



Gateway National Recreation Area



Meet us at the beach!

Stop by to meet our planning team and share your ideas and comments.

Friday, August 3

11:00 am to 3:00 pm
and

Wednesday, August 8

3:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Lot D/Sea Gull's Nest, Hartshorne Drive
Sandy Hook, NJ

Saturday, August 4 & Friday, August 10

11:00 am to 3:00 pm

Riis Park, Rockaway Beach Boulevard
Queens, NY

Sunday, August 5 & Saturday, August 11

11:00 am to 3:00 pm

Great Kills Park (off Hylan Boulevard)
Staten Island, NY

Visit the park's website at www.nps.gov/gate for additional information about the events with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, September Open Houses and weather alerts.



New Vision for a Great Urban Park

Gateway National Recreation Area (Gateway) was established with the dream of bringing a National Park Service experience to the New York metropolitan area. The world has changed since Gateway was established in 1972. Working together we need to figure out what it means to be a great urban park in the 21st century.

Three years ago, Gateway began its journey to develop a General Management Plan (GMP). Please take a few minutes to look at the alternatives for the future of Gateway. One alternative is the “no-action” alternative. This is a required alternative and it means that we will be doing things pretty much as we are now. Alternative B – Discovering Gateway takes actions that will strengthen the connection between the park and local communities making the park easier to access by bike, on foot, or in a car and promotes the opportunities to participate in healthy activities. Alternative C – Experiencing Preserved Places recognizes that the natural and cultural resources in Gateway are a valuable asset to the people who use the park. This alternative allows plenty of opportunity for visitors to immerse themselves in the history and nature that makes Gateway such a special place. Alternative D – Connecting Coastlines acknowledges that the natural, cultural and recreational opportunities at Gateway owe a lot to the park's proximity to water – ocean, bays and ponds. This alternative focuses on water-based resources, activities and modes of transportation.

Regardless of which alternative we choose, we know that there are some things we have to do.

One thing we do know is that we need to keep evolving to stay relevant to the communities near the park and to serve as a primary introduction to the National Park Service for the millions of residents and visitors who are in the area. And while we work on the GMP we are working on programs that will strengthen those connections such as new camping opportunities at Floyd Bennett Field, Fort Wadsworth and Sandy Hook;

and programs such as Tu Parque, Tu Salud. Another thing we know is that we can't do it on our own. We need a wide variety of partners including non-profit groups, businesses and other government agencies. Partnerships are so important to us that we've been exploring a new partnership with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYCDPR) to create a park around Jamaica Bay that would include City Park and National Park lands. The goal of this partnership would be to make a seamless park that benefits people and wildlife while making the best use of limited tax dollars.

And last, but certainly not least, we need to hear from you! You are a key part of the process. What do you think Gateway needs to be a great urban park? In the fall of 2010, we asked for your thoughts on three concepts for the park. Your ideas and concerns helped us shape the management alternatives that are more fully described in the newsletter. A summary of all the comments we received can be found in the *We Listened and Learned from You* section of this newsletter on pages 6 and 7. We are asking for your help and input again. We need your help to make the changes in Gateway that you would like to see without changing the things you value most. Please look at the details in the newsletter. Imagine visiting the park and how it would be different in the different alternatives. Figure out how your favorite parts of the park would change. How does the meaning and location of management zones effect those areas? Then, tell us what you think.

As Gateway celebrates its 40th anniversary we want to build on those first 40 years by taking a park that has been good for you by making it even greater for your grandchildren.

Linda Canzanelli
Superintendent
Gateway National Recreation Area



America's Great Outdoors & New Partnership with NYC

A GMP lays out a vision for the park and guides decision making to get there over the next 20 years. In this newsletter, you'll read about the progress of the GMP over the last 18 months.

Highlighted in this newsletter are three **Management Alternatives**. These options, or alternatives, lay out different directions for the park. These alternatives define some ideas for preservation of the park's natural areas and historic sites. They offer different kinds of recreation and education experiences, and explore ways we can collaborate with others to make this vision a reality. We are interested in hearing your thoughts on these alternatives and how they could be further expanded. Check out the many ways to make your voice heard on page 4.

New Partners, New Vision

When Gateway was created in the 1970's, the majority of the park land to establish this new unit of the national park system was donated from city and state parks. In New York City (NYC), road systems like the Belt Parkway created a physical boundary between neighborhoods, city parks and incredible Gateway resources such as Jamaica Bay. Gateway and NYC have been individually managing thousands of acres of open space, wetlands, shoreline, water and community recreation areas, most of these spaces adjacent to each other. As a result, they have been restoring habitat, protecting wildlife corridors and providing recreation services independent of each other, without a unified vision.

In 2010, President Obama launched the America's Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative and challenged federal agencies to be a great partner with communities to reconnect all Americans to our great outdoors. With more than 60% of the

American population living in urban areas, urban parks are critical to this effort. As part of this initiative, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar challenged the National Parks of New York Harbor and Gateway to become a model for AGO's goal of establishing "a new generation of Great Urban Parks and community green spaces." Secretary Salazar recognized that with its unsurpassed wealth of national, state and



Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar (center).

local parks, national historic landmarks, and a working, historical waterfront, New York Harbor offers an opportunity for federal, state and local partners to work together toward a shared vision for open spaces, historic preservation, environmental restoration and outdoor recreation.

In order to achieve these goals in the New York City metropolitan area, greater collaborative efforts among federal agencies, the City of New York, other municipalities, the states of New York and New Jersey and local partners would be needed. In June 2011, Secretary Salazar and Mayor Michael Bloomberg brought together a group of over 70 public agency and private organization leaders to explore opportunities for greater collaboration and potential strategies to build a stronger urban park experience. From this summit, a bold new idea emerged to begin this new collaboration in Jamaica Bay.

The Great Jamaica Bay Park

Over the last year, Gateway and NYC staff members have been exploring ways to break down both the physical and administrative boundaries that separate the parklands around Jamaica Bay. As part of this collaborative effort, a new vision will include ways to:

- create a seamless and interconnected network of recreation spaces, including integrated land and water trail systems and community activity areas
- coordinate habitat restoration, research and resource management in the Bay
- ensure public transportation and access to and within Jamaica Bay strongly supports existing and new experiential activities, including public transit, pedestrian, bicycle, and ferry access
- provide unified signage, maps and marketing wherever possible
- integrate business practices for maintenance and management
- develop new revenue generation sources and philanthropic support to enable the redevelopment and support the ongoing operations of the parks without regard to underlying ownership

A variety of different ways to achieve this new vision for Jamaica Bay have been integrated into the three management alternatives detailed in this newsletter.





GMP Overview

General management planning offers an open, structured decision making process that encourages and considers ideas and comments from many different people and groups. One of the goals for this GMP is to create, build and nurture long-lasting relationships among those organizations, agencies and individuals interested in Gateway and its future.

Your ideas, expectations and concerns about the future of the park are important to us and carefully considered in decision making. In order to create the best possible future for Gateway, these ideas and comments are matched with scholarly and scientific information and analysis. The GMP must also comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This means that impacts to the social, cultural and natural environments in the park and surrounding areas will be taken into consideration.

All of the ideas, options and potential impacts for the future of the park are presented in a written document that will be available for you to read and make comments on. After all comments are received and considered, together, we will choose the best future for the park. A summary of the planning process, timeframe and ways for you to participate is provided on page 4.

Planting new trees at Gateway as part of the MillionTreesNYC Program.

Planning Process for the General Management Plan		
Estimated Time Frame	Planning Activity	Ways to Be Involved
Summer 2009	Scoping – identify concerns, expectations, and comments related to the site with the public, government agencies and other stakeholders.	Review newsletter and send us your ideas and concerns. Attend an Open House, learn about the project and voice your ideas and concerns.
Fall 2010 – Summer 2012	Develop and Present Preliminary Alternatives – Outline different possible futures for the park and provide opportunities for review and comment by public, partners, government agencies and other stakeholders.	Review newsletter and send us your ideas and comments. Attend an Open House, comment on concepts and management alternatives.
Spring 2013	Prepare and Distribute a Draft General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement - Review and comment by public, partners, government agencies and other stakeholders.	Attend an Open House and share your comments. Review the Draft <i>GMP/EIS</i> and provide written comments.
Summer 2013	Revise Draft Plan and Prepare a Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement.	Review the Final <i>GMP/EIS</i> .
Fall 2013	Implement the Approved Plan – Prepare and issue a “Record of Decision” and implement plan as funding allows.	Work with Gateway to implement the plan.

Get Involved with the GMP Now

We look forward to hearing from you about the information presented in this newsletter, especially the draft management alternatives. Suggestions and comments will be collected by any of the following ways:

- Drop by at one of the information sessions to learn more about the GMP. Talk with one of the planning team members, review presentation boards and maps and fill out a comment form.
- Go on-line to <http://www.nps.gov/gate> and fill out a comment form from the General Management Planning page.
- Call the park planning office at 718.354.4628 and request a comment form that can be mailed or faxed back.

Stay Connected

The Gateway website, <http://www.nps.gov/gate>, is the best place to stay connected with the GMP and future events. Check out the General Management Planning section for updated and expanded information on GMP activities. Join the electronic mailing list. Sign up on the website to receive **e-blasts**. You can follow Gateway National Recreation Area on Facebook. Gateway is also on Twitter! You can follow us at www.twitter.com/GatewayNPS.

Foundation for Planning

Park Purpose

Gateway National Recreation Area provides a national park experience in the country's largest metropolitan area. The park preserves a mosaic of coastal ecosystems and natural areas interwoven with historic coastal defense and maritime sites around New York's Outer Harbor. Beaches, marshes, waters, scenic views and open space offer resource-based recreational opportunities to a diverse public, recognizing the importance to preserve these special places for future generations.

Park Significance

Statement 1: Gateway contains an assemblage of coastal ecosystems formed by natural features, both physical and biological, that include barrier peninsulas, estuaries, oceans, and maritime uplands. The habitats that comprise these ecosystems, so rare in such highly developed areas, support a rich biota that includes migratory birds, marine finfish and shellfish, plant communities, and rare, threatened, and endangered species. These features provide opportunities to restore, study, enhance, and experience coastal habitats and ecosystem processes.

Statement 2: Forts Hancock, Tilden and Wadsworth comprise one of the largest sets of military installations and distinctive fortifications in the country, dating from pre- Civil War through the 20th century. These installations represent a long period of military presence and served as the defense of New York, America's largest city.

Statement 3: The maritime resources of Gateway include the oldest working lighthouse in the United States and the first federally sponsored lifesaving station in the country. These resources served to protect ocean commerce and enhance the safety of the busiest American seaport.

Statement 4: The vast and diverse park resources at the gateway to the most densely populated region of the United States provide an abundance of outstanding recreational and educational opportunities.

Fundamental Resources

- Beach and dune systems at Bergen Beach, Breezy Point Tip, Great Kills, Jacob Riis Park, Plumb Beach and Sandy Hook
- Natural Areas at Breezy Point Tip, Crooke's Point, Floyd Bennett Field, Great Kills, Hoffman & Swinburne Islands, Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge and Sandy Hook
- Jamaica Bay waters including inlets, submerged lands, and Dead Horse Bay
- Sandy Hook Maritime Forest
- Sandy Hook Lighthouse
- Coastal defense resources including earthworks, associated structures, collections and archeological sites for:
 - Fort Hancock
 - Endicott/Taft Era Batteries
 - Parade Grounds
 - Nike Launch Area and Radar Site
 - Fort Tilden
 - Battery Harris East
 - Battery Harris West
 - Nike Launch Site
 - Fort Wadsworth
 - Battery Weed
 - Endicott/Taft Era Batteries
 - Fort Tompkins
 - Torpedo Building
- Feelings associated with open space in high density area
- Views of New York Outer Harbor
- Connections to national history
- Direct sensory experience with natural elements
- Public access to bay and ocean shorelines
- Darkness and night sky

Fundamental Values

- Recreation experience including:
 - Nature observation
 - Water-based activities such as fishing and swimming
 - Walking, biking, and horseback riding on trails
 - Picnicking
 - Visiting historic sites



Other Important Resources and Values

- Civil and military aviation history resources at Floyd Bennett Field and Miller Field
- Archeological resources



We Listened and Learned From You



In the fall 2010, the Gateway planning team presented three preliminary alternative concepts. Over 9,000 copies of the second GMP newsletter were sent to the park's mailing list and distributed at visitor contact stations or by staff throughout the park. In order to reach as much of the metropolitan audiences as possible, the newsletter was posted on the park's website and translated and printed in Chinese, Russian and Spanish. The newsletter provided a summary of the three alternative concepts, as well as an update on the planning process, the foundation for planning, a summary of your ideas from the 2009 scoping meetings, and the planning challenges.

The planning team hosted eleven open houses in communities surrounding Gateway. The purpose of the open houses was to gather ideas on the preliminary alternative concepts for Gateway. Poster-size maps and text boards were used to present project background information, the foundation for planning, and the alternative concepts. GMP team members were present during the open house workshops to answer questions. The public comment period for the alternative concepts was from November 20, 2010 through March 15, 2011. Hundreds of comments were received in response to the following questions:

- Do you think each concept helps Gateway carry out its purpose?
- Will the park's natural and cultural resources that are important to you be adequately preserved under each concept?
- What types of educational and recreational activities do you think are appropriate under each concept?
- Do the concepts provide ways for people to reach Gateway and move around the different sites?
- How could partnerships support the ideas in each concept?
- Are there other ideas important to you that are missing from the concepts?

What follows is a brief overview of some of the ideas that were shared with us. A complete listing of all comments received is available on our website at: www.nps.gov/gate.

Gateway's Purpose

Many of you indicated in your comments that all three of the alternative concepts would indeed help Gateway carry out its purpose. In general, your comments favored the concepts (or elements of the concepts) fairly equally; there was not a concept that was clearly preferred by a majority.

Ideas and topics that we heard repeatedly included the importance of building stewardship for Gateway's resources, increasing sustainability in park management, and raising public awareness of the park. Many of you suggested that park managers actively pursue the preservation, restoration, and adaptive re-use of historic structures, with many suggesting that partners could assist in this effort. Maintaining public access and ensuring a variety of recreation opportunities were also frequently mentioned. Some people voiced concerns with the current level of maintenance at the park.

Preservation of Natural and Cultural Resources at Gateway

Overall, your comments indicated that each of the concepts offered sound approaches to protecting Gateway's natural and cultural resources. Some comments encouraged the use of sustainable and innovative approaches to resource management and others suggested taking an adaptive management approach to climate change. Recognizing the great number of natural and cultural resources of the park, some suggested prioritizing the protection and rehabilitation of only the most important resources. There were specific ideas and suggestions for priority resources, such as the buildings at Fort Hancock and Fort Tilden, forts, and the marshes and islands of the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. Some suggested that non-priority resources, those in very poor conditions, or inappropriate uses should be removed from the park, such as garbage truck facilities, some historic runways, and dilapidated buildings. Some of you recognized the challenges of resource protection, and identified issues such as water quality degradation, the deterioration of cultural resources over time, and litter.

Several of your comments recognized the important role that community and non-profit groups, schools, and other partners play in rehabilitating and using park buildings. It was pointed out that these



types of partnerships can help to bring life to otherwise unused (and in some cases dilapidated) park structures and many encouraged the continuation of these types of partnership as a way to protect park resources. Finally, there were comments that addressed the importance of building and nurturing the next generation of park stewards to ensure the protection of Gateway's resources into the future.

Educational and Recreational Activities at Gateway

Your comments generally expressed satisfaction with the activities and programs currently available at Gateway and many new ideas were provided. Favorite recreational activities that were frequently mentioned included boating, fishing, kayaking, biking, swimming, hiking, bird watching, canoeing, crabbing, exploring, wind surfing, scuba diving, and historic ship viewing, and sightseeing. Some of you thought that equipment rentals and lessons could help visitors to better access and enjoy park resources. Many showed your support for the continuation of organized sports leagues and for the use of park buildings by community groups.

