

Re: Final Disposition of NHL Steam Schooner *Wapama*.

San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (SAFR) is continuing consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on the proposed final disposition of the National Historic Landmark (NHL) Steam Schooner *Wapama*, a property of SAFR, currently located at Potrero Point, Richmond, California. This action is in accordance with the *Programmatic Agreement Regarding the General Management Plans, San Francisco Maritime National Historic [sic] Park, CA* of May 2, 1997 and the *Extension of General Management Plan Programmatic Agreement (GMP PA) to 2015* of November 22, 2010.

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as amended, and implementing guidelines 36 CFR 800.10 (Special Requirements for Protection of National Historic Landmarks) and 35 CFR 800.4 through 36 CFR 800.6, as well as the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Vessel Preservation Projects, SAFR has determined that the proposed undertaking will have an adverse effect on a National Historic Landmark.

Project Area of Potential Effects: SAFR has identified the Area of Potential Effects (APE) as being the entire historic vessel as she now sits on a floating steel barge, as well as portions of the historic graving basin and the craneways located to the east, west and north of the vessel within the National Register listed Richmond Shipyard No. 3 Historic District, Potrero Point, Richmond, California. Shipyard No. 3 is a property owned by the City of Richmond, California, and is a site included within Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park (RORI).

NHL Steam Schooner *Wapama*: The *Wapama* is a large wooden-hulled steamer, built in 1915 at St. Helens, Oregon. She is the last surviving example of the West Coast Steam Schooner type, a class of vessel developed beginning in the 1880s for lumber transportation in coastal trade. She is nationally significant in the area of naval architecture for her unique construction, varying from the established shipbuilding practices of the time. She is also nationally significant in the areas of commerce, industry and transportation as a Pacific Coast expression of the United State's dependence on maritime trade and commerce. She is the last intact American coastwise steamship to carry passengers and cargo, and is the sole representative of hundreds of wooden steamers which operated on America's Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific coasts in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Acquired originally by the California State Park Service in 1957, she passed to National Park Service ownership in 1977. The massive Douglas fir hull had deteriorated to such an extent that by 1979 she could no longer be maintained afloat on her own bottom. The vessel was placed on a steel barge in 1980, where she has remained until this

time. Although the vessel has been adequately blocked, and partially protected with a fabric cover on a wooden frame, the gradual deterioration of the structure has unfortunately continued. She was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 24, 1973 and was designated as a National Historic Landmark on April 20, 1984.

Richmond Shipyard No. 3: “Henry J. Kaiser's enterprise built and operated four shipyards at Richmond, California, for the U.S. Maritime Commission during World War II. Richmond shipyard no. 3 is significant as the only one of the four Richmond shipyards that survives. Richmond shipyard no. 3 embodies the amazing accomplishment of American industries and American Home-Front workers in producing the ships and other materiel necessary for the military forces of the United States and its allies to defeat the Axis powers during World War II. Richmond shipyard no. 3 has significant associations with the U.S. Maritime Commission, which oversaw the nationwide program to build emergency shipyards and then to equip and staff those shipyards to build record numbers of Liberty ships and other merchant vessels in support of the war effort; with Henry J. Kaiser, one of the most remarkable of America's wartime industrialists for the extent of production by his enterprises; and with the important roles that wartime industries in the U.S. played in shaping the course of American society after the war, such as the opening of industrial work places to women and people of color.”¹

“The five basins at yard no. 3 are relatively intact with the significant exception of their gates, which have been removed. The basins are therefore permanently flooded, with no possibility of closing the gates and pumping out the seawater. The basins are now used to store boats, barges, and ships and/or to make ship repairs that do not require that the ships be elevated out of the water. Given the variety of activities taking place in the basin, the craneways between the basins are crowded with materials, trailers, truck mounted cranes, and other equipment. The galleries beneath the craneways are largely open. Some of the partitions that once defined storerooms or shops for various shipbuilding crafts are still in place. Concrete stairs that once provided pedestrian access from the craneways to the galleries and to the bottoms of the basins are still in place, although several are in advanced stages of deterioration.”²

Project Description: This project will dismantle and dispose of the NHL Steam Schooner *Wapama*. Elements of the vessel to be accessioned into the park museum collection, or which have use for interpretation or other park uses will be removed before the vessel

¹ From HAER report: page 2, “Kaiser’s Richmond Shipyards with special emphasis on Richmond Shipyard No. 3”, prepared for the NPS by Fredric L. Quivik

² Ibid. page 223.

becomes too unsafe for access. The vessel itself will be dismantled using heavy equipment. The dismantling process will be documented through video and digital photography. There are a number of options for the dismantling work, including, but not limited to:

- Dismantle the vessel in place on the barge with debris going into shore-based trucks or debris boxes.
- Dismantle the vessel in place on the barge with debris placed on another barge for disposal.
- Partially dismantle the vessel in place, stabilize the barge and move it to another location to complete dismantling.
- Tow the vessel on its barge to another location where it would be dismantled.

