



FIRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

WILLIAM FLOYD ESTATE PRELIMINARY MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES



FIRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE

GMP NEWSLETTER 3, SEPTEMBER 2011

NOTE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

After 30 years, Fire Island National Seashore is engaged in the preparation of a new general management plan (GMP). The Estate is a separate and distinct unit of the Fire Island National Seashore with its own set of unique characteristics. To properly address the future needs of the Estate, workshops and alternative planning concepts were developed separately from the overall planning effort for the Island.

This newsletter specifically relates to the William Floyd Estate and includes important background information,

describes the current management of the Estate and presents a preliminary management alternative entitled “Historical Park and Museum.” The newsletter also puts forth a number of actions that would be “Common to All Alternatives” because they are considered so fundamental to the Estate’s management that they would be pursued regardless of the management alternative selected for implementation. The ideas being presented were prepared by the National Park Service (NPS) planning team in consultation with the park staff; representatives from the surrounding town and villages; Native American, state, county and local entities and organizations; and members of the general public. Through workshops and other outreach efforts, the planning team has received many helpful comments and a wealth of ideas.

The proposed preliminary management plan for the Estate will be refined after your input, and comments from other interested parties, have been considered. The management plan proposed for the William Floyd Estate will then appear in the draft GMP/EIS for Fire Island National Seashore for formal public review. Your thoughts are important to us and we need your help to generate the best plan we can for the William Floyd Estate. We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

K. Christopher Soller
Superintendent



Two hundred and fifty years of history are preserved at the William Floyd Estate, which contains architectural features and artifacts from three centuries of American life. The estate contains the ancestral house, grounds, and cemetery of the William Floyd family. William Floyd, a Revolutionary War general and a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was born in the house in 1734.



FIRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE

GMP NEWSLETTER 3, SEPTEMBER 2011

**WHAT IS A GENERAL
MANAGEMENT PLAN (GMP)?**

General management plans are requirements of the National Park Service that lay out the vision for a park and provide guidance for its management over the next 15 to 20 years. General management planning offers an open, structured decision making process that is (1) logical and trackable, (2) based on scholarly and scientific information and analysis, and (3) based on understanding and consideration of public input. General management plans provide the foundation for decision making in each of the 394 units of the NPS.

As part of the general management planning process, the planning team held a visioning workshop in June 2009 to define important issues and identify opportunities for the Estate's future. The visioning workshop generated many good

ideas and aided the planning team's development of several alternatives. Those alternatives were reviewed by a diversity of public and agency participants at the second Estate workshop, held this year. Based on their comments and other information, specific ideas were taken from each alternative to create the preliminary management alternative (Historic Park and Museum) that is presented in this newsletter. After considering comments related to the information in this newsletter, a "preferred plan" for the Estate will be developed and integrated into the overall Fire Island National Seashore draft general management plan.

KEY QUESTION AND PLANNING PRIORITIES

During the course of the planning process a Key Question about the Estate was raised. The question focused on the fact that the Estate is physically and thematically discrete from the rest of the Seashore and has separate and distinct management issues. The Key Question is: "How can the National Park Service provide a balanced strategy for management at the Estate that accommodates expanded hours, programming, and outreach while ensuring resource protection and a high quality visitor experience?"

In order to develop and frame the critical planning issues and address the Key Question, two workshops were conducted specifically related to the Estate. The planning priorities defined during those workshops include:

DEFINING THE MESSAGE

Work with other entities to develop a consistent message that defines the Estate's significance, themes and objectives and also broadens understanding and appreciation of the William Floyd Estate locally, nationally and globally.

EDUCATION DESTINATION

Establish the Estate as a place for research and education. Become a living classroom that builds understanding for the cultural and historical significance of the property through engaging, hands-on activities and tangible examples of the historic uses of the site.

ACCESS

Ensure the Estate is easy to find and open and available to the public on a regular basis. Provide a facility that orients visitors and provides space for educational programs throughout the year.

HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY

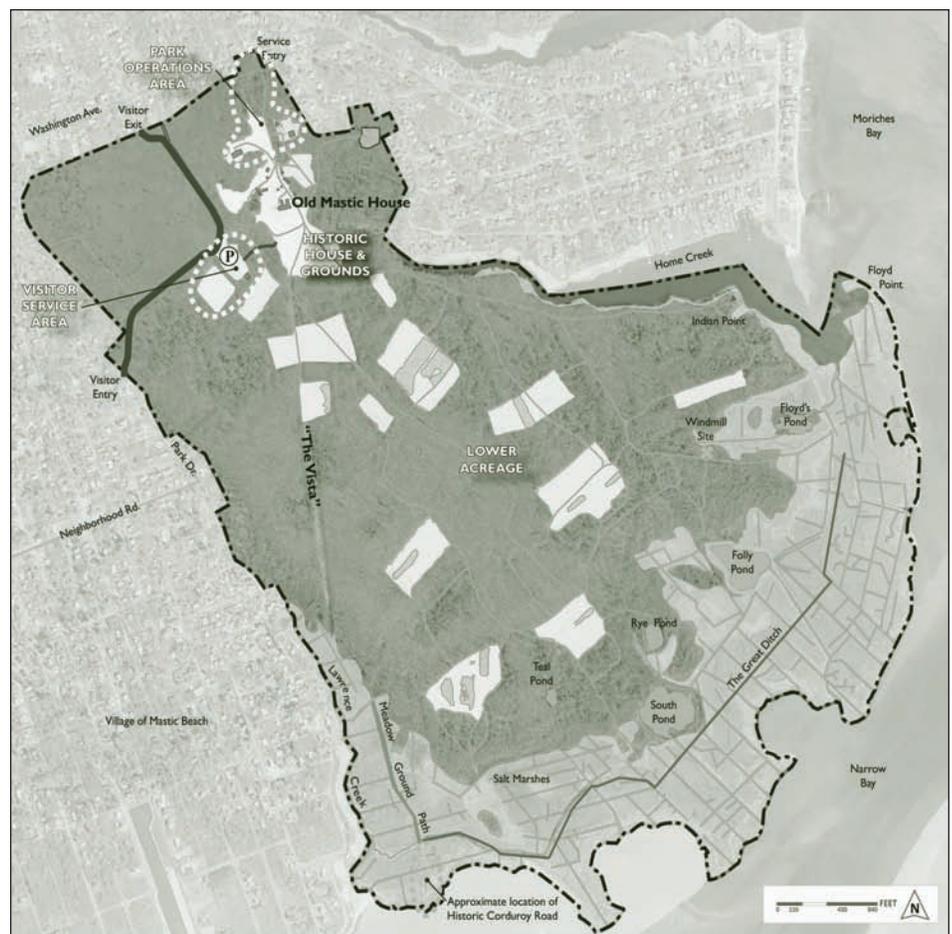
Ensure that visitors have a safe and healthy visitor experience that fosters their understanding and appreciation of the Estate. Create an appropriate monitoring and security system to ensure the park's long-term protection.

The 613 acre Floyd Estate is the remnant of a larger 4400 acre plantation that stretched from the middle of Long Island to the Great South Beach on the Atlantic Ocean.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

In collaboration with others, establish a broad range of diverse and lasting partnerships that encourage educational

opportunities for a wide array of audiences and foster long-term stewardship of the property.



EXISTING CONDITIONS THE WILLIAM FLOYD ESTATE / FIRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE

LEGEND

- Park Boundary
- Public Access Road
- Unpaved Road/Trail
- Boardwalk
- P Parking
- ⊗ Archeological Site
- The Great Ditch
- Estate Grounds
- Hedge
- Field
- Tidal Wetlands
- Woodlands
- Buildings
- Water
- Floyd Family Cemetery



FOUNDATION FOR PLANNING

As you read the foundation statements below, please keep in mind that the Estate is part of Fire Island National Seashore. Therefore, the statements may include references to other parts of the Seashore.