Your suggestions for educational programs included topics such as the ocean, environmental concerns, water quality, sand movement, preservation and sustainability, history, arts, interpretation, and climate change. It was suggested that programs and activities should target a wide range of ages, from youth to senior citizens, and should be offered throughout the day and year to accommodate different schedules. Some of you suggested that working with local educators and interest groups could help to expand the capacity of Gateway's educational programming. Others made specific suggestions of names and types of community and nonprofit groups, educational institutions, and governmental entities that could be partnered with to enhance educational and recreational opportunities at Gateway.

Getting To and Moving Around Gateway

Overall, your comments indicated that the alternative concepts would provide convenient ways for people to get to Gateway and move around the sites. Many of you expressed support for alternative transportation approaches including more bike and walking paths, waterways, shuttles, buses, and ferries. Many also endorsed the idea of enhanced water connections between the park units and improved access throughout the park. Several comments emphasized that transportation improvements should focus on convenience, affordability, and accessibility for all. A few of you noted that good public transportation connections exist for bringing visitors to park



entrances, but not necessarily into and throughout the park unit. Working with city, county, and state transportation providers and other partners to improve connections was suggested.

Some questions were raised regarding the transportation element of the alternatives. Some questioned whether there would be sufficient demand to support ferries and shuttles, while others indicated concern for the costs associated with an improved transportation network.

Partnerships at Gateway

Most of your comments indicated that partnerships can provide significant benefits, both to the park, as well as the partnering organization. The benefits of partnerships that were mentioned included financial support, enhancement of park resources, additional "people-power", and new ideas and innovation. Many suggested seeking partnerships with groups who can assist the park with rehabilitating historic buildings and then reusing them.

Many expressed support for the existing partners at the park, citing the positive role that they play through improvements to facilities, assistance with providing programming, introducing new park visitors and extending the park's network, cost savings, and stewardship building. Ideas for new partnerships include businesses, educational institutions, concessioners, local and state governments, science, conservation, and wildlife organizations, private foundations, friends groups, and global partners. Some suggested that partnering with the community is an important tool to building additional support and stewardship for the park.

Access is the most important thing, along with preservation of habitat and key structures... people will use it if they can get to it!

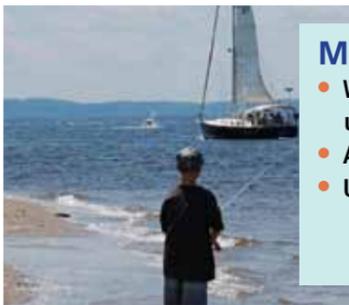
The GMP planning team carefully considered your ideas and comments in the development of the draft management alternatives. Some of these suggestions are reflected in the alternatives sections of this newsletter. Other ideas will be incorporated into the larger draft GMP/EIS as the planning process moves forward.

Management Alternatives

There are many different ways to protect Gateway's natural areas, preserve its historic buildings and provide fun and educational activities. In a GMP, these different options to fulfill the park's purpose are called draft management alternatives. In this newsletter on pages 8-27, you'll find information about the alternatives that describe three visions for Gateway in the future. Each of the alternatives is anchored by a different concept that helps guide both parkwide and unit specific ideas. Your comments on the draft management alternatives will help guide the different visions that will be presented in the draft GMP/EIS. The NPS has not yet designated a preferred alternative. The preferred alternative could be one of the three alternatives in this newsletter or it could be made up of parts of these initial alternatives. Information about how to comment is provided on pages 4 and 28 in this newsletter.

Management Zoning

One of the tools used in park planning is management zoning. Management zones identify how different areas of Gateway could be managed to achieve a variety of resource conditions and visitor experiences. These zones are applied differently to Gateway's land and waters with respect to the types and levels of uses and facilities. The planning team arranged these zones in different configurations consistent with the three alternative concepts to create the maps on the following pages.



Marine

- Waters managed to protect and enhance the ocean and bay environments and provide opportunities for water-based visitor use and recreation.
- Activities are regulated to protect elements of the natural environment, prevent visitor conflicts and enhance public safety.
- Use levels would be expected to range from low to high and would be influenced by adjacent zones and time of year.



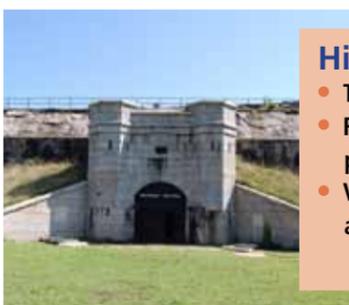
Recreation

- Park areas that accommodate a variety of recreation activities for fun, learning and physical activity.
- These areas offer a broad range of outdoor, educational, and interpretive experiences.
- High use levels would be expected especially during the summer months. Encounters with other people would be common.
 - **Community Activity Subzone** - This subzone supports large group gatherings such as sports leagues, community activities and special events. These places require more intensively managed facilities and landscapes.
 - **Active Beach Subzone** - This subzone offers traditional summer beach activities including swimming and sunbathing.



Natural

- Open, undeveloped areas managed to preserve natural resources while allowing for the enjoyment of the outdoors and nature.
- Visitors would enjoy the quiet, solitude, and sense of connection inspired by the natural world.
- Programs and facilities would facilitate nature study, interpretation and other passive activities.
- Moderate use would be expected at centralized activity areas and points of entry.
 - **Sensitive Resource Subzone** - These natural areas receive the highest level of protection, scientific investigation and monitoring and are sites for current and future restoration efforts. Public access is restricted to minimize impacts.



Historic Core

- These areas include fundamental and historic sites, structures and cultural landscapes linked to Gateway's history.
- Resources in these areas are the focus of interpretation and preservation projects and are managed to ensure the long-term protection of their historic integrity.
- Visitor use would be managed to minimize impacts on the resources while providing opportunities to learn about their associated events and history through tours and interpretive media.



Evolving Landscapes

- Structures, sites and landscapes in these areas are adaptively reused to accommodate contemporary uses.
- These places continue to reflect their historic character while being rehabilitated and utilized by visitors, partners and/or NPS.
- Use levels would be expected to range from low to high and would be dependent on chosen adaptive uses.
 - **Ruins Subzone** - This subzone contains historic structures and landscapes in very poor condition. These structures and landscapes are allowed to decay naturally. Some areas may be improved for interpretation. The majority of these areas would be fenced to limit public access or stabilized for safety.



Developed

- These areas support visitor and administrative functions of the park and its partners.
- Infrastructure and facilities support maintenance, orientation, education, interpretation, lodging and transportation.
- Visitor access would vary throughout this zone with some areas receiving intensive visitor use and others having limited or no public access.

Alternative A

Continuation of Current Management Practices (No-Action)

This “no-action” alternative is required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and serves as the baseline for evaluating and comparing the other proposed alternatives. Although there are current management actions associated with it, this alternative is not considered to be an “action alternative.”

Gateway would continue to manage park resources and visitor use as it does today, with no major change in direction. Decisions would be based on existing conditions and available information, but would continue to lack a comprehensive planning framework that addresses the full range of contemporary and potential future issues. The park’s enabling legislation, the existing General Management Plan (NPS 1979), and other implementation plans would continue to guide management decision-making.

The park would continue to meet day-to-day operations, management, legal, and regulatory requirements based on existing plans and the availability of funds. Improvements to natural and cultural sites and visitor facilities would include only projects that are already approved and fully funded, or compatible with the current direction of park management. NPS would continue to collaborate with local, county, and state officials on an as needed basis to address common regulatory, policy, and management issues. Existing partnerships and cooperative relationships that support ongoing management would continue.

Visitor Use and Experience

Under this alternative, the visitor experience would remain segmented with each of the three units independently serving local residents and visitors at specific locations. Existing interpretive, educational, and management programs providing a range of services to visitors would continue. Visitors would continue to enjoy a variety of traditional beach-oriented recreational activities at current areas. NPS would continue to manage sports leagues and other activities such as gardening in their current locations.



The four visitor centers at Fort Wadsworth, Sandy Hook, Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge and Floyd Bennett Field would continue to provide orientation, information, interpretive programs, and exhibits and serve as both destination and points of departure for day visitors, tours, and school groups. Traditional ranger-led activities and curriculum-based educational programs would continue to be available. Current efforts to make more people aware of the presence of the national recreation area would continue. The park’s informational website, exhibits, brochures, and other publications would continue to be available.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

Natural resource management programs would continue, many in partnership with federal, state, and local agencies, academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations. Existing programs would focus on protecting sensitive species, monitoring conditions, mitigating external threats, controlling non-native species, and restoring habitats impacted by man-made structures or activities.

Historic structures and landscapes would continue to be managed through maintenance and repair where feasible and when funding becomes available. Existing programs providing basic protection to the park’s cultural resources would continue consistent with applicable federal and state laws and NPS policies.

Some coastal defense fortifications continue to have vegetation removed on a limited basis while others will continue to further

deteriorate and be impacted by natural processes. The Sandy Hook Lighthouse continues to be maintained in good condition. Collections and archives continue to be maintained in their current locations. Many vacant buildings continue to deteriorate.

Gateway would continue to provide snack bars, restrooms, lifeguards, limited camping and ferry operations, where those services currently exist. Improvements and expansions to trail systems and camping areas would continue under existing management guidelines. Funded projects for additional planning for trails and expanded camping opportunities would continue.

Gateway visitors would continue to be auto-dependent and people without cars would continue to be reliant on limited direct bus and ferry service. The park’s administrative headquarters, operations and maintenance areas would continue in their present locations.



Planning Considerations Common to All Action Alternatives

Regardless of which alternative is ultimately chosen and implemented, numerous objectives for management will be applicable to the park as a whole. Some of the elements considered common to all action alternatives are presented below:

Multiple Day Experiences

Gateway is a large park with thousands of acres spread out among three units in two states with additional adjacent parklands managed by local and state agencies. All of these places provide a variety of things to see and do that can't be experienced in a single day. The alternatives will propose different types of camping and lodging, varied use levels and a range of supporting facilities that may be appropriate. In the future, Gateway will work with partners to develop and offer a variety of overnight accommodations such as camping, youth and elder hostels, eco-friendly lodges and small inns, where appropriate at each unit. These overnight lodging facilities will be similar to those found in other national parks throughout the country.

Adapting Historic Buildings and Landscapes

Finding viable contemporary uses for hundreds of historic structures and landscapes is a priority preservation strategy for Gateway. Some of the park's most well-known places like Battery Weed, Officers Row, and the Floyd Bennett Field Hangars are elaborate stone and brick structures. Repairing, painting and other maintenance today is a serious challenge given the number of buildings, current condition, and competing funding and staff priorities. For all action alternatives, the park will pursue

public-private partnerships that assist with the reuse of these places for a wide variety of uses including visitor services such as lodging, administrative and partner needs and recreational business opportunities.

Some structures and landscapes are in very poor condition and the costs to repair, stabilize and preserve these resources are extreme. Under all the alternatives, many of these resources would remain as ruins and continue to decay naturally by the forces of nature. Gateway would prioritize documentation of these places and use innovative interpretive media to provide information and virtual access.

Cooperative Stewardship of Jamaica Bay

There is a long and rich history of environmental interest within Jamaica Bay. Despite many years of efforts by a multitude of federal, state, city, and municipal agencies, and philanthropic organizations to improve conditions, water quality is still threatened in Jamaica Bay. The deterioration of the saltmarsh in Jamaica Bay is severe and the rate of replacement cannot keep up with the rate of loss. While a wealth of information exists about Jamaica Bay, new scientific insights are necessary to further clarify the important ecosystem processes of the Bay in order to achieve restoration goals. In addition, specific studies, along with monitoring follow-up, will be necessary to implement and evaluate success of restoration work. Under all alternatives, Gateway will work with partners to support a new cooperative stewardship approach that considers NYC, Gateway and New York state lands and waters holistically. At the center of this new approach is a research-based science institute that may be located at Gateway under some of the alternatives.

Climate Change & Sea Level Rise

Climate change refers to changes occurring in the earth's atmospheric, hydrologic, and oceanic systems, which could alter the landscape, natural and cultural resources,

and facilities of Gateway. Gateway would implement sustainable strategies and establish programs to assess, interpret, and respond to the impacts of climate change and work to:

- reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- explore the use of solar and other types of energy generation for operations
- educate NPS staff, its partners, and the public on the topic
- improve energy efficiency and waste reduction
- undertake research and monitoring to expand understanding of climate change and how systems respond
- proactively plan for and adapt to the effects that may be realized from climate change, including the loss of shoreline, altered ecosystems, cultural resources, loss of recreation sites and park facilities, and disruptions in visitor use.

Information, Orientation and Wayfinding

NPS, in conjunction with others would improve orientation and wayfinding to and throughout Gateway, including signs, maps and other information. Different types of facilities (e.g. kiosks, contact areas) would welcome and orient visitors to Gateway and surrounding partner parklands to improve the sense of arrival. The park would take advantage of technological innovations in interpretive media, social networking and communications in order to connect with broader audiences.

Third Party Recreation Management

The maintenance and operation of sports fields and leagues remains a challenge at Gateway. Several sports share the multi-purpose fields while other fields are going unused. Similar types of activities are offered adjacent to the park by NYCDPR, non-profit leagues and also for-profit facilities. For all the action alternatives, Gateway will explore the use of a non-profit or for-profit partner to maintain the sports fields and manage leagues.

Action Alternatives



Three draft management alternatives are presented on the following pages and provide a broad range of ideas from concept statements to area-specific changes. Together, this information and the associated management zoning maps will guide the different options for Gateway's future.

Alternative B: Discovering Gateway

Concept: Through widespread outreach and improved community connections, Gateway becomes a popular destination for recreation, education and interpretive experiences in the Northern New Jersey/New York area. By offering a multitude of recreational opportunities, NPS and its partners attract a greater diversity of visitors to the park and increase awareness and enjoyment of Gateway's historic resources and the natural environment.

Parkwide Highlights

- Provides the widest range of activities and most recreation opportunities of any of the alternatives.
- Forges new connections with city parklands and communities adjacent and nearby the park.
- Offers more instructional programming and skills development – from kayak lessons to bike rentals to designed nature play spaces for youth.
- Emphasis on more convenient and affordable park access through alternative transportation, greenway connections, and bicycle infrastructure.
- Promotes Gateway as a natural retreat for urban residents and facilitates connections between people and the natural environment.
- Maximizes joint management and operations for visitor services, orientation, programs, and facilities with New York City and other partners.

Alternative C: Experiencing Preserved Places

Concept: Natural systems, historic sites and landscapes receive the highest levels of preservation and restoration in this alternative. Opportunities for independent exploration of Gateway's fundamental resources and values and participation in environmental education and preservation programs provide for an outstanding national park experience.

Parkwide Highlights

- Promotes and highlights preservation projects, resource protection, research and monitoring activities with partners.
- Immerses visitors into environment and highlights preservation efforts as part of interpretation and education activities.
- Protects and enhances natural resources to the greatest degree possible to strengthen ecosystem integrity and resiliency.
- Provides most opportunities for independent exploration and "wild" experiences.
- Focuses new recreational programming on low impact activities that promote hands-on learning and outdoor skills.
- Serves as a learning lab for history and environmental education.
- Improves transit connections and low impact, human-powered access modes such as bikes, trails, and non-motorized boats to make the park more accessible.
- Concentrates facilities and highlights sustainable operations.

Alternative D: Connecting Coastlines

Concept: The broad themes of coastal ecology, coastal defense and coastal recreation link the three park units and their varied resources together. In this alternative, NPS and its partners emphasize water-based recreation, education and interpretation and create a seamless coastal experience centered on beaches, marine habitats and coastal defense resources and stories.

