terrestrial landbirds (songbirds) have taken advantage of planted and unmanaged vegetation on the island. The seabirds and waterbirds are colonial nesting species that are highly susceptible to disturbance. Coupled with limited preservation of historic landscape features, the extent of sea bird habitat has grown sharply since 1972. The result is a tension between habitat protection and visitor access to many of the island's historic points.

Muir Woods National Monument preserves one of the last remaining ancient redwood forests in the Bay Area. From its inception, Muir Woods National Monument was designed to protect the “primeval character” of the redwood forests, and today, ecological integrity is a major driving force behind the management of the monument. Surrounding Muir Woods National Monument are mostly protected lands, including other units of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and lands managed by California State Parks (Mount Tamalpais State Park) and the Marin Municipal Water District.

Muir Woods National Monument is located entirely within the watershed of Redwood Creek, which originates on Mount Tamalpais (over 2,400 feet in elevation), flows through the heart of the national monument, bisects Frank Valley, and discharges into the Pacific Ocean at Muir Beach, approximately 3 miles below Muir Woods National Monument. The Redwood Creek watershed—extending from Mount Tamalpais to Muir Beach—is a delicate ecosystem that includes the northern spotted owl, coho salmon, and steelhead trout, and demands utmost care and vigilance. The Civilian Conservation Corp implemented projects to harden the banks of the creek in order to direct the flow of water away from Redwood groves. The stream stabilization on Redwood Creek has impacted the natural functions of the creek.

### **Sustainable Cultural Resource Preservation and Management**

The park has a large collection of historic structures and archeological sites within a mosaic of cultural and natural landscapes. The majority of these cultural resources are nationally significant; however, their condition varies. The identification of appropriate preservation treatments, including sustainable adaptive uses of these resources, poses a substantial challenge. Cultural resources and archeological sites are impacted in a variety of ways such as through weathering, increases in visitor use, erosion, vandalism, and deferred maintenance. There is a continued need for developing baseline documentation of historic structures, cultural landscapes, and archeological inventories throughout the park. The park staff continues to work to balance the preservation needs of the park's natural and cultural resources. Still, there is a need to identify priorities when such balance is not very clear. The general management plan will address how to preserve fundamental cultural resources where visitation is increasing with the understanding of the fragility and significance of those resources. The general management plan will provide direction for preserving and managing fundamental cultural resources of the park in a sustainable manner and will provide direction for encouraging ongoing public stewardship.

Golden Gate National Recreation Area houses its museum collections in 15 separate facilities throughout the park that function as visitor centers, interpretive exhibits, or dedicated storage areas. Of the four largest storage repositories, three are located in

buildings owned by the Presidio Trust with no lease agreements in place. One of these structures, which is being removed in 2010 to make way for the Doyle Drive Project, houses the park's archeology lab. The park museum collections are in a vulnerable position due to temporary space and deteriorating structural conditions. The current conditions for museum collections in the park do not meet NPS standards for the long-term preservation, protection, and use of museum collections. Staffing for the museum collections has not been stable, thus precluding reliable access for researchers, the public, and park staff. Although planning has been underway, a suitable location for the park's museum collections has yet to be finally determined.

Alcatraz Island is a designated national historic landmark because of its national significance in the areas of military history and social history (penology: the study of incarceration). Although Alcatraz Island is a highly visible and popular site in San Francisco Bay, many of its buildings, archeological features, and landscape features are deteriorating, and sections of its shoreline are eroding. The park lacks the funding and personnel to protect and preserve all of the island's historic resources. In addition, some conflict has arisen over management strategies for protecting the island's cultural and natural resources (e.g., protecting important bird nesting habitat), as preservation of nesting habitat can inhibit historic preservation. The general management plan will provide direction for preserving and managing historic structures, archeological sites, cultural landscapes, and museum collections.