PURPOSE

Fire Island National Seashore conserves, preserves and protects the historic structures, cultural landscapes, museum collections and archeological resources associated with Fire Island National Seashore including the Fire Island Light Station and the William Floyd Estate.

SIGNIFICANCE

Owned and occupied by the Floyd Family from 1724 to 1975, the William Floyd Estate was the home of General William Floyd, a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES & VALUES

On Long Island, adjacent to the Village of Mastic Beach, the 613- acre William Floyd Estate includes the home occupied by William Floyd and generations of his descendants well into the 20th century. William Floyd was one of New York's signers of the Declaration of Independence. The Floyd family's occupancy resulted in

a continuum of use and change that is interpreted at the Estate. The park maintains a house museum and archival collection that includes items that pertain to both the Estate and other areas of the Seashore.

INTERPRETIVE THEMES

The Life and Times of a Patriot

As a signer of the Declaration of Independence, William Floyd, prominent New York political leader and wealthy plantation owner, provides a personal perspective on the risks to life, property, and reputation associated with being a patriot in New York during the War for Independence.

Three Centuries of Change at the Floyd Estate

The Floyd family's personal stories and 250-year occupation of the Floyd Estate in Mastic Beach provide a lens through which to understand the dynamic social, economic, and political changes that took place over that time on Long Island and throughout the nation.

Special programming at the Floyd Estate enables visitors to immerse themselves in the sights and sounds of prior eras.

ELEMENTS COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

A series of Elements Common to All Alternatives have been developed specifically for the Estate. These elements are so important to management of the Estate that they will be applicable no matter which management alternative is selected. The overall GMP being developed for the entire Seashore includes some key actions (entitled Common to All) that are relevant to the Estate and are also considered fundamental to the management of the Estate. (Please see the *Fire Island General Management Plan, Preliminary Management Alternatives Newsletter 2, April 2010* for a selection of park-wide Common to All statements).

CULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Additional information about the Estate is needed to broaden educational programming and to help ensure accurate preservation and interpretation occurs at the site. Informational gaps would be filled by completing such documents as the Estate's Cultural Landscape Report; implementing an archeological program; and working with others to obtain more information related to the site's ethnographic resources (e.g., enslaved people, indentured servants, and other workers). The Seashore would work to acquire additional information about the local Native American associations with the site. Existing historic structures would continue to be rehabilitated for preservation, interpretation and/or for adaptive reuse and the historic cemetery would continue to be preserved and maintained. The Caretaker's Workshop would continue to serve as an office for staff on the property. The lower acreage would continue to be managed as a cultural resource and would be monitored to retain its natural resource values. The Seashore would continue working with the Floyd family descendents and others related to the site to enhance the Estate's collections and our knowledge of the site. In addition, the Park would make the collections more readily available to the public and to educational entities for research and interpretive use.

The National Park Service would integrate efforts to control non-native invasive species with the implementation of the cultural landscape treatment plan. Selective rehabilitation of the cultural landscape would be undertaken in a manner that allows for the maintenance of a mixed habitat complex including forest, field, fresh, and salt water. Fire, vector and deer management plans would be completed specifically for the Estate and operations in these areas would be expanded to address visitor safety and comfort while ensuring resource protection.

William Floyd, a signer of the Declaration of Independence was born at the Estate in 1734 and lived there (except for the British Occupation during the Revolution) until 1803. Portrait by Ralph Earl, 1792

VISITOR EXPERIENCE AND INTERPRETATION

Education about the Estate is an important means for enhancing public enjoyment, building appreciation and fostering stewardship of the site and related area resources. The National Park Service would work with others to make the Estate an educational destination for a diversity of audiences and expand programs and events using a variety of methods and media. The Seashore would develop an outreach initiative so that the Estate and its history would become better known locally, regionally and nationally. To do this effectively, the Estate's hours and season of operation would be expanded, as funding becomes available. The interpretive time period for interpretation would continue to be 1724 to 1975 with an emphasis placed on the continuum of family occupancy and how they reflect important themes of American history within a local, national and global context. Connections to related local, regional and national sites would be enhanced and the Seashore would work with these related entities to undertake events, programs and special tours (e.g., special holiday tours, historic craft events, films, lectures) that further visitor understanding of the Estate and its context.