Parkwide Highlights

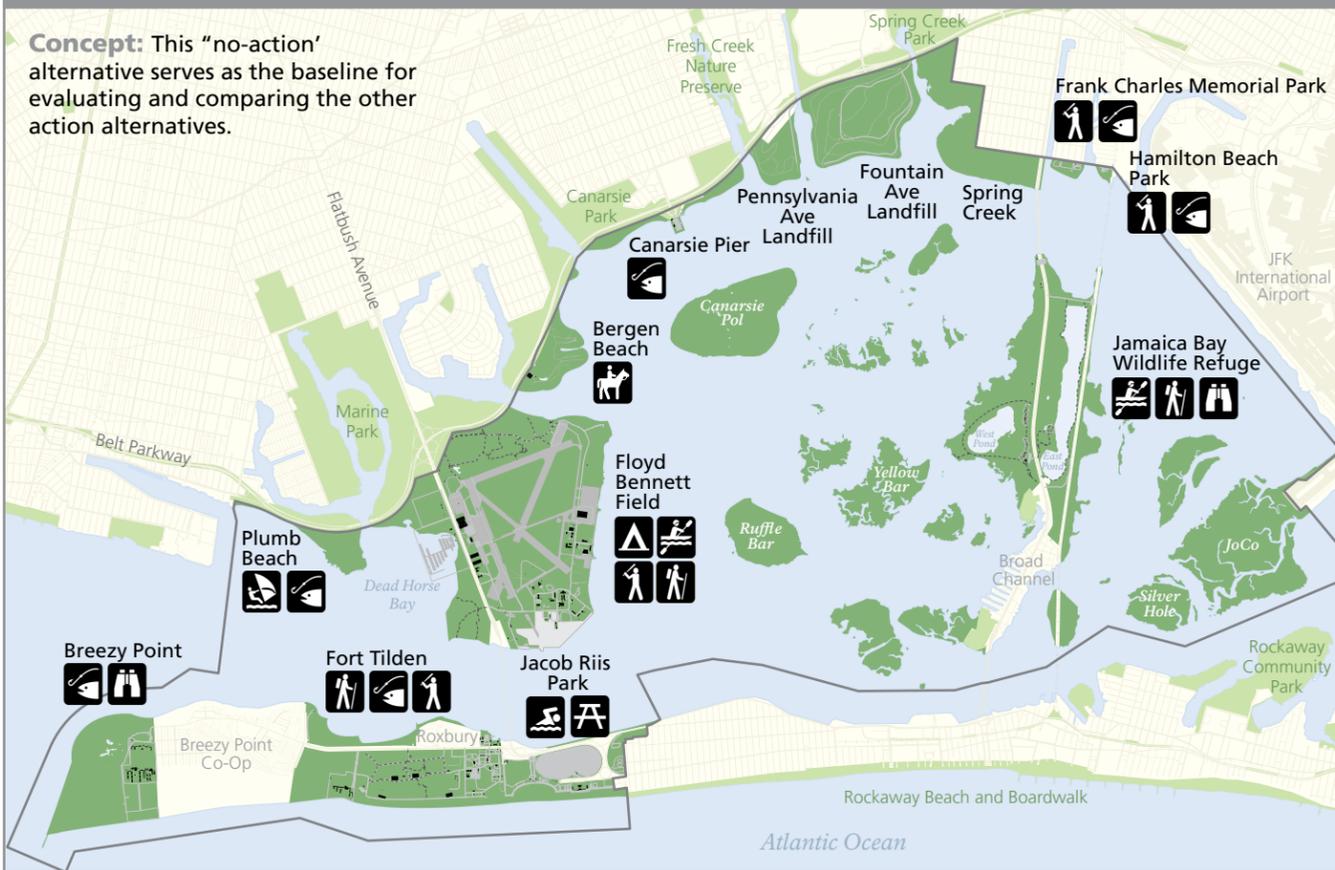
- Increases the visibility, enjoyment and protection of coastal resources throughout Gateway, especially opportunities to access and experience Gateway waters.
- Expands and promotes water-based recreation opportunities and city park connections including water trails, kayak rentals and trainings, and boat tours.
- Provides new orientation, programming and access from water and increases waterborne transportation.
- Focuses resource management on beach & dune ecosystems and coastal defense landscapes.
- Promotes coastal and wetlands research, education & stewardship.
- Fosters development of new support areas for coastal activities and recreation i.e. tours, outfitters, launch/landing sites, lodging.
- Offers a distinct interpretive focus and becomes a learning center for one or two of the park's interpretive themes (Staten Island – Coastal Defense, Sandy Hook – Maritime, Jamaica Bay – Natural History).

Management Alternatives: Jamaica Bay



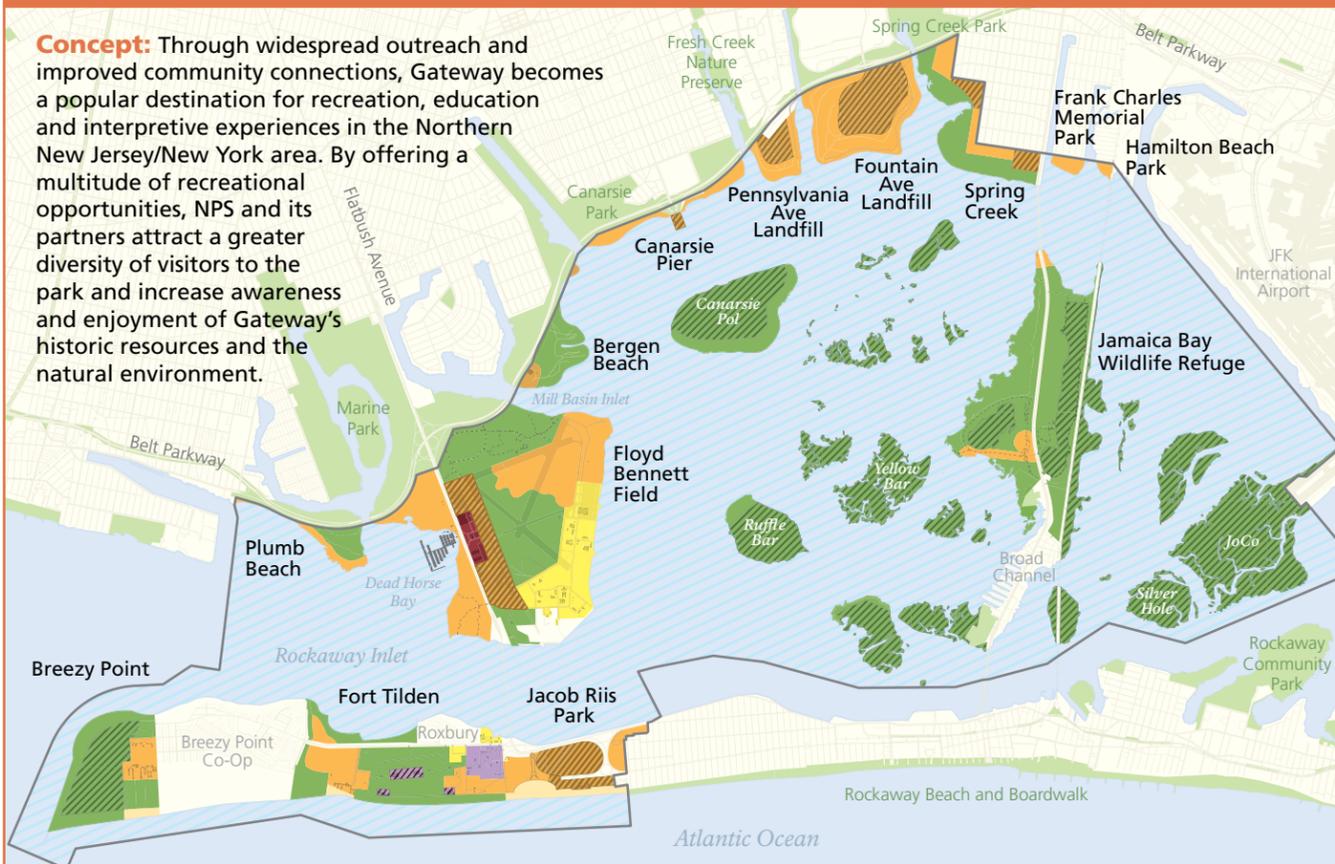
Alternative A: Current Management

Concept: This "no-action" alternative serves as the baseline for evaluating and comparing the other action alternatives.



Alternative B: Discovering Gateway

Concept: Through widespread outreach and improved community connections, Gateway becomes a popular destination for recreation, education and interpretive experiences in the Northern New Jersey/New York area. By offering a multitude of recreational opportunities, NPS and its partners attract a greater diversity of visitors to the park and increase awareness and enjoyment of Gateway's historic resources and the natural environment.

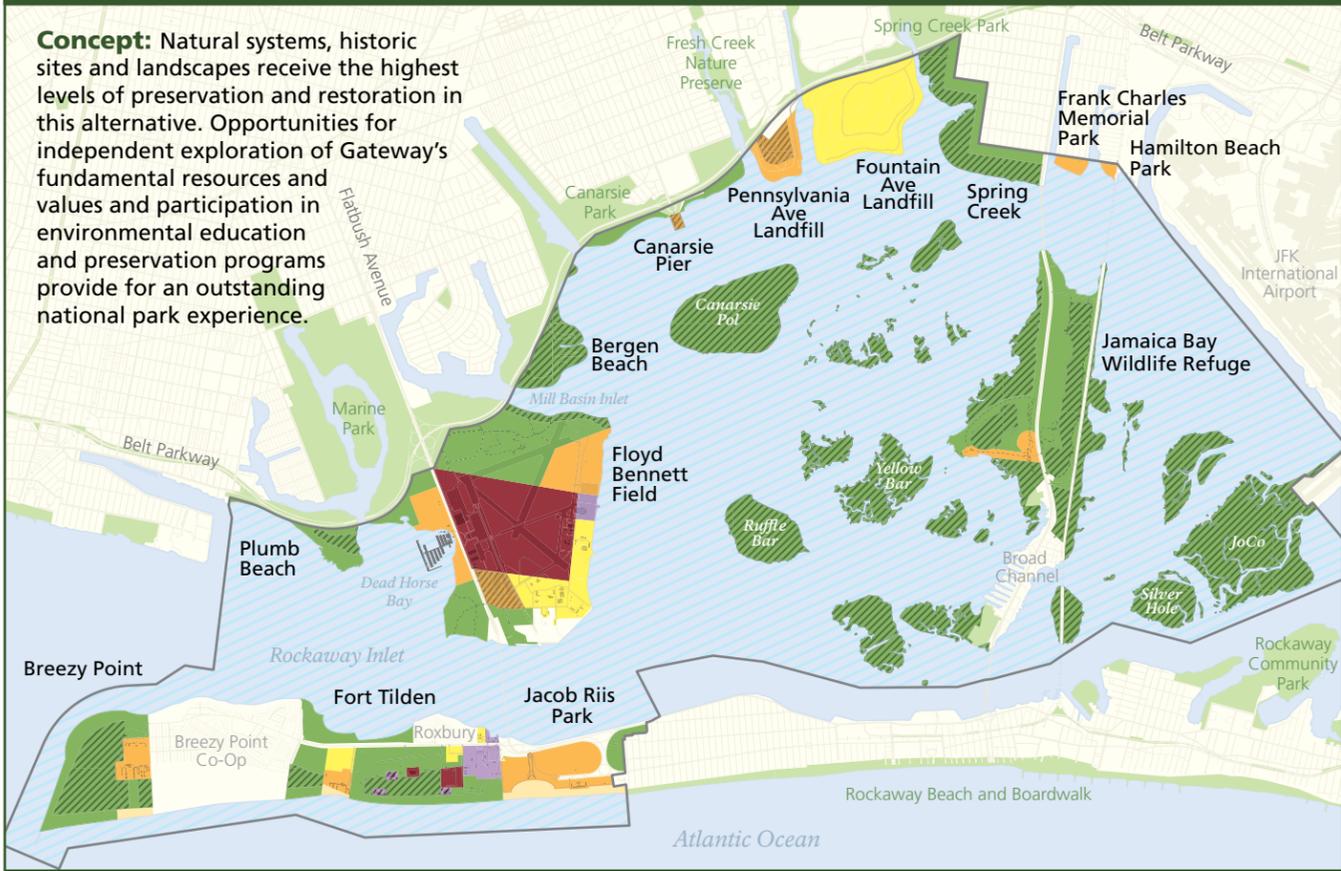


Management Alternatives: Jamaica Bay



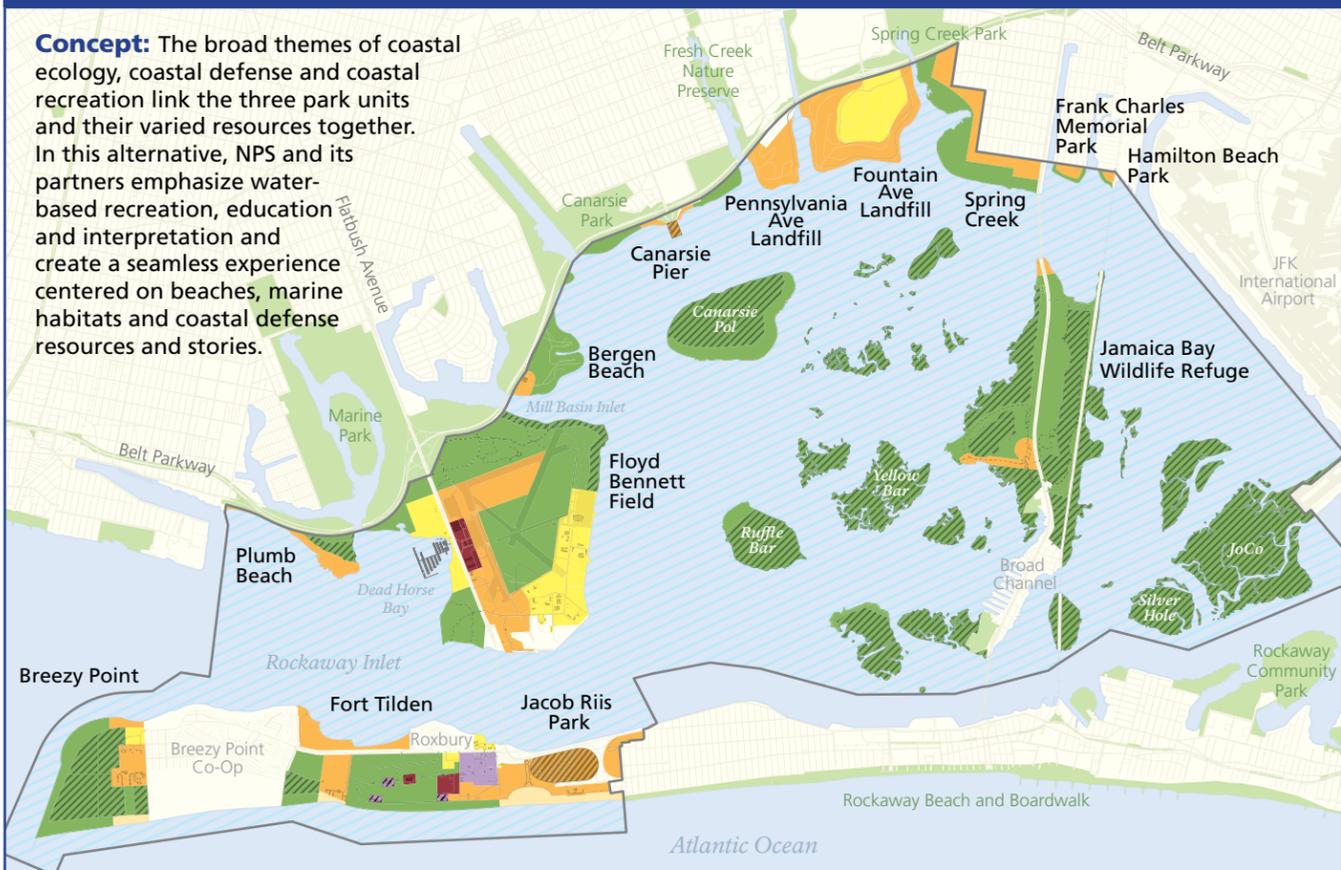
Alternative C: Experiencing Preserved Places

Concept: Natural systems, historic sites and landscapes receive the highest levels of preservation and restoration in this alternative. Opportunities for independent exploration of Gateway's fundamental resources and values and participation in environmental education and preservation programs provide for an outstanding national park experience.