### **Climate Change**

Climate change may have begun to affect both park resources and visitors. The effects are predicted to include changes in temperature, precipitation, evaporation rate, ocean and atmospheric chemistry, local weather patterns and increases in storm intensities and sea levels. These effects will likely have direct implications for resource management and park operations and influence the way visitors experience the park. Sustaining and restoring park resources will require the National Park Service to address many challenges, including fiscal and ecological threats and threats to the integrity of cultural and natural resources. Proactive planning and management actions will allow the park to avoid, mitigate, adapt to, and interpret these effects.

The general management plan will provide guidance on how to assess, respond to, and interpret the impacts of global climate change on park resources, and will identify objectives for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

### **Land Acquisition**

The 1978 National Parks and Recreation Act (16 USC 1a-7) requires general management plans to address potential modifications to the park boundaries. Current or potential changes in adjacent land uses could pose threats to the fundamental resources of the park and could limit the park's ability to protect the resources that support the park purpose and significance.

The diversity of park lands presents challenges for land and boundary management. The park needs to strengthen its strategic approach to land acquisition and park boundary changes and management in coordination with agencies and owners of property within the park boundary. A reassessment of guidelines and priorities is needed.

Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument are portions of a larger area of protected open space in the Bay Area. The natural and cultural resources of the park would face a greater threat if not for the many other open space areas that contribute to the integrity of coastal ecosystems, scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, and the preservation of historic resources. The general management plan will address future land protection and boundary changes that support both the preservation of the park's fundamental resources and regional conservation priorities.

### **Reaching New Audiences**

Visitation at many park sites does not reflect changing regional or state demographics. Some groups may not be aware of the park, feel a direct connection to it, or view the park as a recreational opportunity or a resource to be protected. Changing technology can also influence the park's relevancy to future generations. Reaching these audiences is essential to effective park management and to achieving civic engagement and community-based stewardship goals. The general management plan will include strategies to help engage new audiences.

### **Operational Facilities**

Park resources, visitor safety, and visitor experience have suffered because of the lack of adequate operational facilities in appropriate locations. Golden Gate National Recreation Area has expanded in size in recent years, especially to the south in San Mateo County; the current distribution of facilities is no longer effective or efficient for day-to-day operations. Park maintenance and public safety functions are scattered throughout the park and are often located at sites and facilities that were not intended for such uses. Often, these functions operate out of makeshift facilities because they have been displaced by other park uses or outside forces, or have outgrown previous spaces. These operations have been forced to adapt to conditions that do not adequately meet their space, size, function, mobility, and security requirements. The general management plan will identify a strategy and actions for locating operational facilities.

### **Scenic Beauty and Natural Character**

The park's scenic beauty and natural character provide opportunities for visitors to experience dramatic settings. The park's varied landscapes are the stage for multisensory experiences that are a hallmark of the Bay Area. Preserving these important scenic resources and making them available to the public are primary reasons the park was established. The National Park Service needs to protect these resources from degradation that can result from modern intrusions, including new development on the surrounding lands and waters. The general management plan will provide guidance in the preservation and enhancement of scenic resources.

## **Regional Cooperation**

Visitor experience and resource protection in the park are affected by a variety of outside influences. Watersheds, viewsheds, soundscapes, ecosystems, and trail and transportation systems all extend beyond park boundaries; their management and preservation require cooperation with other adjacent public land managers, local jurisdictions, and private landowners. The park is located in an urban/suburban setting, which places demands on park lands and resources (particularly by local public utilities). The park staff cannot successfully manage the natural and cultural resources and visitor experiences by looking only within the park boundary. The general management plan will provide guidance on improving communication, coordination, and participation with public and private stakeholders with a goal of protecting ecosystems, watersheds, viewsheds, and visitor opportunities that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

## **National Park Service Identity**

For a variety of reasons, the park does not have an easily recognized identity as part of the national park system. These include the large number of points of entry with minimal or no identifying entry features; the lack of NPS staff presence in many locations; the close juxtaposition of city, county, and state lands with NPS lands; and the lack of clearly marked park boundaries. The general management plan will provide guidance on improving and promoting the recognition of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument as national park system units and as areas where many visitors are first introduced to the concept and values of the national park system.