ACCESS AND WAYFINDING

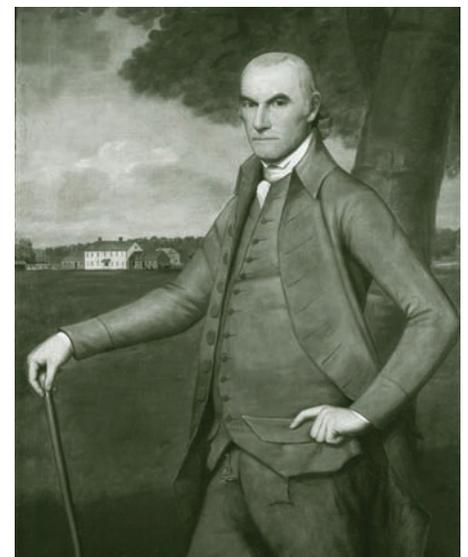
The Seashore, in conjunction with others, would improve wayfinding to the Estate through a diversity of means. These would include signs, maps and other information located at key places in the area. The information would also be posted on the web. New and developing technologies would be used to distribute information and orient visitors. The existing park entry and exit roads would remain the same with signage on local roads improved to direct people easily to and from the Estate through the Village of Mastic Beach. For large-scale special events, the Seashore would work with the local community and other entities to provide off-site parking with shuttle service to and from the Estate.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

The Seashore would improve the current maintenance complex to ensure it has an adequate, safe, and secure space to support operation and maintenance of the Estate and the east end of Fire Island. Twenty-four hour security through on-site staff housing would continue to be provided.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Seashore would strive to integrate the local community and related entities so they become a vital part of the Estate's stewardship. As part of that effort, the Park would work to strengthen the site's recently re-established Friends of the William Floyd Estate and expand the number of Estate volunteers to assist in a multitude of ways. Partnerships would also be expanded for research, programming, and outreach and include Native Americans and such entities as area libraries, schools (pre-school to university), historical societies, youth groups and other interest groups or entities with connections to the Estate. Expanded contact with descendents of the Floyd family and other descendents would take place in order to broaden stories of the place, expand the artifact collection, and deepen our understanding of the Estate and its linkages to related sites. The Seashore would continue to work with descendents to improve the Estate's information and expand the visitor experience.



Independence NHP

STATUS QUO: THE ESTATE'S CURRENT MANAGEMENT

The status quo is considered a management alternative and serves as the baseline for evaluating the preliminary management alternative entitled Historical Park and Museum. Under the status quo alternative, current management practices and the use of approved and interim plans would continue. NPS would continue to collaborate with local, county, and state officials on an as needed basis to address policy and management issues. The Estate would continue to meet day-to-day operations, management, legal, and regulatory requirements based on existing plans and the availability of funds.



Between 1718, when the property was acquired, and 1976, eight generations of Floyds managed the property and adapted it to their changing needs; and so the 25-room Old Mastic House grew from the original 1724 structure to include several “wings and tails.”

VISITOR EXPERIENCE, FACILITIES AND OPERATING SEASON

The primary visitor experience, at the Estate, would continue to be a small group guided tour of the historic Old Mastic House. House tours would be available during the visitor season, from Memorial Day through mid-November on Fridays, weekends and holidays. Visitors would continue to be guided through 25 furnished rooms describing the changes in the land, the house, and the family over their 250 years of occupancy at the home. Self-guided walking tours would continue to be available to visitors wishing to see the historic outbuildings, cemetery, and lower acreage. Thematically relevant programs as well as nature walks would also be offered year-round, staffing and conditions permitting.