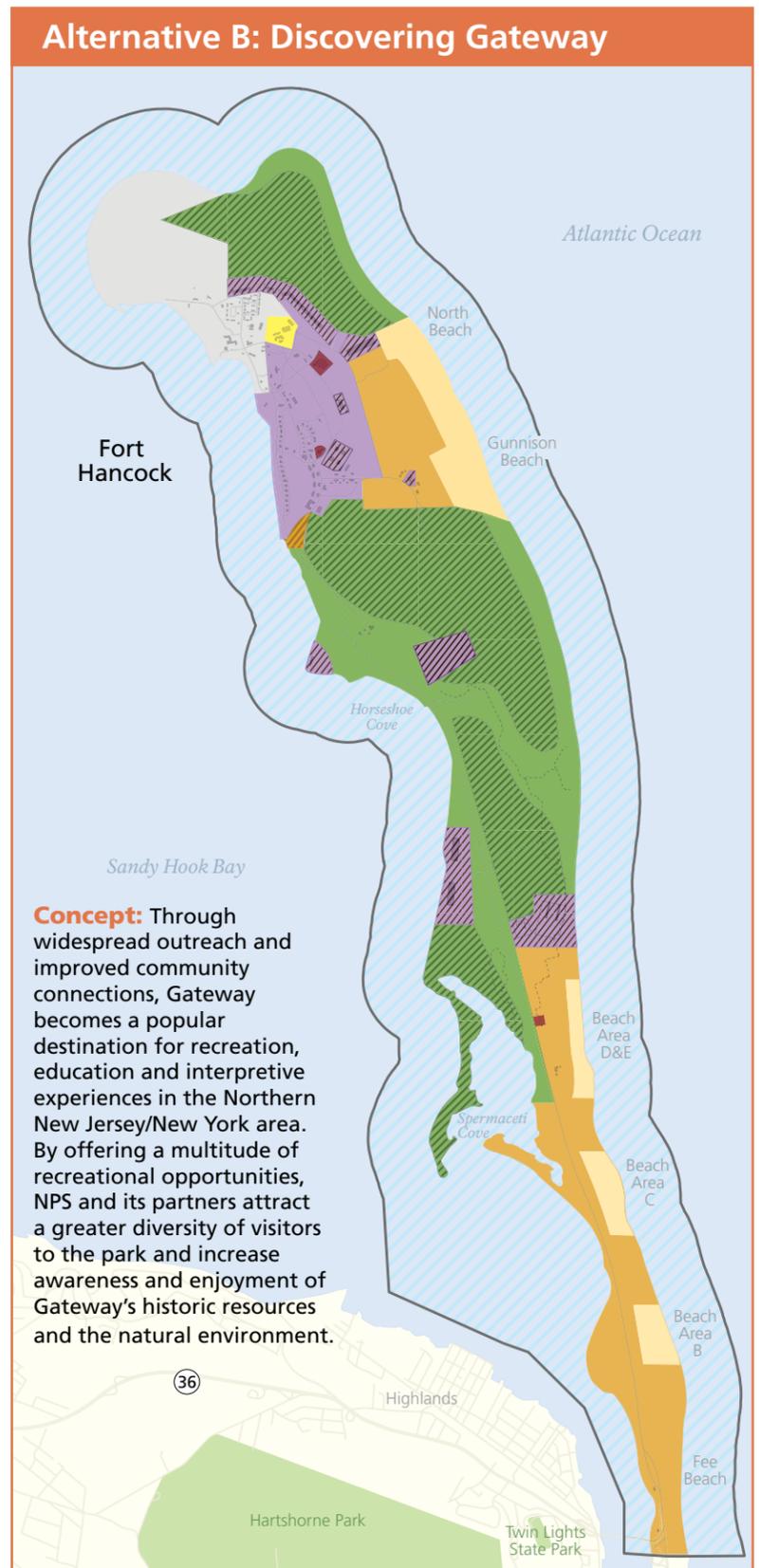
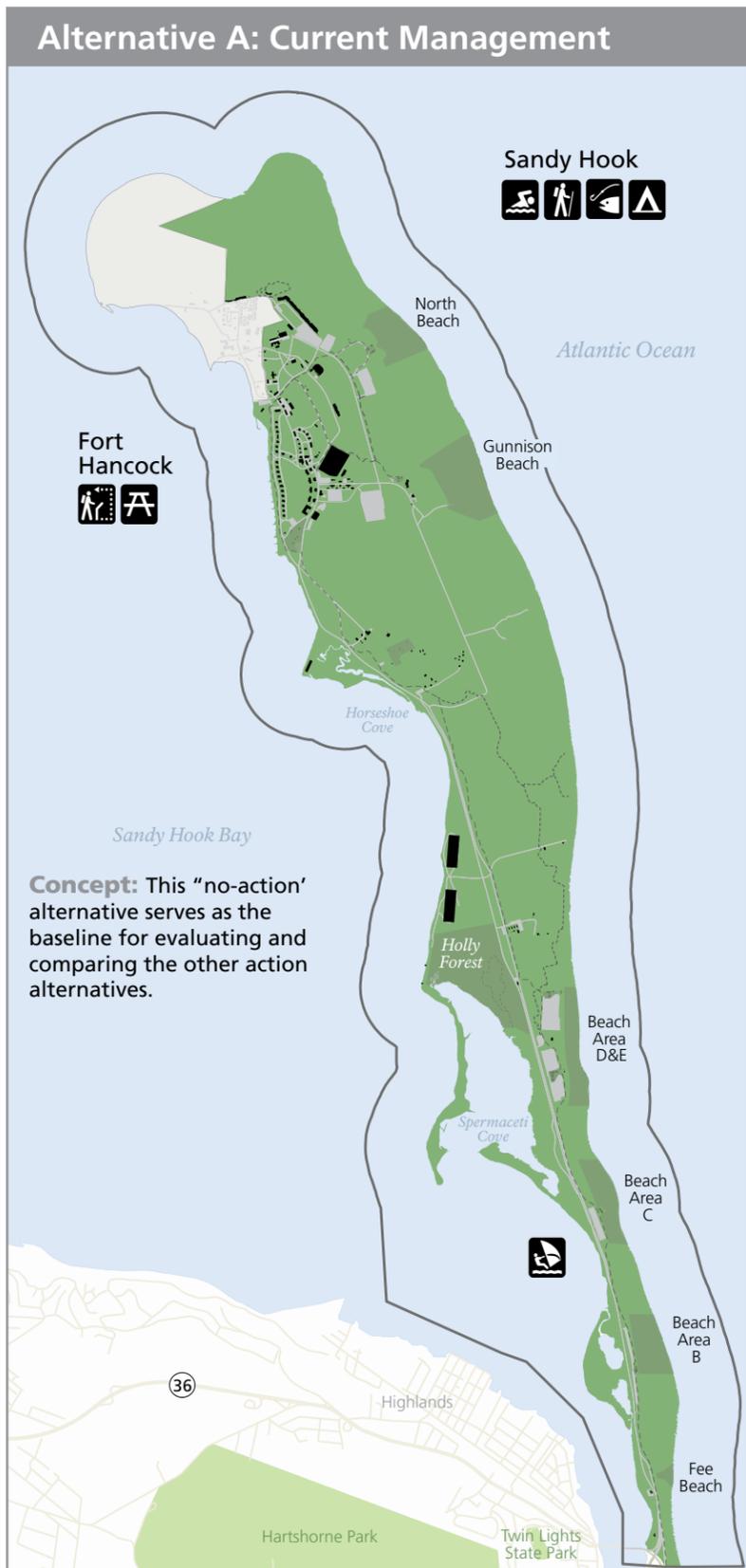


Alternative D: Connecting Coastlines

Concept: The broad themes of coastal ecology, coastal defense and coastal recreation link the three park units and their varied resources together. In this alternative, NPS and its partners emphasize water-based recreation, education and interpretation and create a seamless experience centered on beaches, marine habitats and coastal defense resources and stories.

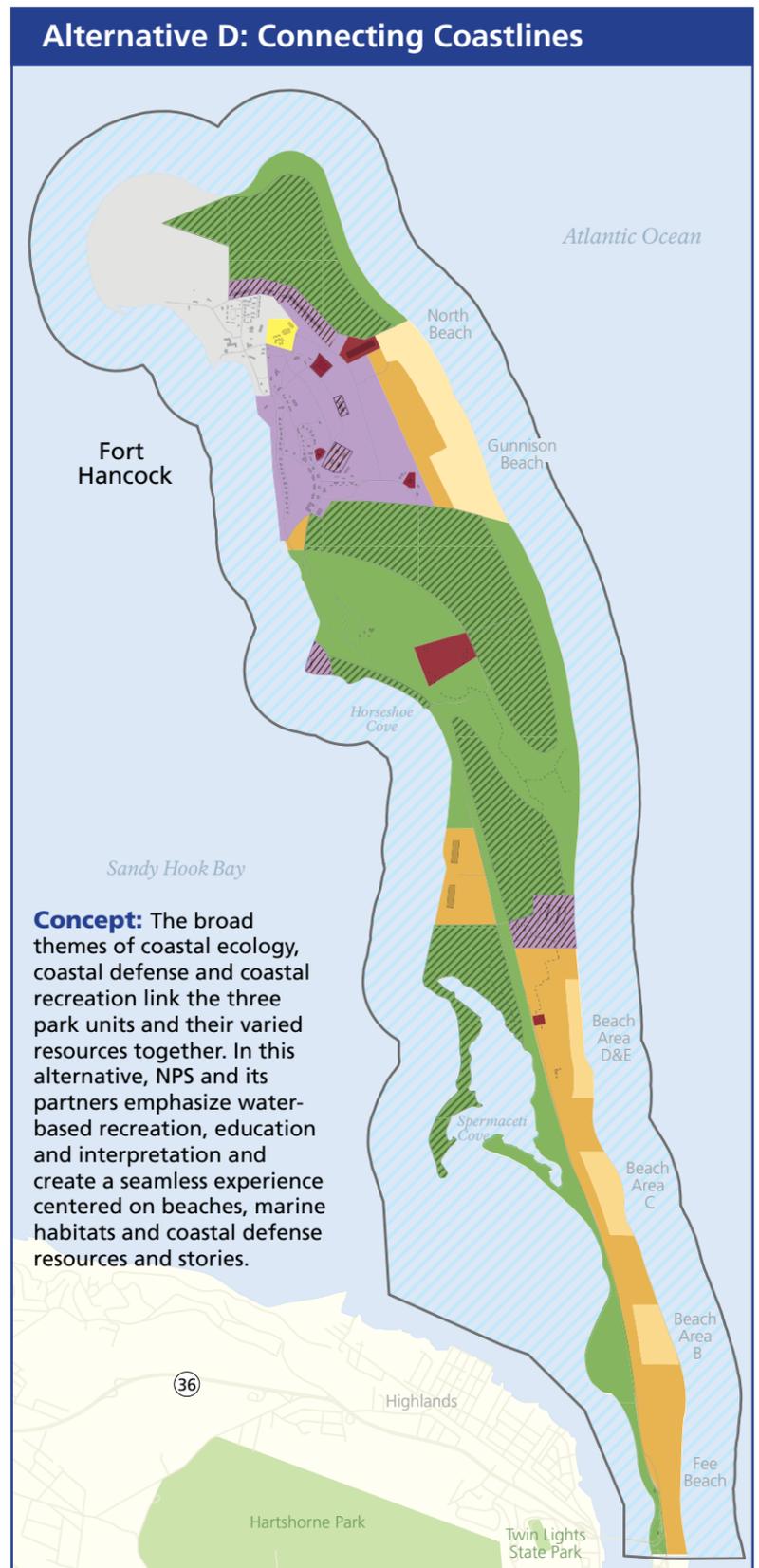
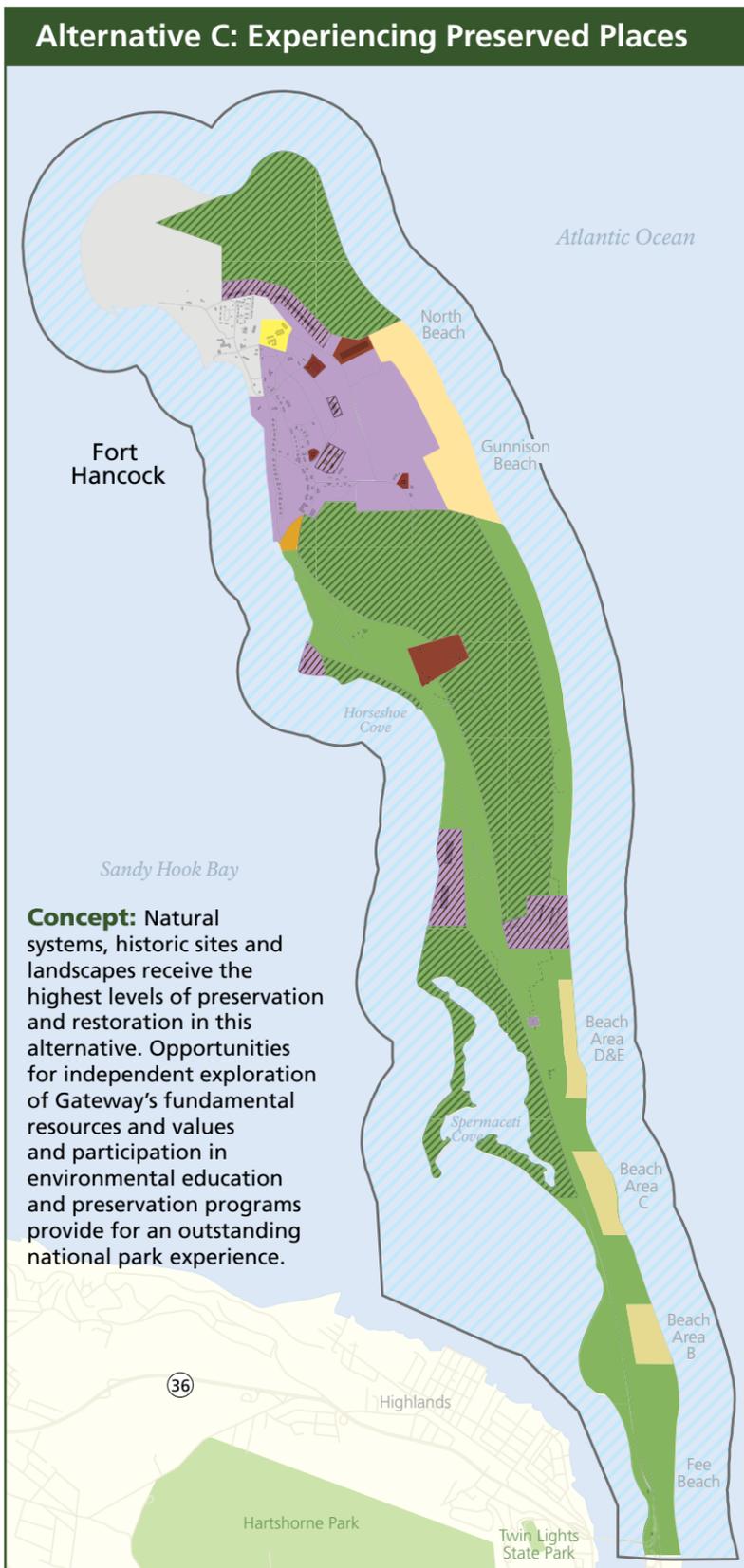