## **Partnerships**

Partners are fundamental to long-term sustainability of the park. They help the National Park Service manage natural and cultural resources, deliver public programs, reach new audiences, and remain relevant and inclusive. They also help the park staff innovate and build community support. The National Park Service cannot fully accomplish parts of its mission without partners. Despite the many commonalities and objectives shared by the park staff and park partners, the current set of partners creates a diversity of goals and interests that may not be compatible with park goals. Partners' needs cannot always be accommodated in the park. The general management plan will provide guidance on partnership development and management that enables NPS managers to make effective decisions and foster flexible, productive relationships that strengthen the purpose and mission of the park.

## **American Indian Values**

Since the late 1990s, the park staff has worked with American Indian groups, including the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (the federally recognized tribe comprised of park-associated Coast Miwoks and Southern Pomo), the many Ohlone tribes seeking federal recognition, and Ohlone individuals who partake in the stewardship of Ohlone heritage. Park lands in Marin County are the aboriginal homelands of Coast Miwoks. Park lands in San Francisco and San Mateo counties are the aboriginal homelands of Ohlones. The park staff desires to build on the relationship and civic engagement with American Indians in three broad activity areas: cultural resource management,

interpretation and education, and revitalization of community and tradition. The general management plan will provide guidance for integrating American Indian values with the management of resources and visitor experiences.

## **ISSUES THAT WILL NOT BE ADDRESSED**

### **Dog Management**

This general management plan does not make decisions about dog walking in the park. The National Park Service is conducting a separate planning process to develop a dog management plan that will decide how best to manage dog walking. The dog management plan will identify a range of alternatives, evaluate them, solicit public review, and make decisions. The planning team for the general management plan continues to coordinate with the dog management planning team to ensure consistency between the plans. The National Park Service could make minor changes to the preferred alternative in the general management plan to make the plan consistent with the final dog management plan.

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## RELATIONSHIP OF THIS PLAN TO OTHER PLANS

Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument are located in the midst of a variety of public and private open spaces. These lands and waters combine to form a large and comprehensive natural open space corridor. Within Golden Gate National Recreation Area, there are sites that are being managed with guidance from recently completed land use or site management plans.

The complex physical and political landscape of the San Francisco Bay Area has produced an environment where a multitude of planning takes place regarding transportation, conservation, recreation, growth and development, and coastal and ocean resources. Most of these public and private land and marine areas are covered by approved plans prepared by a host of federal, state, regional, and local agencies. Management of these lands and waters could influence or be influenced by actions presented in this general management plan / environmental impact statement. The following narrative briefly describes the various planning efforts and projects at the federal, park, state, and county levels, and how they may be influenced by the general management plan.

### **NPS LAND USE PLANS FOR GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA SITES NOT INCLUDED IN THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Many of the park sites within Golden Gate National Recreation Area have recent management plans and environmental documents that provide updated guidance in how the lands will be managed. The following NPS management plans and decisions were reviewed in the preparation of the general management plan to ensure a coordinated management of park lands. For a complete understanding of how all lands and marine areas will be managed at Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the managers will be guided by this new general management plan in addition to the plans that cover park sites outside of this planning process. Each of these plans followed a prescribed planning process that involved public participation in their development. Following are descriptions of the management plans that together with this plan provide guidance for managing the park.

### **Point Reyes National Seashore / Golden Gate National Recreation Area Northern District Draft General Management Plan (draft)**

The current guiding document for Point Reyes National Seashore and Golden Gate National Recreation Area is the 1980 *Golden Gate National Recreation Area / Point Reyes National Seashore General Management Plan* and its subsequent amendments. Since the 1980 plan was approved, Point Reyes National Seashore has managed the lands of the Northern District of Golden Gate National Recreation Area from the Bolinas/Fairfax road northward. The 1980 general management plan is being updated through the GMP/EIS planning process for Point Reyes National Seashore and the Northern District of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The staff at Golden Gate

National Recreation Area participated in the planning process for Golden Gate National Recreation Area Northern District and worked to ensure consistency between the plans.