The orientation and sales space would continue to be located inside the Old Mastic House. The office for the tour guides would continue to be in the small caretaker's workshop adjacent to the Old Mastic House. Restrooms would continue to be located away from the historic core in a small facility near the existing parking lot.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Old Mastic House would continue to be preserved and furnished to reflect the family's use and occupancy. While most of the rooms would reflect changes at the Estate over the last 250 years, one room would continue to serve as an



The Floyd family cemetery. Note the small white crosses, at the right, just outside the fence line. These are the grave markers for the family's slaves and servants.

introductory exhibit space while another would serve as a small sales area. The cultural landscape, in the lower acreage, would continue to be maintained in the same forest, field and unpaved road configuration as when the NPS obtained the Estate in 1975.

The Park would continue to house and maintain an extensive collection of archival and museum items for the Estate and the entire Seashore on the Estate's grounds. A number of objects would continue to be on display in the Old Mastic House, though the majority would remain in storage.

ACCESS AND WAYFINDING

Visitors would continue to use the existing entrance road that guides them to a parking lot and restroom facility in the northwest section of the Estate. A nearby cleared area would continue to be available for event overflow parking. The parking lot would continue to be connected with a boardwalk system through the woods to a grass clearing at the Old Mastic House. Trails and unpaved roadways throughout the Estate would be retained and would remain unmarked.

OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE AND HOUSING

A small collection of maintenance sheds in the northeastern section of the Estate would continue to serve as the storage and preservation area for all Estate maintenance and operational activities.

PARTNERSHIPS

The William Floyd Estate would continue to be managed as a discrete unit of Fire Island National Seashore with numerous volunteers trained and scheduled to provide interpretive tours of the Old Mastic House. The Estate would continue to host a variety of researchers and academic interns that request use of the collections. Many Estate educational programs would continue to be curtailed due to a variety of reasons such as health and safety concerns (e.g., ticks, poison ivy, mosquitos) and the lack of appropriate facilities and staffing.

HISTORICAL PARK AND MUSEUM

This alternative would envision the Estate as a historical park and museum where visitor activities and experiences would focus on understanding and appreciating the historical relevance of William Floyd and his descendents, the evolution of the site from agriculture to recreational retreat, and the political, social, and economic forces that shaped this family and their use of the Estate. The value of the Estate as a large area of undeveloped land in a developed community would be acknowledged. Recreational, historical and nature-based opportunities would be expanded, as appropriate within the context of the Estate's purpose and significance. The interpretative emphasis would be broadened to embrace more of the site's historic regional context with more collaborative exhibits and programming taking place with other institutions, both on and off site.



William Floyd's great-great grand daughter, Cornelia Floyd Nichols and her children donated the Estate to the National Park Service to ensure its preservation.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE, FACILITIES AND OPERATING SEASON

For many, the visitor experience at the Estate would begin at a newly rehabilitated and modestly expanded orientation facility located near the site's existing parking area. At the facility, visitors would have the opportunity to see an introductory video, use the restroom and talk with a park ranger or volunteer to plan their visit. Visitors would also have an opportunity to view an orientation exhibit that interprets the historic evolution of the property as well as other relevant changing exhibits. Indoor and outdoor program spaces would be available for day and evening programs as well as a place to orient and stage school groups and provide a sheltered area for lunch. The rehabilitated facility would enable the Seashore to remove non-historic functions from the Old Mastic House and create a safer space in which to orient and stage visitors. In addition to providing this rehabilitated facility at the Estate, the Seashore would work in collaboration with the Village of Mastic Beach to explore the possibility of creating an off-site exhibit about the Estate. This exhibit could potentially be located in the Village's proposed welcome center.

The historic grounds and the upgraded facility would be open to the public year around with days and hours of operation

varying seasonally. The Old Mastic House would continue to be open seasonally. The extension of the operating season and school programming would be contingent upon the availability of funding.

