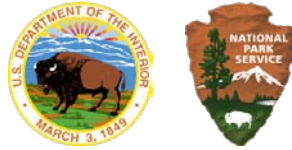


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## Alcatraz Ferry Embarkation EIS

Golden Gate National Recreation Area, California

National Park Service  
 U.S. Department of the Interior



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## Public Scoping Process Kicks Off in June

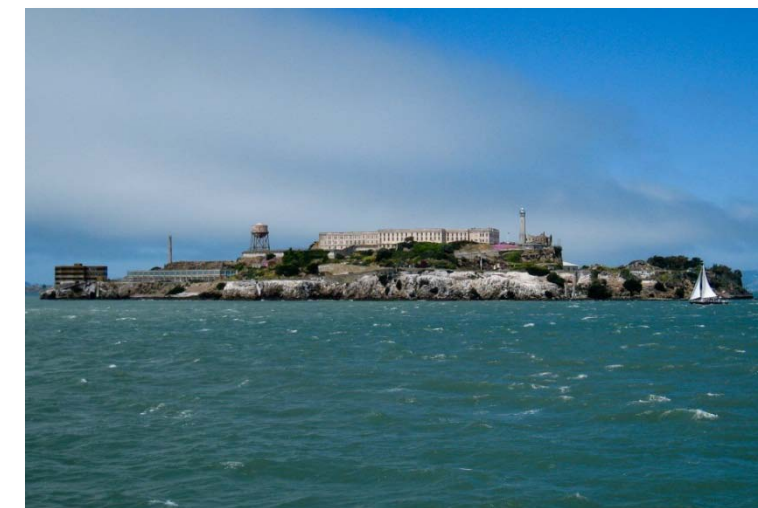
The National Park Service (NPS) is beginning the planning process to establish a long-term ferry embarkation site for passenger service between the San Francisco waterfront and Alcatraz Island. The associated Alcatraz Ferry Embarkation Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will also evaluate a ferry connection from the San Francisco embarkation site to existing piers at Sausalito and/or Fort Baker. This project is being developed in cooperation with the Port of San Francisco (Port) and City and County of San Francisco (City).

To begin the process, the park is engaging the public and agencies in scoping activities to hear comments that could inform the preparation of the Draft EIS. This information will be useful in creating a range of reasonable alternatives, evaluating their potential impacts, identifying ways to mitigate impacts, and selecting a preferred alternative. We will report back to you what we learned through public scoping later this year.



It is important to note that the process to award the 10-year concession contract for ferry service to Alcatraz Island from the selected site will be a separate process and is scheduled to be completed in advance of the current contract expiring in 2016. The planning process is following requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act.

## Background



Alcatraz Island, the site of pre-Civil War fortifications, was the nation's first military prison. It later became the most notorious maximum security penitentiary in the United States and subsequently was the site of the occupation that helped ignite the movement for American Indian self-determination. More than 1.4 million people annually visit Alcatraz Island.

Alcatraz Island is managed by Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), with access from the existing ferry embarkation site located between Piers 31 and 33 (also referred to as Pier 31½) in San Francisco. This EIS will build upon recent studies conducted by the NPS, the Port, the City, the State of California, and the former Water Transit Authority.

## Alcatraz Ferry Embarkation EIS

Golden Gate National Recreation Area, California

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## Decision Process

It is anticipated that the Draft EIS, which will describe the preferred alternative site, will be available for public review in the fall of 2013. Availability of the Draft EIS will be formally announced through local and regional news media, on the project website, in the Federal Register, and also by email to those on our email list.

We will hold public meetings after the Draft EIS is distributed to provide further opportunities to discuss and comment on the document. Dates and locations for these meetings will be determined at the time the Draft EIS is released.

The Final EIS and Record of Decision are anticipated to be available in 2014. The official responsible for making the final decision on the Ferry Embarkation EIS is the NPS Regional Director, Pacific West Region, upon the recommendation of the GGNRA Superintendent.

### Milestones

#### June to July 2012

Public and agency scoping

#### Fall and Winter 2012

Development of alternatives and analysis of impacts

#### Fall 2013

Draft EIS available for public and agency comment

#### Fall 2014

Final EIS available and issuance of Record of Decision



## Project Purpose

The NPS seeks to secure a site on the northern San Francisco waterfront that provides for a long-term ferry embarkation facility for visitors traveling to Alcatraz Island. The need for the project is driven by the following current conditions:

- Due to federal concessions law, the ferry embarkation site is subject to change every 10 years, leading to confusion for visitors and inconsistencies in the delivery of visitor services, and hindering the ability for the NPS concessioners to build upon previous site improvements.
- Current and previous 10-year leases between the Port and NPS concessioners diminish the earned revenue available to reinvest on Alcatraz Island and at other GGNRA sites.
- The visitor experience and waiting area are not of the quality the NPS strives to provide due to the temporary nature and condition of existing facilities.
- The facilities are inadequate to appropriately prepare visitors for their trip or provide information to the many visitors who are unable to visit Alcatraz Island.
- The current facility does not provide an opportunity for expanded ferry service to other GGNRA areas such as Muir Woods via a shuttle bus from Sausalito.