Management Alternatives: Sandy Hook

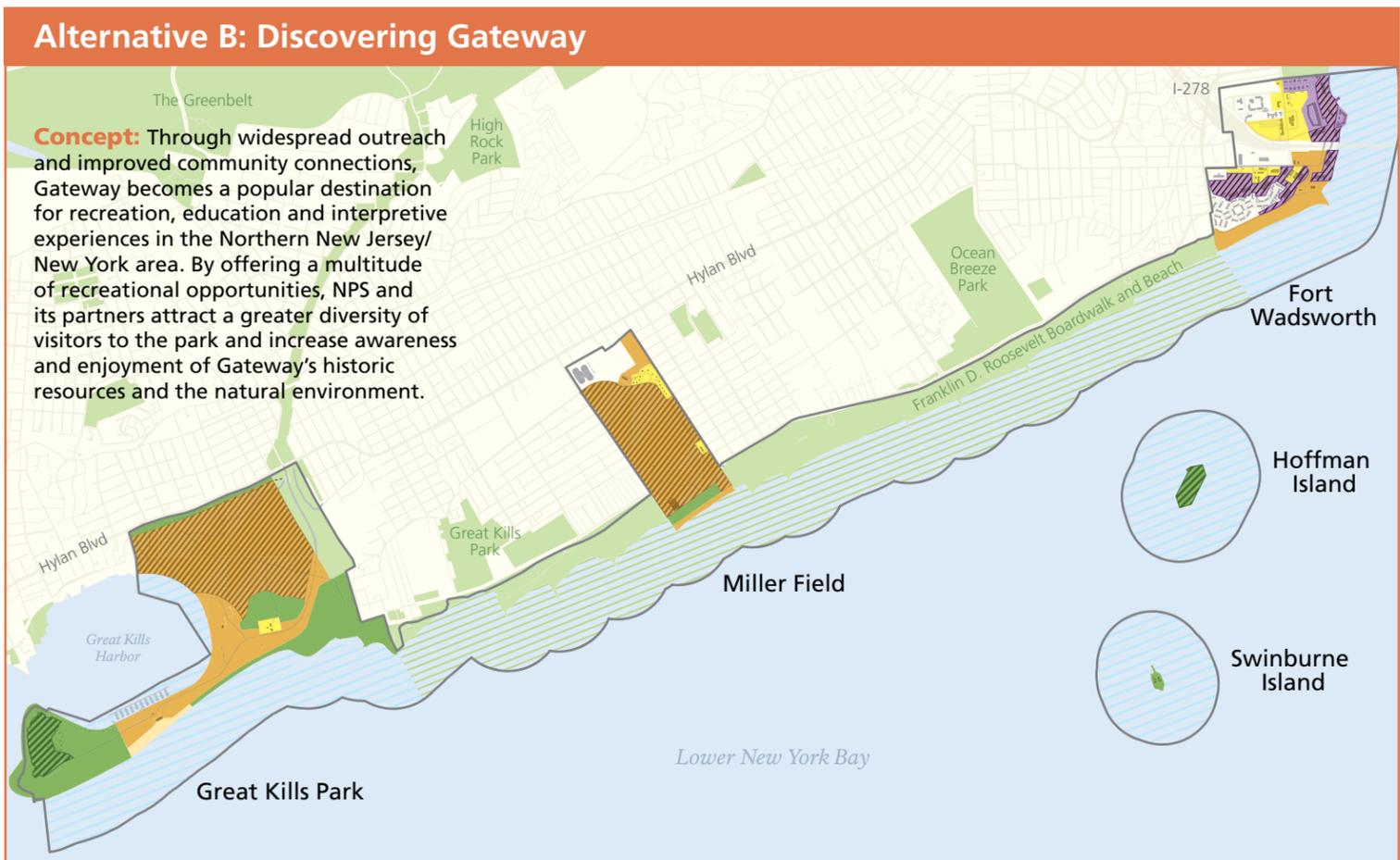
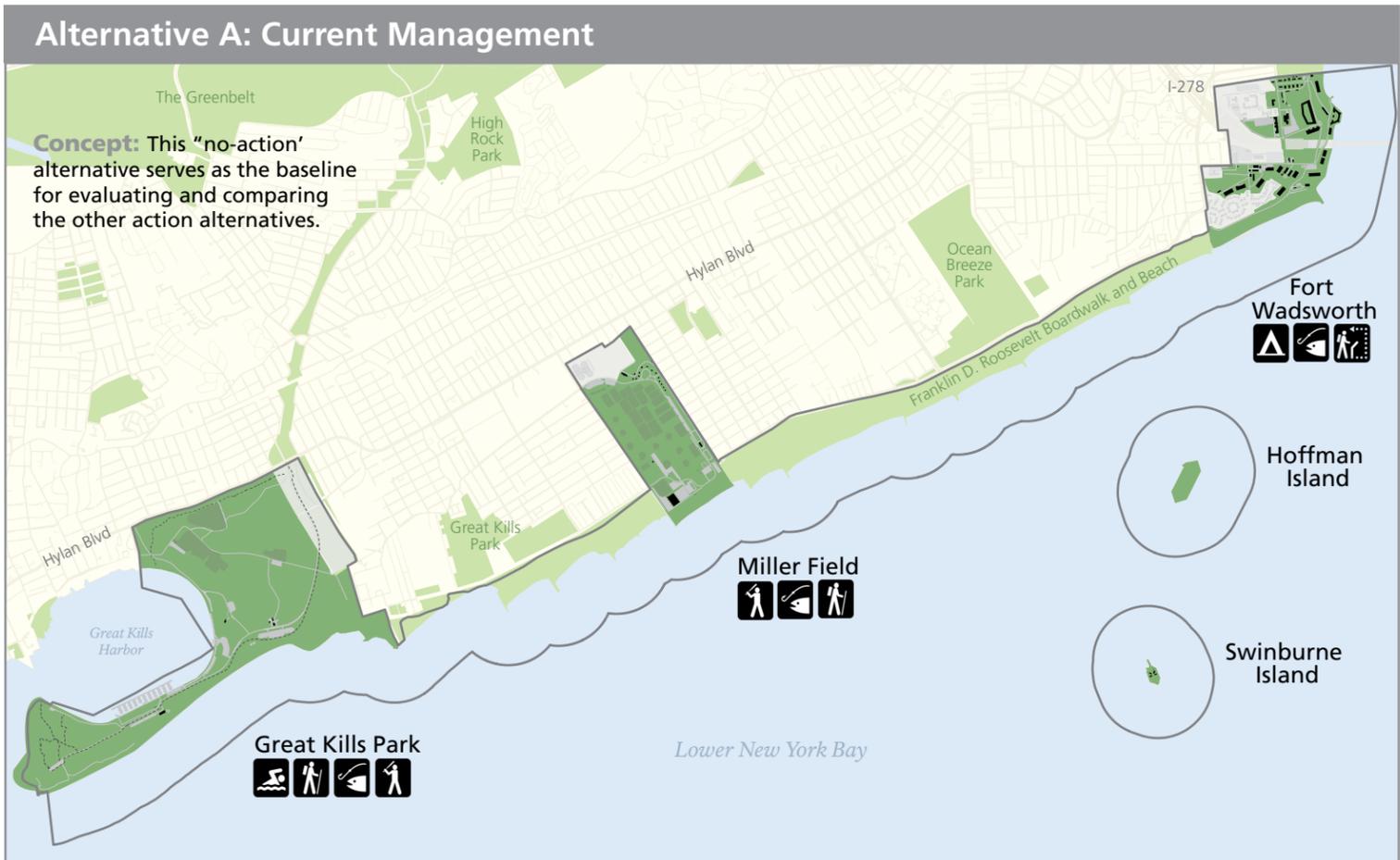
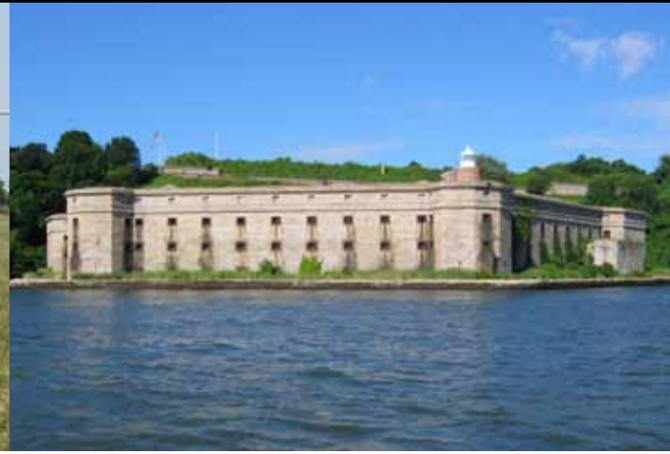


Marine
 Recreation
 Active Beach Subzone
 Community Activity Subzone
 Natural

Management Alternatives: Sandy Hook



Management Alternatives: Staten Island



Management Alternatives: Staten Island



Management Alternatives: Jamaica Bay

Alternative B: Discovering Gateway

Visitor Use and Experience

The Jamaica Bay unit would offer park neighbors and visitors an unmatched variety of recreational activities and a unique place to retreat from the city scape into a natural setting. NPS would emphasize community and city park connections in the development of programs tailored to city youth and their families while an array of entertainment and educational programming (e.g. concerts, festivals, air shows, readings) would draw all ages into the park.

NPS and its partners would offer an abundance of nature experiences. New facilities at Fort Tilden, Bergen Beach, Plumb Beach, the Refuge and the remediated landfills including trails, overlooks, viewing blinds, kayak launch sites, outdoor classrooms and campsites would provide more convenient access to natural areas and interpreted historic resources (e.g. Battery Harris East) to the broadest array of visitors.

Floyd Bennett Field would be transformed into a regional recreation destination. An extensive trail system would cater to hikers, bikers and nature lovers while water trails and landings invite visitors to launch kayaks, canoes, sailboards and other non-motorized boats into the bay. Additionally, enlarged areas for community uses and recreation activities provide for

extensive camping facilities, play areas and entertainment/programming venues to ensure that Floyd Bennett Field appeals to a diversity of visitors.

Riis Park invites more community use with expanded facilities for community activities such as ball fields and courts along with more educational, arts and entertainment programming. Through improved bike infrastructure, public transportation and park shuttles, access to and within Jamaica Bay is made affordable and convenient to more people.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

Improving water quality and habitat protection within Jamaica Bay would be prioritized along with restoring degraded stretches of coastal habitats. At Riis Park, portions of the historic parking lot would be adaptively re-used for additional recreational facilities such as ball fields, playground, group picnicking, performance/event space while the bathhouse and its associated historic features would continue to accommodate visitors.

Alternative C: Experiencing Preserved Places

Visitor Use and Experience

In areas throughout Jamaica Bay such as Breezy Point, Fort Tilden, Jamaica Bay Refuge and Floyd Bennett Field, visitors would find open, protected natural areas. In these areas visitors find opportunities to retreat into natural environments; experience the sounds, smells, and views; and learn about healthy habitat remnants that are very unique within the NYC metropolitan area. Independently exploring these natural areas would be encouraged in new opportunities such as a seamless beach walking trail from the Rockaways around the Breezy Point Tip.

This alternative would focus on engaging visitors, communities, and partners in participatory science, education and natural resource stewardship with a focus on improving conditions and habitat within and around Jamaica Bay. Also, increased monitoring, research, volunteer programs and collaboration with regional partners would continue to address water quality issues, habitat restoration and stewardship.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

Natural resource restoration projects would be widespread. Management would focus on protecting and restoring natural conditions throughout the

unit including water quality within the bay, freshwater marshes at Breezy Point the dune system at Tilden. Ongoing restoration projects would be broadened, expedited and strengthened by the additional partners, funding, and scientific resource. The park will collaborate with NYC, academic institutions and non-profit organizations to develop a science-based science center to further research and restoration projects in the bay. Along with this enhanced natural resource management would come expanded opportunities for nature-study, environmental educational and participatory natural resource stewardship programming.

The aviation history at Floyd Bennett Field would be preserved and showcased. At Tilden, interpretation of the Fort's landscape, batteries and Nike missile site would round out the predominantly natural resource based recreational experiences found throughout the unit. Interpretation projects at Battery Harris East and West and the Nike Missile site would lead to improved access to the fundamental cultural resources and enriched communication about the site's coastal defense history. All new facilities would be designed to be "light on the land" and minimize impacts to natural and cultural resources.

Alternative D: Connecting Coastlines

Visitor Use and Experience

In this alternative NPS would create and expand opportunities to experience the Jamaica Bay unit from the water or along the shores of the bay and ocean. With the development of water trails, instructional water-recreation programming, equipment rentals, and the expansion of beach access, the Jamaica Bay unit would be established as a popular recreation destination for water-based activities. The coastal edges of Tilden and Floyd Bennett Field would be enhanced with improved water access, water trails, additional landings as well as camping facilities. Plumb Beach would become a windsurfing destination with expanded facilities for both windsurfers and spectators. At Jacob Riis, existing beach uses would be maintained, the parking lot would be adaptively reused for other recreation uses. Transportation facilities such as shuttle parking and a bike sharing station as well as expanded food service and other visitor amenities would be offered.

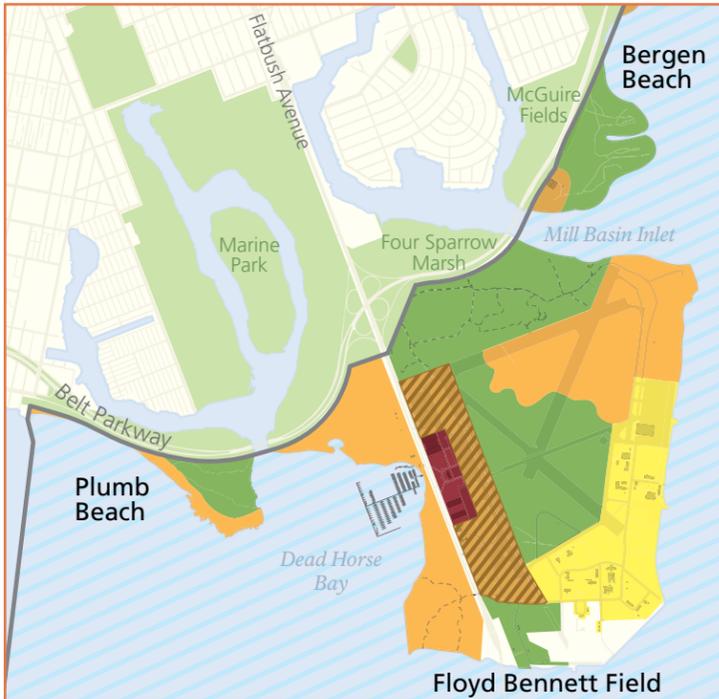
In this alternative, NPS would work closely with National Parks of New York Harbor, NYCDPR and other regional partners to improve transportation throughout Jamaica Bay, establish and promote the park as a tourism and recreation destination, and to provide new coastal stewardship and educational programs. NPS would work with partners to improve water-

borne transportation throughout the unit with ferries and water taxis. With ferry service to Riis Landing and Floyd Bennett Field as well as a shuttle system and improved regional trail connections, this alternative would offer the most extensive multi-modal transportation system.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

The development of additional water-based recreation facilities and experiences would be balanced by increased habitat resource protection, research and restoration of beach and dune habitats at Breezy Point, Fort Tilden and Jamaica Bay. NPS would rely heavily on partners to maintain and improve habitat conditions within the bay waters and wildlife refuge. While the marshes would mostly remain as natural preserves set aside for research and restoration efforts, limited guided boat access to Canarsie Pol & Ruffle Bar and development of an offshore dock would facilitate environmental education and wildlife observation among the Jamaica Bay "islands". Fort Tilden would emerge as the unit's primary historic and interpretive destination where expanded interpretation of Battery Harris East and West and the Nike missile site reveal the interwoven story of the park's coastal setting and its historic fortifications.