Interpretation and programming would emphasize regional and community connections to the Estate in historical, cultural and physical terms. A strong focus would be placed on working with area school districts to tie on-site school programs to the State Curriculum. In addition, a variety of programs would be provided that encourage families of diverse interests and backgrounds to make return visits to the Estate.

Tours of the Old Mastic House would be scheduled and ticketed to manage the volume and flow of visitors through the house. Visitors would also have the opportunity to explore other structures and features within the historic core, see an exhibit and use the restroom at the expanded curatorial facility and walk along the historic system of roads and trails to learn about the Estate's grounds from a historical perspective. Landscape tableaus, that visually illustrate the site's cultural past, would be created to help visitors understand the Estate's historic evolution and support its interpretive objectives. Landscape tableaus may include a planted agricultural field, garden, or other landscape feature illustrative of an important period in the Estate's history.

Because the Floyd family was active in natural resource conservation, the Seashore would also highlight the Estate's natural landscape and its flora and fauna. Interpretation would be intertwined with recreational activities throughout the site. Walking, hiking, birding and photography and related activities would be allowed and encouraged. A well-hidden rustic restroom could be provided in the Lower Acreage. The Seashore would explore providing a simple non-motorized watercraft landing at the Estate with a nearby

in-water trail. Both a walking tour brochure and a downloadable audio tour would be available to visitors and would provide important information on safety while touring the site (e.g., ticks and poison ivy) and help interpret the different periods in the Estate's history.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The historic core (Old Mastic House, surrounding grounds, cemetery) would be preserved in a manner that supports interpretation of the continuum of the site's multi-generational history. In the Old Mastic House, the orientation exhibit and sales area would be removed and all the spaces in the home would be furnished to illustrate the continuum of family use. The existing structures and selected landscape features (e.g., garden, portions of the orchard) within the historic core would be rehabilitated and interpreted. The sheep barn, which was destroyed by fire after the NPS acquired the property, would be reconstructed and relevant missing structures and features would be interpreted to help visitor's understand the site's history. In the lower acreage, the existing cultural landscape features (e.g., fields, marshlands, "vista", ponds, remnants of the corduroy road and lop treed fence system) would be retained and rehabilitated. Landscape tableaus would be created in support of interpretive objectives and roads and trails would be rehabilitated to support additional recreational use, by using best practice methods and materials. The existing curatorial facility would be expanded to meet the needs of a growing collection including additional space for cataloguing and caring for the collection, an appropriate area for researchers to review materials, as well as a space for temporary exhibits that could be open to the public. The improved facility would offer an outdoor exhibit to provide interpretation of the collection even when the curatorial facility is closed. The curatorial facility would continue to house collections from both the Estate and Fire Island with an expansion

in the scope of collections to include additional artifacts and archival materials related to William Floyd, his descendents and items related to Fire Island.

ACCESS AND WAYFINDING

The directional signage system guiding visitors to the Estate and back through the Village of Mastic Beach would be improved. The Estate's existing road system would be retained; however, the existing parking lot would be reconfigured to accommodate the rehabilitated facility. Parking may need to be expanded into portions of the current overflow field to handle the potential increase in vehicles. For special events, requiring additional parking, the Seashore could partner with others to provide off-site parking with a shuttle bus service to and from the Estate. The current boardwalk may need to be realigned, in certain areas to better connect the proposed visitor orientation facility to the Old Mastic House.