### **Fort Baker Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (2000)**

In 1995, the remaining military land at Fort Baker was determined to be excess to the needs of the military by the Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure Committee. As a requirement of that determination, the land was transferred to the National Park Service, consistent with Public Law 92-589. The Fort Baker site includes a historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places containing 45 contributing features (including post-Civil-War-era coastal fortifications), a marina and waterfront area at Horseshoe Cove, and important open space and scenic and natural areas including habitat for the federally listed endangered mission blue butterfly. The purpose of the 2000 EIS was to identify the following:

- the program and types of uses that would be accommodated in historic buildings and generate adequate revenue for building rehabilitation and preservation
- improvements to facilitate public uses, including new construction and removal of buildings, landscape treatments, trails, parking, circulation, and locations and patterns of use
- waterfront improvements
- opportunities for habitat restoration
- an approach to the protection, rehabilitation, and maintenance of the historic and natural resources

The highlights of the plan included development of a conference and retreat center, improvements to the Bay Area Discovery museum, and retention of the Coast Guard's Golden Gate Station. The plan provided guidance for the restoration of the historic parade ground, use of the historic boat shop as a public center; improvements to the marina; restoration of the beach; protection of mission blue butterfly habitat; and preservation of fortifications, batteries, and historic landscapes. Implementation of this plan contributes to the diversity of recreational opportunities provided at Golden Gate National Recreation Area and preserves military structures and landscapes that reflect the military history of the site. Actions in the GMP alternatives are consistent with the *Fort Baker Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement*.

### **Fort Mason Center Long-term Lease Environmental Assessment (2004)**

Fort Mason is part of the San Francisco Port of Embarkation National Historic Landmark District, historically serving as a major point of embarkation for American troops. In 1972, the U.S. Army transferred responsibility for its maintenance, restoration, and use of the long-time military base to the National Park Service as part of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. In 1975, a nonprofit group expressed an interest in moving to the lower part of Fort Mason, and the Fort Mason Foundation, a private nonprofit organization, was created by San Francisco civic and business leaders to negotiate with the National Park

Service on behalf of the nonprofit community. In 2004, following an environmental assessment and public review process, the National Park Service entered into a long-term lease with the Fort Mason Center to continue its public programming and management of Lower Fort Mason, and to invest in the capital improvements needed for historic building preservation. The long-term lease accommodates continued use of Building E by San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park. The alternatives in this general management plan are consistent with this environmental assessment and long-term lease.

### **Presidio General Management Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement (1994)**

The transition of the Presidio of San Francisco from military post to the national park system began in 1972 when, in the legislation creating Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Congress included a provision that the Presidio would become part of the national recreation area if the military ever declared the base excess to its needs. After the Presidio was designated for closure in 1989 by the Base Realignment and Closure Act, the U.S. Army transferred jurisdiction of the Presidio to the National Park Service in 1994. As part of the transition, in July 1994, the National Park Service completed and issued a final general management plan amendment for the Presidio laying out a vision for its future use and management.

Once the general management plan amendment was created, difficult issues remained regarding how to fund implementation of the plan. The National Park Service recognized that implementing the amendment would require innovative approaches and unique authorities to manage those aspects of the amendment. The National Park Service also recognized that the costs associated with this unit were high and uncharacteristic for the National Park Service. In 1996, Congress established the Presidio Trust (Trust) pursuant to the Presidio Trust Act for the purpose of preserving, enhancing, and maintaining the Presidio as a park, using the revenues from its leasable assets to fund that effort. In response to competing public policy goals, Congress gave the Trust the unique responsibility to reduce and eventually eliminate the costs of the Presidio to the federal government while retaining the Presidio within Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