Management Alternatives: Jamaica Bay



Plumb Beach

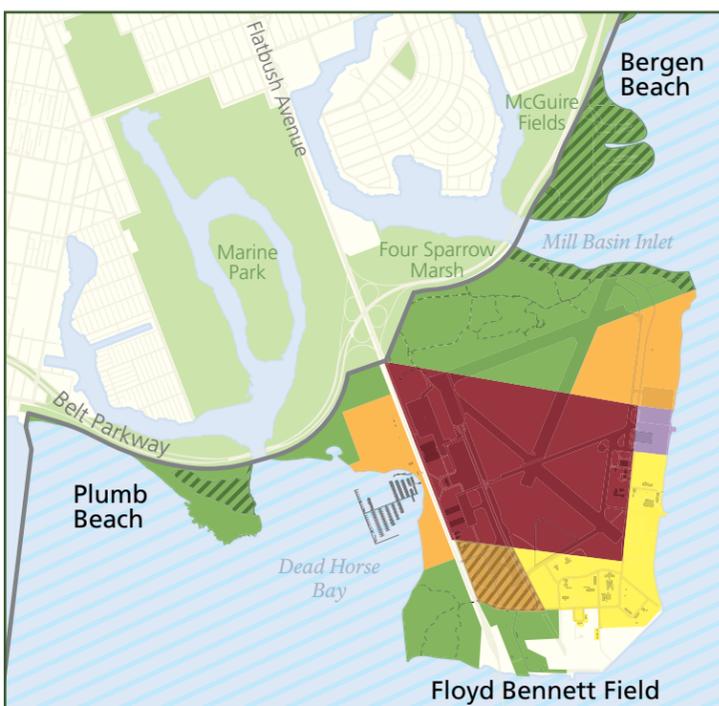
- New orientation portal developed for Great Jamaica Bay Park
- Connection from Marine Park and adjacent neighborhood by new bike/pedestrian bridge
- Access & circulation improvements by parking area and Greenway
- Controlled access to protect natural areas and habitat
- New visitor amenities such as bathrooms, rentals (bikes and wind sports), bike sharing, food trucks

Bergen Beach

- New picnic and open space area in northeast section
- New physical connections to McGuire Park, Paerdagat Basin Park, Eco Park and Flatlands neighborhoods
- Nature trail developed to bay for fishing, walking
- Improved areas for horse-related activities

Floyd Bennett Field

- Create connections to communities and Marine Park, connections established at western portion along from Flatbush
- Multi-use trail system developed on “greened” runways
- New picnic and flexible open space areas
- New Outdoor Skills area
- Expanded camping options from tents to RVs
- Community activity space expanded for gatherings, gardens and educational events
- Jamaica Bay Greenway connection established at North 40 area
- Aviation interpretive area at Hangar Row



Plumb Beach

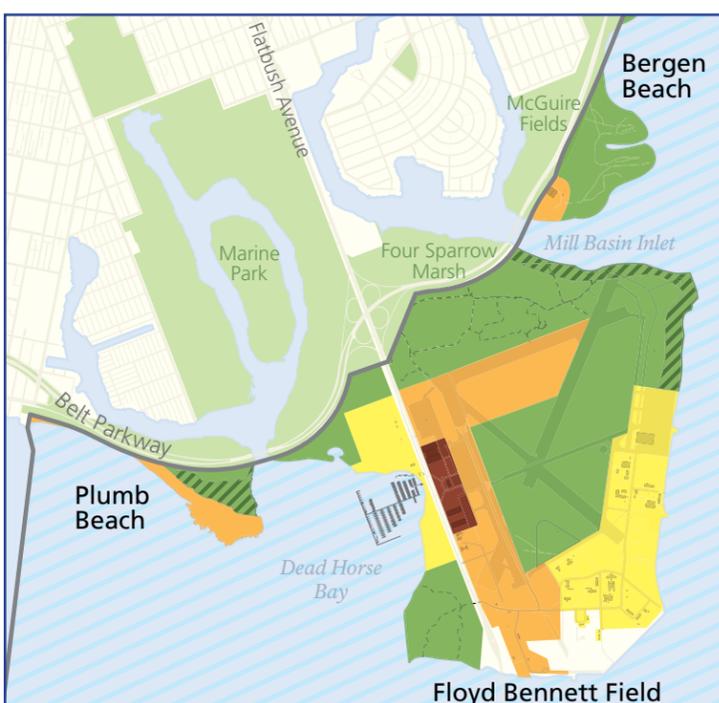
- Portal for nature-oriented low impact activities such as environmental education, stewardship and passive recreation
- Greenway improvements similar to B
- Enhanced natural areas/habitat including redesigned nature trail
- Improved management of shoreline and habitats

Bergen Beach

- Natural conditions predominate
- Area of intensive restoration efforts
- Horse-related activities relocated to FBF or Tilden
- No facilities (building removed)
- Very limited public access

Floyd Bennett Field

- Preserves specific aviation period of significance including cultural landscape rehabilitation
- Historic circulation pattern/entrance at Ryan center restored
- Focuses attention on Hangar Row, aircraft “museum”, aviation-related activities, observation areas
- Concentrated use areas for camping, horse-related activities, community recreation and outdoor skills development
- Composting and recycling center developed with education area
- Most habitat and shoreline restoration projects



Plumb Beach

- Promotes water-based activities and wind sports
- Improved areas for rentals, lessons, spectator and launching areas
- New water trail with Marine Park loop
- Connection from Marine Park and adjacent neighborhood by new bike/pedestrian bridge
- Natural area restoration and coastal habitat enhancement

Bergen Beach

- New water trail to Paerdagat and Mill Basin inlet
- Staging area for water-based sports including launching areas, storage, shuttles, equipment rental
- Horse-related activities continue in smaller area
- Maintain natural areas and improve shoreline

Floyd Bennett Field

- New orientation portal developed at marina area
- Improved marina facilities and overnight ‘boatels’
- Wetlands Center developed with extensive wetlands creation and shoreline restoration
- New Jamaica Bay Science Center developed
- Water trail connections (north side) to new launch site at Bergen Beach and western portion across from Flatbush to connect with new launch at Plumb beach
- Concentrated camping activities

Management Alternatives: Jamaica Bay

Alternative B: Discovering Gateway



Canarsie Pier

- New orientation portal developed for Great Jamaica Bay Park
- Improved areas for fishing, kayaking and food service
- Expanded picnic and open space areas for relaxation, gatherings and community events
- Greenway improvements and connections to NYC Canarsie parks

Pennsylvania Avenue Landfill

- Roads converted into multi-use trail system for walking & running
- Improve physical connections with neighborhoods near Spring Creek
- New visitor amenities such as bathrooms
- New viewing platforms
- Ferry connection explored

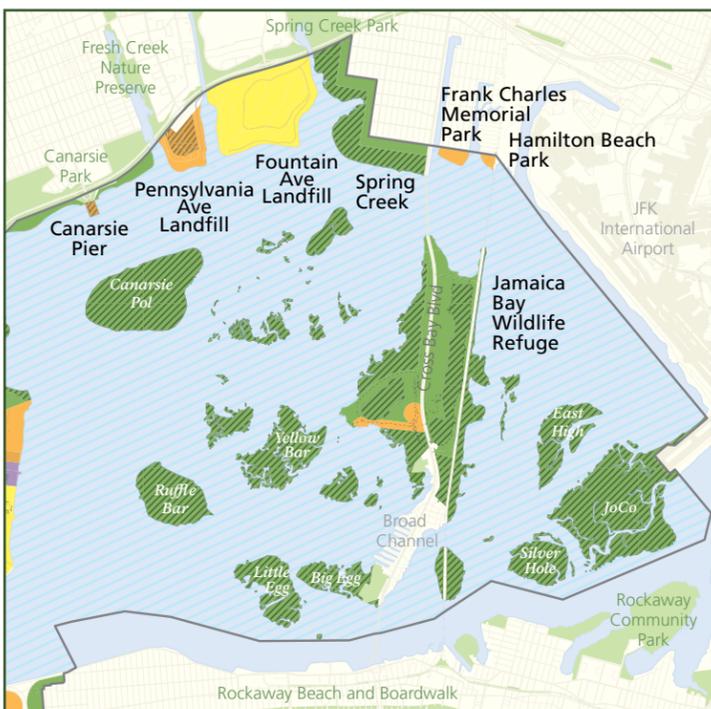
Fountain Avenue Landfill

- New amphitheatre and associated facilities developed
- New viewing platforms
- Trail system on roadways
- Improved physical connections with neighborhoods

Spring Creek

- New orientation portal developed to Great Jamaica Bay Park
- Small developed area near Cross Bay Blvd with kiosk, trailhead
- Trail system to water's edge

Alternative C: Experiencing Preserved Places



Canarsie Pier

- Retain current uses and visitor amenities
- Shade tree plantings and vegetation enhancements
- Shoreline restoration along east and west portions
- New shaded picnic areas

Pennsylvania Avenue Landfill

- Roads converted into multi-use trail system
- Improve physical connections with neighborhoods near Spring Creek
- New visitor amenities such as bathrooms
- New viewing platforms
- Ferry connection explored

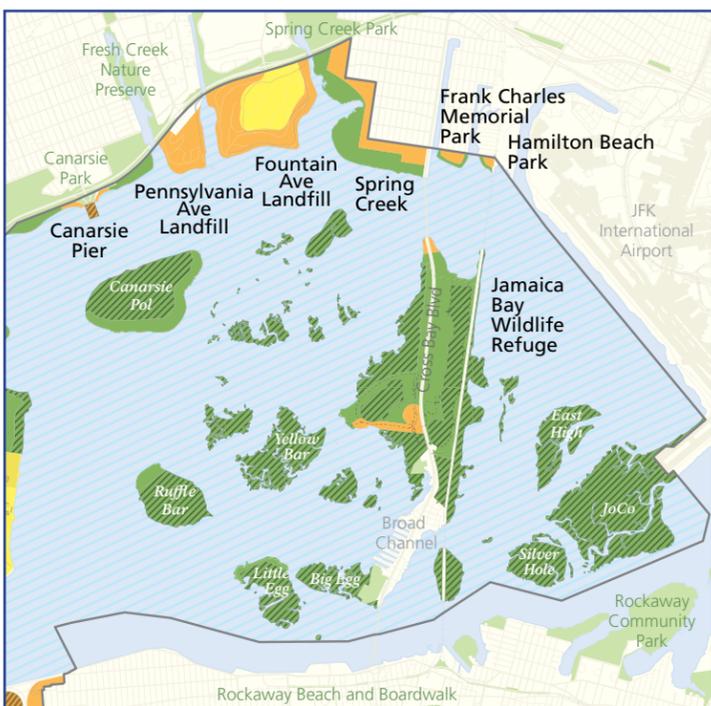
Fountain Avenue Landfill

Energy development only – limited or no public access

Spring Creek

- Multi-use trail developed along road's edge
- Majority of site undergoes restoration, tying into similar NYC projects in NYC Spring Creek Park

Alternative D: Connecting Coastlines



Canarsie Pier

- Increased boating access and use such as sailing
- New floating dock, mooring area and pier enhancements
- Hub for water-borne transportation and connections to other Jamaica Bay areas via water trail
- Habitat conditions improved along east and west portions
- Current recreation uses retained

Pennsylvania Avenue Landfill

- Ferry connection
- New visitor amenities such as bathrooms
- New coastal trail along water's edge
- Addition of launch areas

Fountain Avenue Landfill

- Water trail from Spring Creek
- Launch area near entrance
- New perimeter trail and trailhead
- Trail to viewing areas on top –coastal views
- Limited energy development

Spring Creek

- New orientation portal developed to Great Jamaica Bay Park
- Small developed area near Cross Bay Blvd with kiosk, trailhead
- Trail system to water's edge

Management Alternatives: Jamaica Bay

- New viewing platforms/areas
- New open space area for picnic/relaxation

Frank Charles Park and Hamilton Beach

- Improved community recreation and activity areas including an “exploration” playground

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

- Improved multi-modal transportation to and from the refuge, linking it to other districts by bike and public transportation
- Develop a refuge water trails and kayak instructional zone
- Provide additional visitor amenities
- Expand network of trails, boardwalks and nature study facilities (e.g. scopes, blinds)
- Allow kayak landing access to select islands; seasonal primitive camping
- Fresh water ponds retained, breaches repaired, habitat improvements
- Physical and programmatic connections to Sunset Cove Park and other NYCDPR sites



Frank Charles Park and Hamilton Beach

- Shoreline improvements for fishing, boat launching
- New shaded picnic areas
- Nature play areas developed

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

- Establish field station for environmental education and natural resource stewardship training and as living laboratory for recovery of natural areas, ecological services and climate change study
- Strong emphasis on salt marsh habitat restoration
- Trail system expanded to access more habitats and provide more wildlife observation opportunities
- Motorized traffic is limited to channels (bay waters)
- Viewing platforms and nature study facilities added
- Wetlands around and adjacent to Jamaica Bay managed as a system



- New viewing platforms/areas
- Improved access for fishing, kayak launching and access point for Jamaica Bay water trail
- Some habitat restoration

Frank Charles Park and Hamilton Beach

- Shoreline improvements for fishing, boat launching
- New shaded picnic areas
- Nature play areas
- Access point for Jamaica Bay water trail

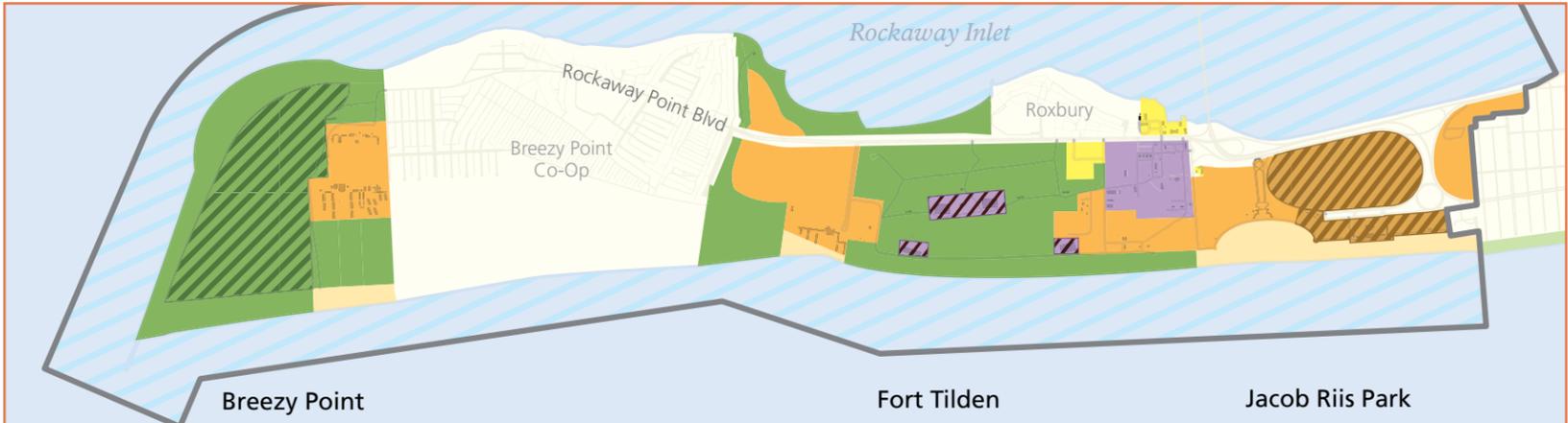
Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

- More water based recreation opportunities including: water trails, kayak instructional programming, equipment rental, offshore docks and additional landing/launch sites
- Limited, guided boat access to Canarsie Pol & Ruffle Bar
- Improved conditions and habitat for premier bird watching experience
- Habitat and marsh restoration promoted
- Improved transportation linkages - bus, ferry, subway



Management Alternatives: Jamaica Bay

Alternative B: Discovering Gateway



Jacob Riis Park

- Becomes multi-season community activity area
- New sports fields and community space developed (within parking lot footprint)
- Indoor space for arts and community use as well as food and new recreational uses in Bathhouse
- Expanded shaded picnic and open space