## Project Objectives

The objectives for this project include locating a ferry embarkation site that:

- Establishes a long-term (at least 50 years) primary location for visitor access to Alcatraz Island
- Is economically feasible and sustainable by enabling substantial reinvestment on Alcatraz Island and other park facilities and visitor programs
- Accommodates the critical facilities and programs needed for the safety and comfort of visitors and staff, and provides for efficient ferry boat operations
- Provides an identifiable area for a quality welcome, orientation, and interpretation of the natural, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources of Alcatraz Island, GGNRA, and the larger national park system
- Provides facilities for expanded ferry service to accommodate existing and future visitor demand for travel to Alcatraz Island and the Marin Headlands

The NPS has requested that the Port and the City be cooperating agencies for this EIS. In the event that a site on Port property is selected as the preferred alternative, environmental review of the project under the California Environmental Quality Act could be required and would be initiated at a later date.

## Get Involved

The purpose of scoping activities is to obtain comments on the proposed project. Members of the public, interested organizations, and agencies are encouraged to provide comments on the full spectrum of issues and concerns that should be addressed in the Draft EIS; to assist with defining a suitable range of alternatives; to advise on the nature and extent of potential environmental impacts including natural, cultural, socioeconomic, and other topics; and to suggest possible mitigation strategies that could reduce project impacts.

In addition to sites identified through recent investigations (see *Project Location map*), other sites that meet the project purpose and need could also be considered if suggested during scoping. Key topics expected to be addressed in the Draft EIS include visitor experience, transportation, visual quality, economics, cultural resources, natural resources, and air quality.

Two open house-format public meetings are scheduled:

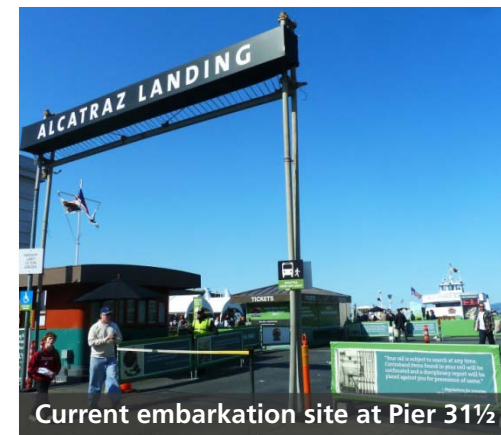
<b>June 26 – 4:30 to 7:30 P.M.</b>	<b>June 28 – 5:30 to 7:30 P.M.</b>
Fort Mason Building 201 San Francisco, CA 94123	City Hall 420 Litho Street Sausalito, CA 94965

Interested individuals, organizations, and agencies are invited to attend the meetings to discuss the project with the planning team and make suggestions about the project.

If you cannot attend, we still want to hear from you. Comments can be submitted up to 60 days from the date that the Notice of Intent for this EIS appeared in the Federal Register (June 1, 2012), but to be most helpful, we ask you to send yours no later than July 31, 2012. You can submit comments online at the project website printed below. Comments can also be mailed to the following address:

Superintendent  
Golden Gate National Recreation Area  
Attn: Alcatraz Ferry Embarkation EIS  
Fort Mason, Building 201  
San Francisco, CA 94123

It is our practice to make all comments, including names and addresses of respondents, available for public review following the conclusion of the plan. If you would like us to withhold this from disclosure, please state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. If you use the website, check the box "keep my contact information private." We will honor your request, but please be aware that we may still be required to disclose names and addresses under federal law.



Current embarkation site at Pier 31 1/2



GGNRA Piers 1, 2, and 3 at Fort Mason



Pier 41



Pier 45



**Submit Comments at the Project Website:** <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/alcatrazferry>  
**Join the Park Email List:** <http://www.nps.gov/goga> and click "Join Our Email List"  
**Contact the GGNRA Planning Division:** Email [goga\\_planning@nps.gov](mailto:goga_planning@nps.gov) or call (415) 561-4700