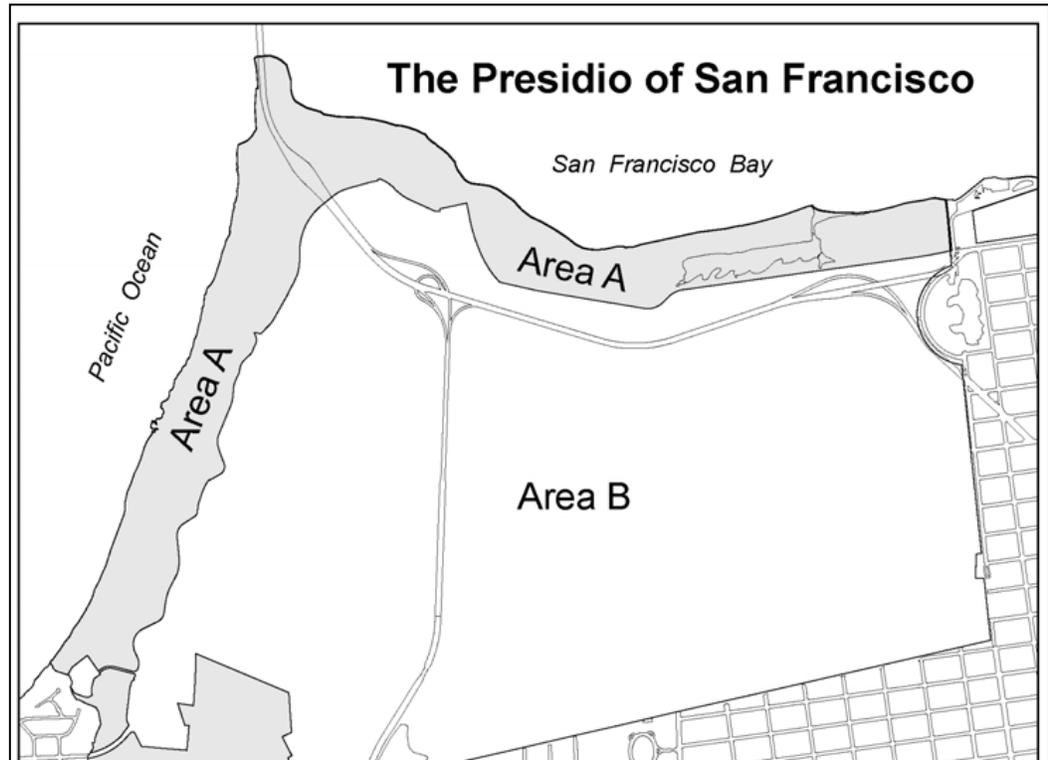
The Trust assumed jurisdiction over 80% of the Presidio of San Francisco (referred to as Area B) on July 1, 1998 and the National Park Service retains jurisdiction over the coastal areas and Lobos Creek and dunes (referred to as Area A). The general management plan amendment remains the foundation plan that guides the Trust's planning and decision making. In 2000, the Trust decided to develop a long-term management plan that would set the parameters within which the Trust would balance its preservation and financial responsibilities.

The general management plan amendment guidance for Area A, managed by the National Park Service, provides for natural resource restoration, education, and outdoor recreation along the coastal areas of San Francisco Bay and the Pacific Ocean. Major sites within Area A include Crissy Field, Fort Point National Historic Site, Baker Beach, and Lobos Creek and dunes.

For Area A, the actions proposed in this general management plan are consistent with the amendment that covers management of the lands within the Presidio of San Francisco.

The waters of the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay that are adjacent to the Presidio have been zoned in the new general management plan.

**Figure 2: Areas A and B of the Presidio of San Francisco**



**Sutro Historic District Comprehensive Design and Environmental Assessment (1993)**

The *Sutro Historic District Comprehensive Design and Environmental Assessment* provides management guidance for the landscape rehabilitation of the Adolph Sutro Historic District. The plan retains the historic character while making changes to the property for new uses and interpretation for park visitors. The National Park Service continues to manage the Sutro Historic District structures and landscape, including the Cliff House, Sutro Baths, and the Sutro Heights Park. The landscape adjacent to the historic district includes a visitor center, trails, and parking, and the extended area is managed for natural and scenic values. The actions proposed in this general management plan recognize that the natural attributes and biotic systems of the larger surrounding park landscape contribute to the historical significance of the historic district. The alternatives are consistent with the environmental assessment.