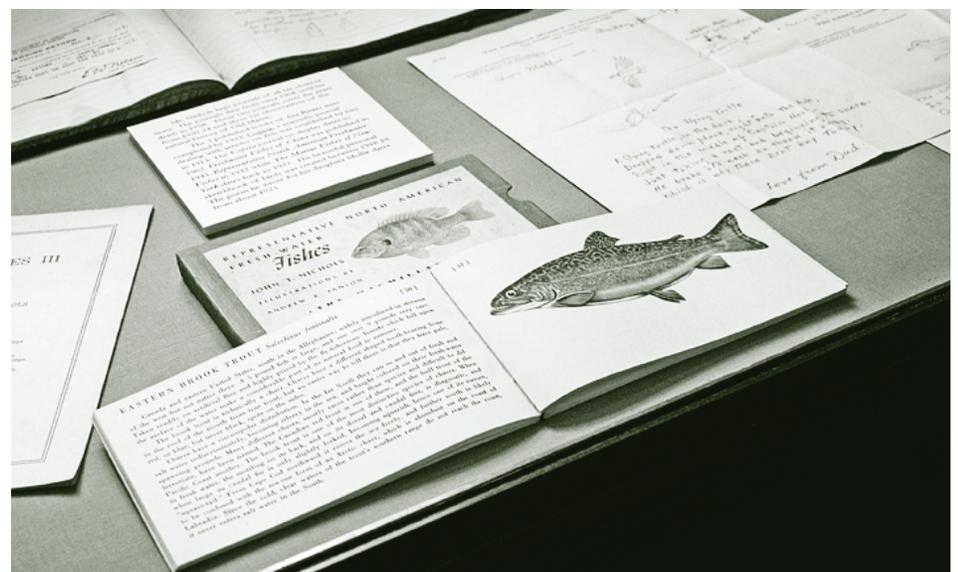
OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE AND HOUSING

The existing non-historic maintenance sheds would be upgraded and consolidated to provide a maintenance facility that offers safe and sufficient space to support the maintenance operations for the Estate as well as the East District of the Seashore. Administrative space would be provided for the Estate's administrative and site staff at the rehabilitated orientation facility. The caretaker's workshop would continue to be staffed as a ranger and visitor contact facility to support the additional activity that is likely to occur on the property.

PARTNERSHIPS

Beyond the key action statements, the National Park Service would consider the possibility of seeking formal Congressional designation of the William Floyd National Historic Site. With such a designation, the Estate would then become a separate unit and could receive its own operational funding from the NPS yet it would still likely receive administrative support from Fire Island National Seashore.

Temporary exhibits drawing from the many artifacts in curatorial storage are used to present different facets of the family's long tenure on the property.



NEXT STEPS/ PROJECT SCHEDULE

Next, the planning team will review the comments received in response to this newsletter, collect and analyze resource information, and develop the draft “preferred plan” for the Estate. That plan will be integrated into the overall draft general management plan for Fire Island National Seashore. The draft GMP for Fire Island National Seashore will be on public review in the winter of 2012.

FISCAL YEAR	TASKS/MILESTONES
2006	Project Scoping
	Research, Data Collection & Analysis
2007	Foundation for Planning (Purpose, Significance, Fundamental Resources)
	Define Park Goals
2008	Framework for Alternatives
	Develop Preliminary Alternatives (internal)
2009	Internal & Stakeholder Review of Planning Alternatives
	Stakeholder Workshop 1 – Visioning for the William Floyd Estate
2010	FINS Newsletter (Preliminary Alternatives)
2011	Stakeholder Workshop 2 – Alternatives for the William Floyd Estate
	Newsletter (Preliminary Alternatives for the William Floyd Estate)
	Draft GMP/EIS for Agency Review
2012	Draft GMP/EIS for Public Review
	Final GMP/EIS for Public Review
	Approve GMP/EIS with Record of Decision (ROD)



The Vista



Fire Island National Seashore General Management Plan
National Park Service
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Boston, Massachusetts 02109

PLEASE SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS WITH US

Please take a moment to consider the content of this newsletter ("progress report") and let us know what you think.

Visit the park's website at www.nps.gov/fiis for links to the planning project web page, where you can also share your comments electronically.

For more information, please contact the planning team at fire_island_gmp@nps.gov or Superintendent Chris Soller at (631) 687-4751.

Design & layout: Rebecca Chandler, www.chandler-design.com