Fort Tilden

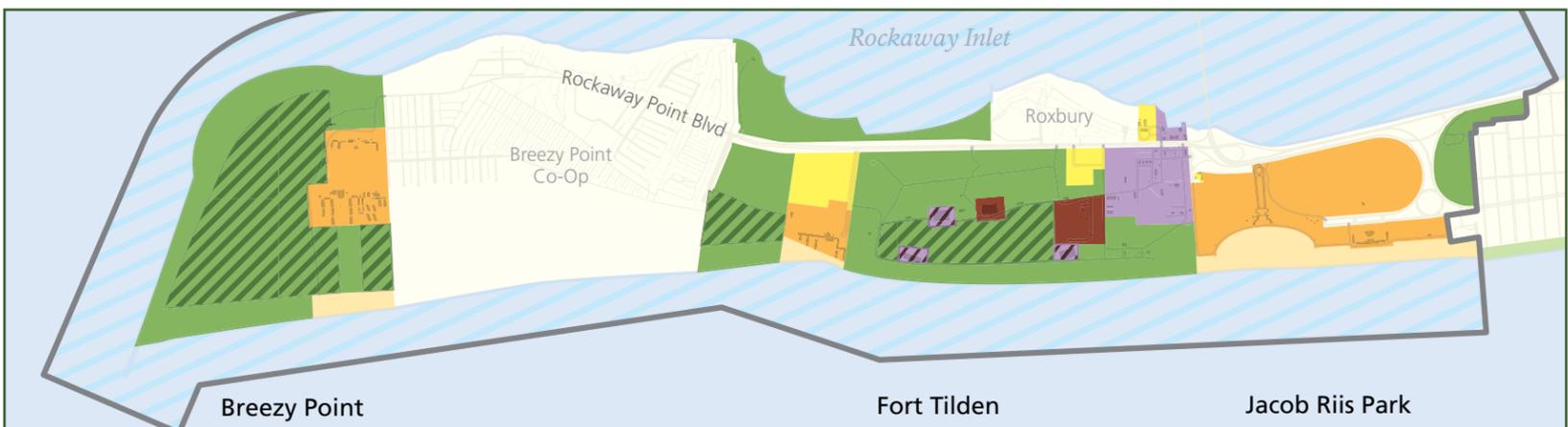
- New lodging and multi-day experience hub (east Tilden area)
- Variety of camping opportunities with associated support facilities
- Improved trail system with trailheads
- Hub for ferry transportation & boating at Riis Landing

- Natural resources managed for increased use
- Landing buildings leased for community uses

Breezy Point Tip

- Fishing and surfing access maintained with limited beach use
- Restoration of habitats and natural area
- Limited shuttle service for convenient access
- Beach clubs retained

Alternative C: Experiencing Preserved Places



Jacob Riis Park

- New nature-oriented play and skills development area
- Picnic grove expanded with more open space
- Improved and expanded sports fields
- Natural open space area established on eastern side
- Bathhouse used for most purposes such as recreation, visitor services & operations

Fort Tilden

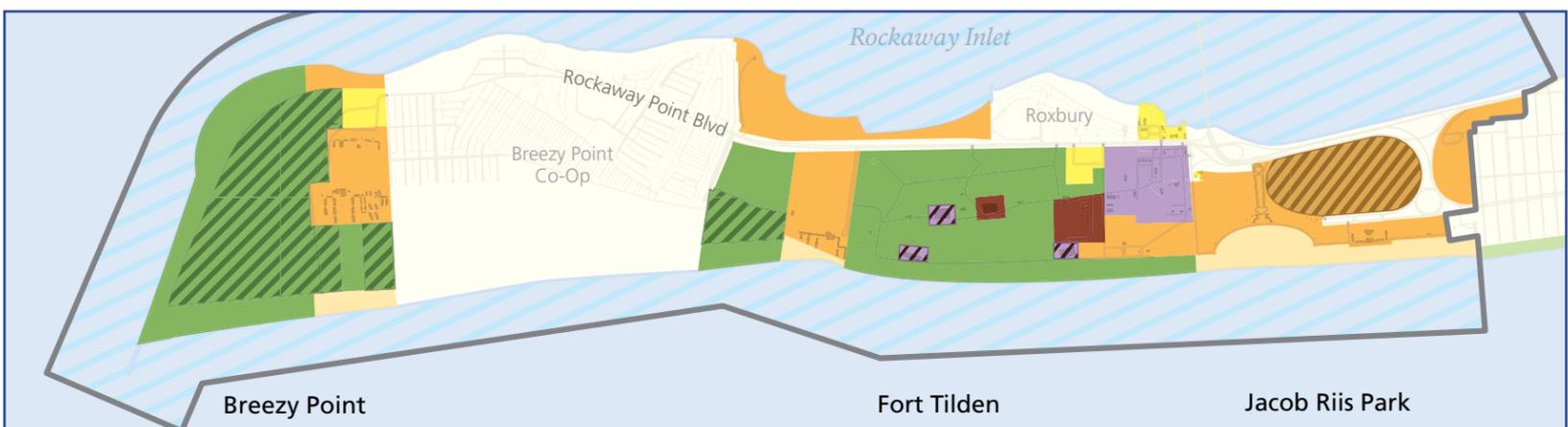
- New interpretive trail system highlights natural and cultural resources
- Battery Harris East stabilized and improved viewing platform
- Nike site cleaned up & interpreted
- Camping, overnight lodging and support facilities "light on the land"

- Concentrated habitat restoration
- Jamaica Bay Science Center developed at Riis Landing

Breezy Point Tip

- Restore plant communities in freshwater marsh areas
- Maintain fishing and surfing access

Alternative D: Connecting Coastlines



Jacob Riis Park

- New water skills area complimenting beach – learn to swim, surf wave, education component
- Shady picnic grove, flexible open space
- Improved visitor services including Bathhouse cafe
- Stabilize & improve shoreline and dune system
- Sea kayak trail

Fort Tilden

- Connect beach and bay experiences
- New launch areas for water activities including fishing trips
- New lodging and multi-day experience hub
- Variety of camping opportunities, including beach camping
- Camping/lodging support facilities at Riis Landing
- Improved trail system with trailhead

- Hub for ferry transportation and boating
- Battery Harris East stabilized and improved viewing platform
- Nike site cleaned up & interpreted
- Natural areas managed for increased visitor use
- Additional launch areas developed

Breezy Point Tip

- Protected beach and dune habitats
- Beach clubs retained

Management Alternatives: Sandy Hook

Visitor Use and Experience

Fort Hancock would be transformed into a bustling center of activity with a number of the Fort's buildings rehabilitated and adaptively reused for a wide variety of visitor services. Future uses would potentially include a restaurant, lodging, program space; recreation equipment rental and interpretive exhibits with the aim of creating a popular overnight destination year-round. On the bayside and the ocean, beaches visitors would find expanded recreational opportunities including instructional programming, equipment rentals, camping and more extensive visitors amenities like picnic areas, shade structures, trails/boardwalks, kayak landings, mooring fields, and observation blinds.

A shuttle system would relieve parking issues and traffic congestion and provide convenient access to the park. The shuttle will collect visitors from surrounding towns, transportation stops and the ferry terminal and drop them off at Sandy Hook's beaches and activity nodes.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

Current natural resource management practices would be maintained and protection, research and monitoring of sensitive habitat areas like the beaches on the northern tip and the maritime forest would be increased. In this alternative, NPS would consider the widest variety of potential adaptive reuses for the Fort Hancock buildings ranging from educational uses and lodging to restaurants, conference space and offices. The Lighthouse, Life Saving Station, Battery Gunnison and Battery Potter would continue to be maintained and utilized for interpretation. No additional coastal defense batteries would be stabilized. The Nike Missile launch and radar sites would be interpreted offsite.

Fort Hancock

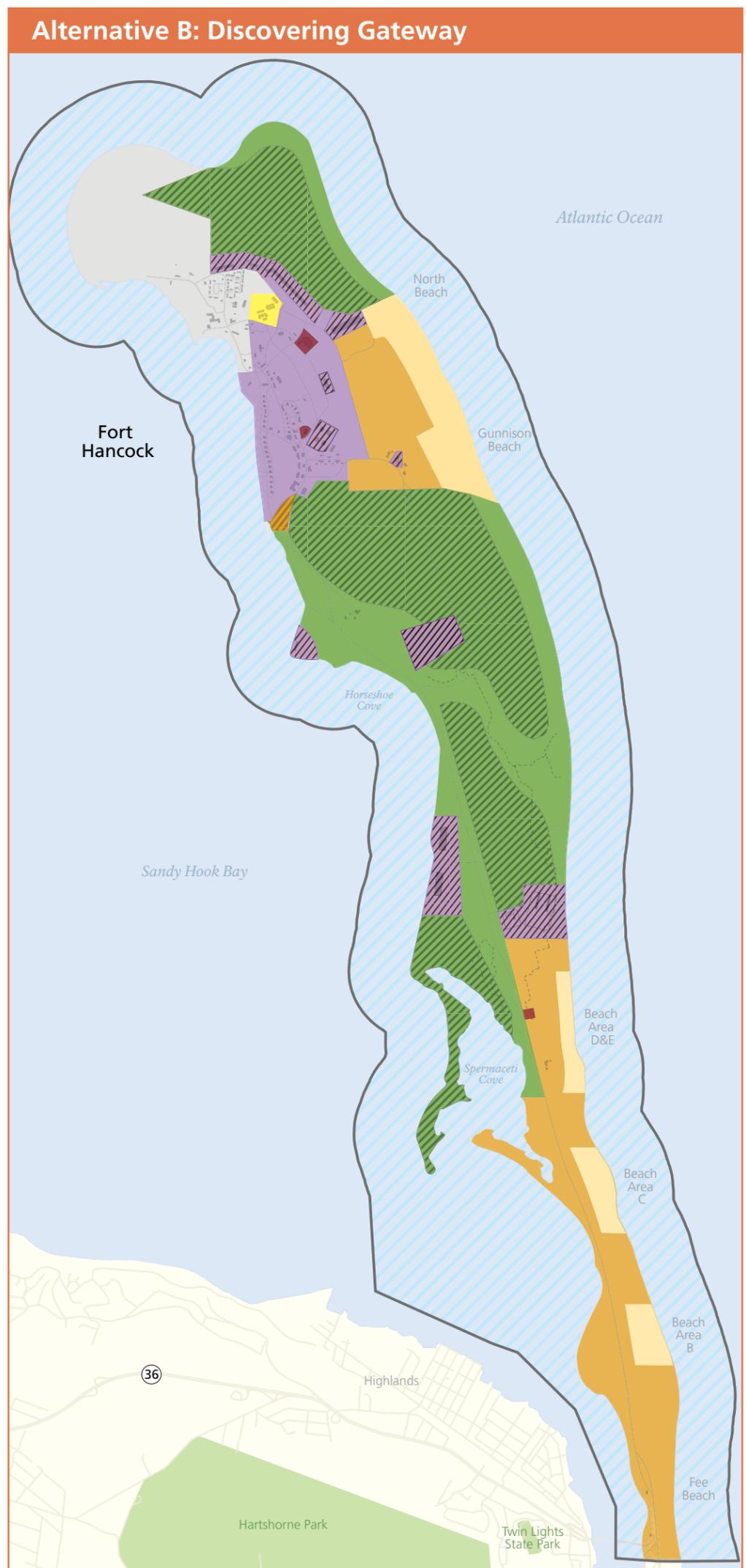
- Picnicking areas and walking trails expanded
- North Beach improved to accommodate more use between the Fort and the beach
- Buildings are adaptively reused for a wide variety of potential reuses ranging from lodging to restaurants, conference space and offices
- Minimal number of batteries are stabilized/interpreted

Bayside/Inland

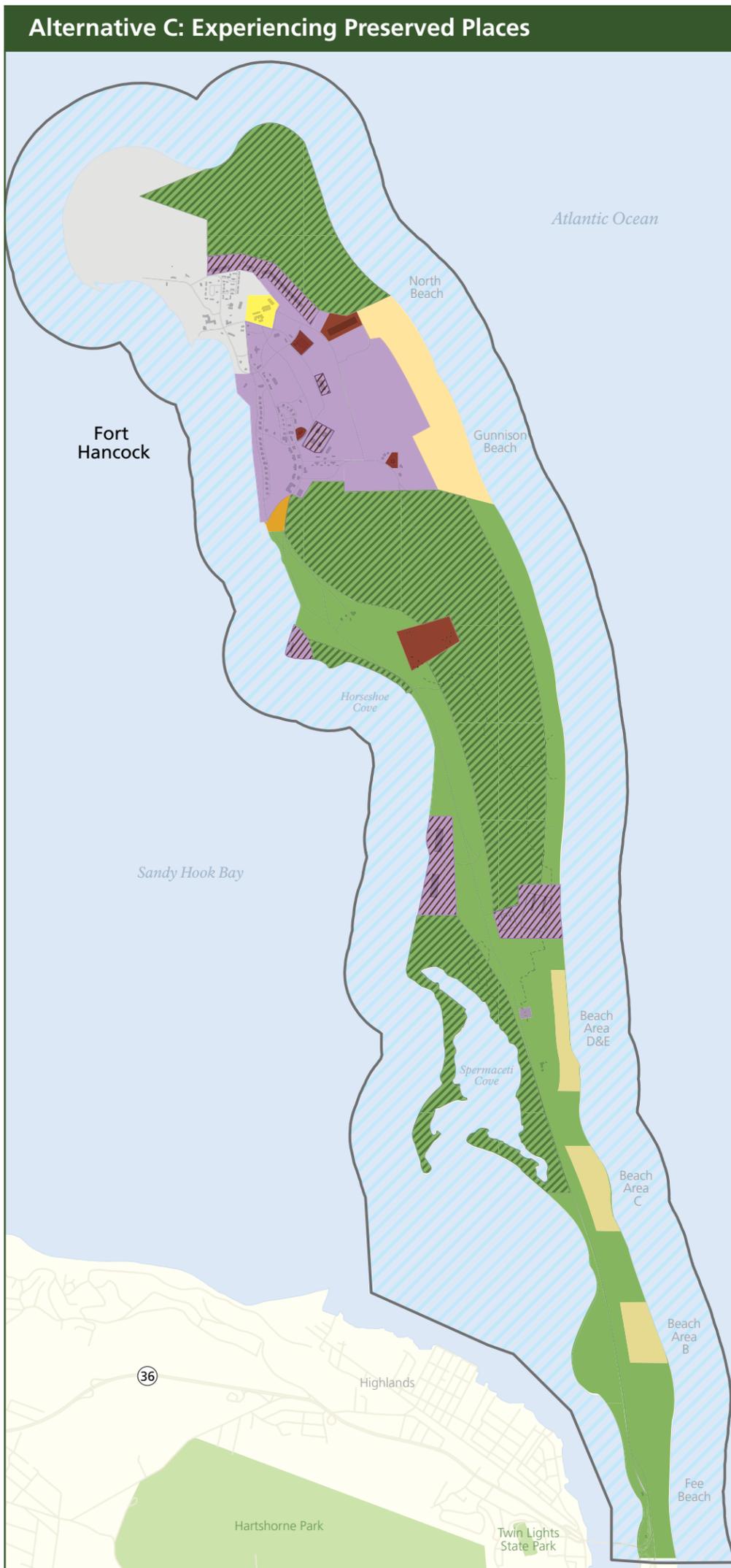
- Expanded trail network and camping at Horseshoe Cove
- Improved facilities for viewing wildlife including birding observation blinds, scopes, and maps/lists
- Improved fishing and wind sport support
- Visitor contact expanded into communities along with alternative transportation options and physical/programmatic connections

Oceanside

- Expanded multi-use trail network
- Equipment rental program and instructional programming
- Beach camping opportunities
- Additional amenities such as shade structures, picnic facilities and more concessions
- Expanded ferry service, internal shuttle, alternative transportation and parking options to accommodate increased beach footprint and greater use
- Interpret the Nike Missile resources offsite (e.g. in visitor center, online)



Management Alternatives: Sandy Hook



Visitor Use and Experience

This alternative would highlight Sandy Hook's beaches, forests, wetlands and waters as living laboratories where visitors and volunteers are engaged in participatory science, education and stewardship. These programs would nurture personal connections with the coastal environment and inspire greater appreciation for the park's historic significance. Recreational uses would be maintained along the beach and bay as would current parking and circulation systems.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

Protection and restoration of the beach dune community as well as forest, shrub and wetland habitats at Sandy Hook would be accelerated in this alternative. To reduce impacts on these sensitive and rare habitats, access would be tightly controlled and restricted in some cases. Aggressive control of invasive species, strengthening healthy communities and repairing beach erosion would be management priorities. Additionally, research and monitoring of the unit's habitats would increase.