## **CURRENT PLANS FOR OTHER PARK AREAS NOT MANAGED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

### **Presidio Trust Management Plan: Land Use Policies for Area B of the Presidio of San Francisco (2002)**

The *Presidio Trust Management Plan* is an update of the 1994 *General Management Plan Amendment* for the portion of the Presidio transferred to the Trust's jurisdiction in 1998. The Trust Act directs the Trust to manage Area B in accordance with the park purposes identified in the enabling legislation for Golden Gate National Recreation Area and the "general objectives" of the amendment. The latter were defined in Trust Board Resolution 99-11 ("General Objectives"). The *Presidio Trust Management Plan* provides an updated land use policy framework for Area B of the Presidio wholly consistent with the amendment's general objectives, and which retains and builds on the amendment's policies and principles. Since the time the amendment was adopted and the Presidio Trust Act was enacted, key land use and financial conditions have changed. *The Presidio Trust Management Plan* took into account the new Trust Act requirements, conditions that had changed since the amendment was adopted, new policies and management approaches, and provide a level of flexibility not contemplated in the amendment. The *Presidio Trust Management Plan* is the plan that the Trust looks to in making management and implementation decisions in Area B that are consistent with the purposes of Golden Gate National Recreation Area enabling legislation and the general objectives of the amendment. The amendment remains unaltered as the plan for NPS management of Area A of the Presidio.

The actions proposed in this general management plan are consistent with the *Presidio Trust Management Plan*.

## **OTHER NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PLANS**

In addition to the overall vision and management plans previously described, the National Park Service develops detailed project and program implementation plans in order to implement the goals and objectives of those broader plans. The implementation plans cover topics such as natural and cultural resource restoration and preservation, visitor use, transportation, and park operations. An overall description of each plan or program in the following list, along with its relationship to this general management plan, is provided in Appendix B.

### **NPS Trails and Transportation Plans and Programs**

- Marin Headlands and Fort Baker Transportation Infrastructure and Management Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement
- Trails Forever Program, in partnership with the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

### **NPS Restoration Plans**

- Alcatraz Island Historic Preservation and Safety Construction Program Environmental Impact Statement
- Easkoot Creek Restoration at Stinson Beach Environmental Assessment
- Lower Redwood Creek Floodplain and Salmonid Habitat Restoration, Banducci Site – Environmental Assessment
- Lower Redwood Creek Interim Flood Reduction Measures and Floodplain / Channel Restoration Environmental Assessment
- Mori Point Restoration and Trail Plan – Environmental Assessment
- Ocean Park Stewardship Action Plan, National Park Service
- Pacific Ocean Park Strategic Plan, National Park Service
- Wetland and Creek Restoration at Big Lagoon, Muir Beach Final Environmental Impact Statement

### **NPS Program Implementation Plans**

- Alcatraz Development Concept Plan and Environmental Assessment
- Bay Area Museum Resource Center Plan
- Climate Change Action Plan
- Comprehensive Interpretive Plan for the Golden Gate National Parks
- Fire Management Plan / Final Environmental Impact Statement for Golden Gate National Recreation Area
- Golden Gate National Recreation Area – Park Asset Management Plan

### **NPS Park Partner Plans**

- Headlands Center for the Arts Master Plan
- Headlands Institute Campus Improvement and Expansion Plan
- Marine Mammal Center Site and Facilities Improvements Project Environmental Assessment
- Slide Ranch Master Plan and Environmental Assessment

### **NPS Plans in the Process of Being Developed**

- Dog Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement for Golden Gate National Recreation Area
- Golden Gate National Recreation Area – Long-Range Transportation Plan
- Marin Equestrian Stables Plan and Environmental Assessment

- Alcatraz Embarkation and Education Center Study
- Visitor Facility at Lands End

### **Other NPS General Management Plans**

- San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park General Management Plan—Preparation of a new general management plan for the historical park is anticipated to begin shortly and will require close coordination with the staff at Golden Gate National Recreation Area.
- Point Reyes National Seashore General Management Plan—Preparation of a new general management plan is underway. This plan addresses lands that are part of Golden Gate National Recreation Area that are administered by Point Reyes National Seashore.