The triple expansion steam engine and a few significant examples of structural members would be removed during the dismantling and moved to a safe location within the park where they would become part of *Wapama*'s interpreted story.

Assessment of Effects: The NHL Steam Schooner *Wapama* would be dismantled and destroyed, an adverse effect. Please see the following reports and background materials that support this decision:

- *Programmatic Agreement Regarding the General Management Plans, San Francisco Maritime National Historic [sic] Park, CA* of May 2, 1997.
- *Extension of General Management Plan Programmatic Agreement (GMP PA) to 2015*, November 22, 2010.
- *NHL Steam Schooner Wapama Condition Survey and Preservation Recommendations*, Richmond, California, Architectural Resources Group, November 2005.
- *Condition Assessment Of Main Structural Members Of Wapama*, February 2006, Natural Resources Research Institute, University of Minnesota Duluth.
- *Value Analysis Study for San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park Treatment and Preservation Options for the Historic Vessel Wapama*, November 29 and 30, 2006, Architectural Resources Group.
- *National Historic Landmark Steam Schooner Wapama Salvage and Disassembly Feasibility Study*, December 21, 2009, Richard P. Arber Associates, by Moffatt & Nichol. (Feasibility Study).
- *Disposition of San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park's National Historic Landmark (NHL) Schooner Wapama – Management Summary*, March 2011, National Park Service. (Management Summary).

Copies of the documents may be found at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/wapama>).

At the time of the preparation of the 2009 Feasibility Study, it was believed that the after house of the vessel could be removed and rehabilitated as a very large artifact. Since that time, the vessel's deterioration has accelerated alarmingly to the point that the after house

will not be salvageable by the time funding can be secured to dismantle the vessel. As noted above, the current plan is to salvage the triple expansion steam engine and some few significant structural elements and artifacts. A number of large pieces of equipment were removed and placed in storage in 2007 to lighten the load on the vessel.

The Programmatic Agreement of 1997 covers the dismantling and destruction of the NHL Steam Schooner *Wapama* and specifically instructs the park to:

1. Provide the SHPO the opportunity to comment on the decision to demolish the vessel.
2. Consult with the SHPO to determine what level and kind of recordation is required for the property.
3. Conduct a survey of the vessel and select any hardware or other material that might be used in preserving other vessels in the park, curated, or utilized for interpretive purposes.
4. Prepare for public distribution a report that details the administrative history of the *Wapama*, maintenance history and reasons for dismantling.
5. Ensure that the story of the *Wapama*, including reason for dismantling, remains a part of SAFR interpretive activities. Salvaged elements may be used to interpret the history of the *Wapama* and steam schooners to the maximum extent possible.

This project also will have a potential effect on Richmond Shipyard No. 3 due to the possibility that the demolition of the *Wapama* would take place, all or in part, from the historic concrete craneways on either side of the vessel. We believe this effect will not be adverse because the park will consult both with the Shipyard owner, the City of Richmond, and the staff at RORI in the preparation of the dismantling contract to assure the protection of the historic shipyard structure.

Request for Concurrence: At this point, we are requesting the concurrence of the SHPO on our decision to demolish the vessel and on our determination of the Area of Potential Effects. We are also requesting SHPO concurrence that the effect on Richmond Shipyard No. 3 will not be adverse if we provide for protection of the historic property in our contract documents. We propose submitting a letter documenting agreement between SAFR, RORI and the City of Richmond; and will allow involved parties, including the SHPO, to review and comment on the draft contract documents for the dismantling of the vessel once they are prepared.

Resolution of Adverse Effects and Continuing Consultation: We are proposing a meeting between the SHPO's office and SAFR in the near future to discuss what has been done, and what needs to be done to comply with the other stipulations of the Programmatic Agreement and any other stipulations the SHPO may feel are necessary. The *Wapama* has been documented to HAER standards, both an initial project in the late 1980s³ and updated documentation in 2010 (which is still in draft). We are compiling a detailed description of what has been done and when it might be available to the public via the

³ See http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/collections/habs_haer/ and search on *Wapama*.

Library of Congress. We have conducted several surveys of the vessel and will be supplying the SHPO with a list of items to be accessioned into the collection, or used for other purposes in the park.

We are interested in hearing from the public ways we might interpret the history of the *Wapama*.

Copies of our SHPO correspondence were sent to:

Ms. Elaine Jackson-Retondo Ph.D., National Historic Landmarks Coordinator,
National Park Service - Pacific West Region
Mr. Tom Leatherman, Superintendent, Rosie the Riveter World War II Home
Front NHP
Ms. Lina Velasco, City of Richmond Planning Department
Mr. Walter Rybka, President Council of American Maritime Museums
Ms. Burchie Green, President National Maritime History Association
Mr. Dana Hewson, Mystic Seaport
Mr. Dick Wagner, Center for Wooden Boats
Mr. Raymond Ashley PhD., San Diego Maritime Museum