Of all alternatives, the greatest effort to preserve the Fort Hancock historic buildings occurs in this alternative. Fort Hancock buildings would be adaptively re-used for many uses including a historic preservation training center that offers instruction in restoring and rehabilitating historic structures. Select batteries are preserved and interpreted through guided tours and interpretive media including Batteries Potter and Gunnison. The Fort's cultural landscape and structures would become a training ground for historic preservationists. Students, partners and volunteers trained at Sandy Hook would be mobilized to participate in historic resource stewardship projects throughout Gateway. The Nike Missile radar site would be converted into an interpreted, visitor-ready site.

Fort Hancock

- The greatest effort to preserve the Fort Hancock historic buildings
- Attracts a historic preservation vocational school and other educational-related uses
- Historic setting of coastal defense structures is improved

Bayside/Inland

- New nature trail and observation facilities
- Enhanced protection, monitoring and study of natural systems and processes

Oceanside

- Recreational uses and facilities maintained in current locations
- Nike Missile radar buildings and equipment repaired and stabilized
- New tours and interpretive media highlight coastal defense history
- Enhance monitoring, study and protection of natural systems and processes
- Beaches remain available for bathing but Holly Forest, dunes, and salt marshes are highly protected
- Engage volunteer stewards in dune habitat restoration projects
- Lodging developed at Life Saving Station

Management Alternatives: Sandy Hook

Visitor Use and Experience

Sandy Hook would remain a popular water-based recreation destination where visitors would find additional launch sites, a water trail, camping facilities and boating facilities all designed to facilitate the coast experience. With its lighthouse, lifesaving station and long coastline, Sandy Hook would emerge as Gateway's focal point for maritime heritage interpretation. The preservation of these iconic structures along with expanded programming, activities and interpretive media would engage visitors in the maritime story. Likewise, Sandy Hook's mosaic of coastal habitats would provide unique opportunities for experiencing and learning about natural systems and native plant communities, several of which are very rare in the region. With expanded ferry service and a shuttle system, both water and land-based access to Sandy Hook would be improved.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

Natural resource management efforts are focused on the protection, study and restoration of the unit's beach/dune habitat and are more extensive than any of the other alternatives. Working with partners, management would endeavor to better understand the natural systems and develop strategies for sustaining the area's native biodiversity, reconnecting fragmented habitat, controlling invasives, and protecting threatened and endangered species. Through bioengineering and other proactive measures, management would build resiliency to climate change within the natural environment and protect Sandy Hook's beaches. The local impacts of global climate change and rising sea level would also be an interpretive focal point and management priority at Sandy Hook under this alternative. The park, in collaboration with partners, would demonstrate leadership in pro-active adaptation and management in the face of climate change and sea level rise. Buildings at Fort Hancock are adaptively reused in a way that enhances appreciation and understanding of the coastal environment. Similar to Alternative C, the Nike missile radar site would be converted it into an interpreted, visitor-ready site.

Fort Hancock

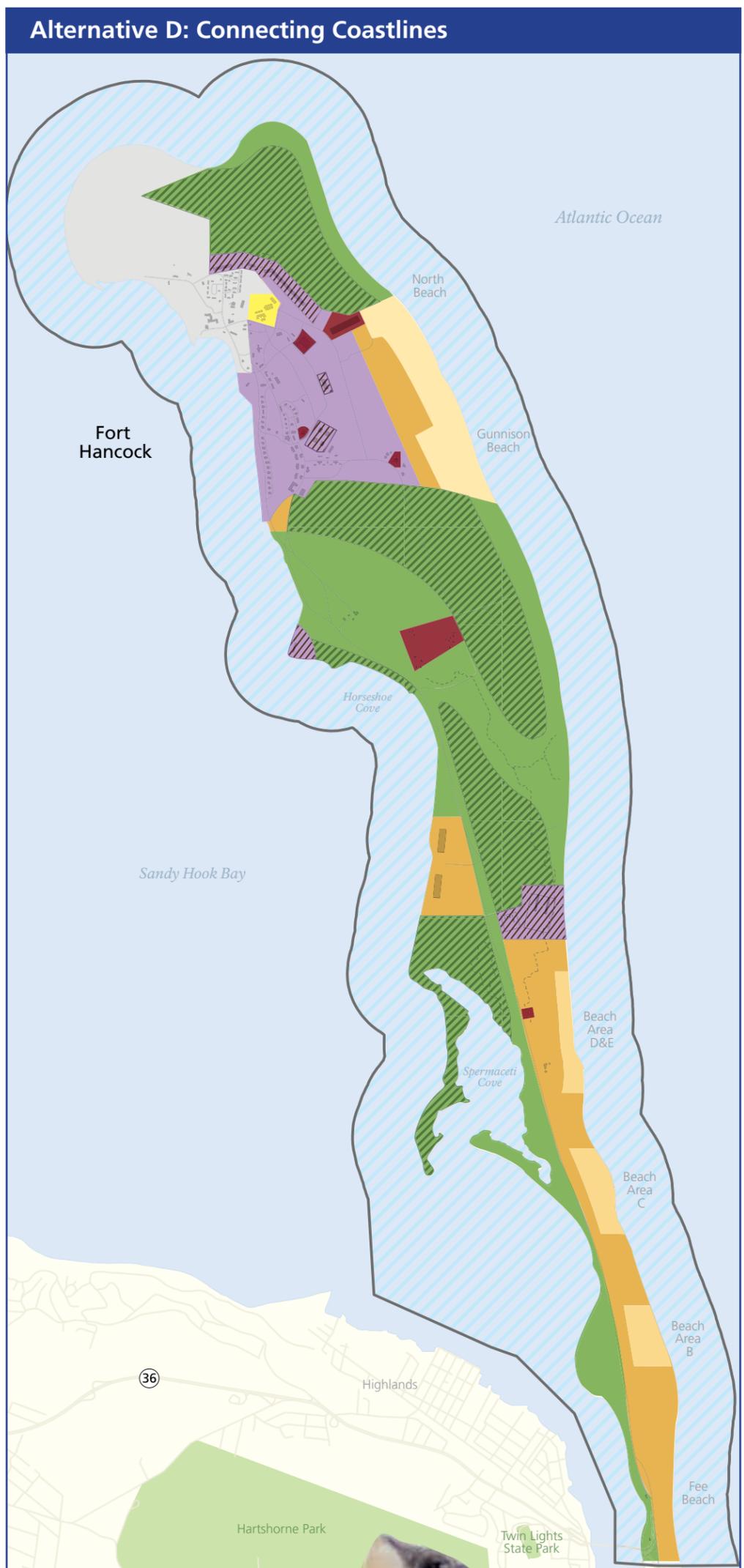
- Becomes a center for maritime-related interpretation and programming and coastal research
- Buildings rehabbed for visitor uses such as lodging
- Most ferry and water taxi use
- Select batteries are stabilized and water vistas created

Bayside/Inland

- New area developed for camping and water recreation
- Expanded water-based recreation with the development of a water trail and mooring field

Oceanside

- Expanded multi-use trail network
- Equipment rental program and instructional programming
- Beach camping opportunities
- Additional amenities such as shade structures, picnic facilities and more concessions
- Expanded ferry service, internal shuttle, alternative transportation and parking options to accommodate increased beach footprint and greater use
- Intensive beach/dune habitat protection, monitoring, and study
- Expanded coastal habitat and maritime interpretation.
- Convert Nike Missile site to an interpreted, visitor-ready site
- Expanded boat use including interpretive boat tours and boat trips linking Sandy Hook with other sites.
- Connections to Twin Lights and other local sites



Management Alternatives: Staten Island

Alternative B: Discovering Gateway

Visitor Use and Experience

The Staten Island units provide opportunities to experience nature, explore our coastal defense heritage, and enjoy the company of families, friends and fellow community members. Improved trailheads and more miles of trail within and between the Staten Island sites as well as picnic areas, water trails and additional water access create many more recreation opportunities. NPS would work with NYCDPR to expand the greenway so that it links Ft Wadsworth, Miller Field and Great Kills together. Additionally, camping would be expanded as a new recreational use on Staten Island.

At Fort Wadsworth, managers would create more to see and do. While visitors may be drawn to the park by Battery Weed or for an afternoon walk they would also find expanded trails and interpretation, access to the water, improved picnic facilities, equipment rentals and other opportunities to recreate in a scenic setting amidst the impressive batteries. Also kayaking would be promoted and visitors would have the opportunity to paddle out to Hoffman and Swinburne Islands for distant wildlife observation from an offshore dock.

At Great Kills, the Education Field Center would be enhanced with a trailhead, outdoor classrooms, camping facilities and a nature playground to create a fun and safe way for youth to connect with nature. The ball fields at Miller Field and Great Kills would remain vibrant centers for community-based recreation and offer new forms of recreation tailored to youth such as a mountain bike park and/or skateboarding facilities built in cooperation with partners such as NYCDPR.

Improved public transportation, the expanded greenway as well as shuttles between the sites would make access more convenient. Also bike infrastructure would be developed throughout the unit including a bike sharing system, maps and convenient bike parking in order to encourage more bike use and connections with other Staten Island trail systems.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

Habitats and current natural resource practices would be maintained including controlling invasive species, planting trees and monitoring beach erosion. With the exception of the primary coastal defense structures that are already interpreted, all other batteries will either undergo limited stabilization for interpretive purposes or remain untreated.

Alternative C: Experiencing Preserved Places

Visitor Use and Experience

Expanded and innovative interpretation of the batteries at Fort Wadsworth including a Coastal Defense Interpretive Trail and self-guided walk would increase opportunities to learn about and enjoy the park's coastal defense resources. Participatory cultural resource stewardship programming in which partners and volunteers could engage in the hands on preservation of the coastal defense structures would be introduced at Fort Wadsworth.

The Staten Island unit, namely Great Kills, would also offer new opportunities for nature-study, environmental educational and participatory natural stewardship programming. The Great Kills Education Field Station would be enhanced to include more programming and exhibits, an outlying interpretive nature trail network and outdoor classrooms in order to better facilitate environmental education and field learning. New camping opportunities, especially introductory and inter-generational programs that teach camping skills would be developed.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

At Great Kills, the valuable natural resources including maritime forest and shrublands and overwash dunes and beaches would be protected and restored. The ball fields complex would be removed to allow for the habitat restoration. Cultural and natural resource stewardship would be prioritized at the Staten Island districts. At Fort Wadsworth preservation camps, trainings and workshops offer opportunities to contribute to the preservation of Fort Tompkins and select Endicott/Taft era batteries. Management would focus on ensuring visitors leave with a richer understanding of New York harbor's coastal defense history.



Alternative D: Connecting Coastlines

Visitor Use and Experience

Throughout the Staten Island unit, opportunities to access and experience Gateway waters would be increased. Water trails, interpretive boat tours, kayak launch sites, beach access and boating and fishing equipment rental would encourage exploration of the coastline. Through water trails, guided tours and kayak rentals, NPS would facilitate paddling from Fort Wadsworth out to Hoffman and Swineburne islands and/or down the coast to Miller Field and Great Kills.

In this alternative, Fort Wadsworth would become Gateway's focal point for coastal defense interpretation where expanded programming, activities and interpretive media would engage visitors in the coastal defense story. This alternative focuses on increasing access to the Fort's most compelling historic structures, Fort Tompkins and Battery Weed, and immersing them in the coastal defense history through enhanced interpretive media and experience.

A shuttle system, linking the Staten Island units with St George Ferry Terminal would be explored to promote sustainable access and provide a first point of visitor orientation to the Staten Island Unit.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

NPS would focus resource protection efforts on improving beach/dune habitat at the unit and working with neighbors and partners to expand and care for the coastal stretch of protected wetlands and beach/dune habitat. Featured as the park's center for coastal defense interpretation, the park would work with partners to ensure the long-term preservation of iconic cultural resources like Battery Weed and Fort Tompkins while expanding interpretive media at Fort Wadsworth and remote digital media. Like Alternative B, some batteries will either undergo stabilization or remain untreated.



Management Alternatives: Staten Island



Fort Wadsworth

- More recreation facilities, support and activities including introductory camping
- Increased access to the water
- Expanded trail system along Verrazano North batteries and connections to NYC Greenway
- New visitor contact station at Gate House



Great Kills

- Improved the ballfield complex and add additional outdoor recreation facilities
- Expanded multi-use trails system
- Enhanced Education Field Center with a trailhead, outdoor classrooms and a nature playground and introductory camping
- Direct access off Hylan Blvd by secondary access



Miller Field

- Increase NPS programs at the fields
- Expanded community gardens and play features
- New mtn. bike park & trails in swamp oak forest
- With partners rehabilitate hangar for recreational uses and new picnic pavilion and trailhead
- Perimeter trail developed connecting forest and ocean



Fort Wadsworth

- New interpretive trail along coastline and Verrazano batteries
- Hands on opportunities to preserve the batteries via volunteer stewardship programs
- Rehabilitation of Fort Tompkins as a visitor facility
- Overnight lodging, camping developed
- Maintain existing recreational uses and facilities



Great Kills

- Ballfield area restored to maritime ecology, also beach/dunes across the site. Reestablish salt marsh
- Expand study of geomorphology & beach erosion
- Habitat restoration at Crooke's Point and improved nature trail
- "Ecology village" developed in conjunction with other camping opportunities



Miller Field

- Rehabilitate the hangar for recreation, interpretation, community use with partners
- New Discovery trail from fields
- Improve hiking conditions and experience in forest
- Dune restoration



Fort Wadsworth

- New "Coastal Defense Trail" among the batteries
- Expanded water-based recreation including a coastal water trail, boat rentals and greater fishing access
- Expanded interpretation of coastal defense resources
- Water-based boat tours
- Rehabilitation of Fort Tompkins as a visitor facility
- Off shore moorings and boatels



Great Kills

- Promenade developed along the inner harbor from Crooke's Point to Hylan Blvd
- New kayak launch, offshore dock, water trail and an instructional boating zone within Great Kills Harbor
- Improved beach/dune habitat (Crooke's Point)
- "Ecology village" developed in conjunction with extensive camping opportunities in former ballfield area



Miller Field

- Launch site and kayak instructional zone developed
- Hangar removed and site rehabilitated to support water-based recreation
- Trailhead, parking and special events space developed



PRESORT STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Union, NJ
Permit No. 933

US Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Gateway National Recreation Area
210 New York Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10305

This newsletter is a publication of the National Park Service,
Gateway National Recreation Area.

For additional information please contact:

Superintendent

Gateway National Recreation Area

210 New York Avenue

Staten Island, NY 10305

Email: gate_gmp@nps.gov, **Tel:** 718.354.4628

Website: www.nps.gov/gate

Stay Connected

The Gateway website is the best place to stay connected with the GMP and future events. Check out the General Management Planning section for updated and expanded information on GMP activities. Join the electronic mailing list. Sign up on the website to receive e-blasts. You can follow Gateway National Recreation Area on Facebook. Gateway is also on Twitter! You can follow us at www.twitter.com/GatewayNPS

- Stay connected to the project by visiting www.nps.gov/gate where you can also sign up for news alerts, read newsletters and find related reading materials.
- Attend open houses and other park events.
- Share your ideas, questions and comments in person or online.
- Encourage your neighbors and friends to visit Gateway and to also become involved.

Creating a Great Urban Park at Gateway!