### **OTHER FEDERAL PLANS**

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration —Joint Management Plan for Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones, and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries

### **STATE AND REGIONAL PLANS**

- Association of San Francisco Bay Area Governments: Bay Trail Plan
- California Department of Parks and Recreation – Angel Island State Park Resource Management Plan / General Development Plan / Environmental Impact Report
- California Department of Parks and Recreation – California Outdoor Recreation Plan
- California Department of Parks and Recreation – Gray Whale Cove State Beach General Plan Amendment
- California Department of Parks and Recreation – Pacifica State Beach General Plan
- California Department of Parks and Recreation – Mount Tamalpais State Park General Plan
- Caltrans District 4 Devil's Slide Project
- Coastal Conservancy – Completing the California Coastal Trail
- Golden Lands, Golden Opportunity: Preserving Vital Bay Area Lands for all Californians (Greenbelt Alliance, Bay Area Open Space Council, Association of Bay Area Governments)
- San Francisco Bay Plan
- San Francisco Bay Area Seaport Plan

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- San Francisco Bay Area Water Transit Authority Final Program Environmental Impact Report: Expansion of Ferry Transit Service in the San Francisco Bay Area
- South Access to the Golden Gate Bridge – Doyle Drive Final Environmental Impact Statement / Report
- Statewide Historic Preservation Plan for California, 2006-2010

## COUNTY AND LOCAL PLANS

- Central Marin Ferry Connection Project
- Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan
- Huddart and Wunderlich Parks Master Plan
- Marin County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
- Marin County Local Coastal Program Unit 1
- Marin Countywide Plan as amended
- Midcoast Action Plan for Parks and Recreation: Planning Team Report
- City of Pacifica Pedro Point Headlands Coastal Trail Connection
- Peninsula Watershed Management Plan – San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
- PG&E Jefferson-Martin 230kV Transmission Line Proposed Settlement and Environmental Assessment
- Regional Bicycle Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area
- San Francisco General Plan
- San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle Route Plan
- San Mateo County Trails Plan
- San Mateo Countywide Transportation 2010 Plan
- San Pedro County Park
- Sausalito General Plan
- Extension of San Francisco Municipal Railway's Historic Streetcar Environmental Impact Statement

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## RELATED LAWS AND NATIONAL PARK SERVICE POLICIES

Many park management directives are specified in laws and policies guiding the National Park Service and are not subject to alternative approaches. For example, there are laws and policies about managing environmental quality (such as the Clean Air Act, the Endangered Species Act, Executive Order 13112: “Invasive Species,” and Executive Order 11990: “Protection of Wetlands”); laws governing the preservation of cultural resources (such as the National Historic Preservation Act and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act); and laws about providing public services (such as the Americans with Disabilities Act). In other words, a general management plan is not needed to decide that it is appropriate to protect endangered species, control exotic species, protect historic and archeological sites, conserve artifacts, or provide for access for disabled persons. Laws and policies have already addressed those and many other issues. Although attaining some conditions set forth in these laws and policies may have been temporarily deferred in the park because of funding or staffing limitations, the National Park Service will continue to strive to implement these requirements with or without a new general management plan. However, the general management plan provides an opportunity to develop more detailed interpretations needed in order to apply them in specific situations, and this is best decided during the development of the general management plan or during other planning processes.

There are other laws and executive orders that 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 (also called the Redwoods National Park Expansion Act), relating to the management of the national park system; and the National Parks Omnibus Management Act (1998).

The National Park Service Organic Act (16 *United States Code*, Section 1) provides the fundamental 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 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 *United States Code* [USC] Section 1a-1 et seq.) affirms that while all national park system units remain “distinct in character,” they are “united through their interrelated purposes and resources into one national park system as cumulative expressions of a single national heritage.” The act makes it clear that the National Park Service 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[e] . . . 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. These are identified and explained in a guidance manual entitled *NPS Management*

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*Policies* 2006. The “action” alternatives considered in this document (alternatives 1, 2, and 3), as well as the no-action alternative (current management), incorporate and comply with the provisions of these mandates and policies. Appendix C details key NPS policies and their desired conditions and strategies.