

Chapter 4. Affected Environment

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT AND NATURAL SYSTEMS/ AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This section provides an overview of the environmental context within which the Truman Farm is located and the natural systems at the Truman Farm. This section also describes resources potentially affected by the alternatives. It is organized by impact topics that were derived from NPS internal scoping and external public scoping.

Environmental Context and Natural Systems

The Truman Farm is in the town of Grandview, Missouri. The town of Grandview is situated on rolling topography with elevations varying between 920 and 1,060 feet above sea level.¹ The farm is fairly flat, with the southern parcel cut down in elevation. All of the property has been previously disturbed and is currently surrounded by residential and commercial development. A small stream is southeast of the property.

Pre-settlement, the town of Grandview was likely dominated by deciduous hardwood forests. The fertile soils on the bluffs overlooking the Missouri River valley made the area attractive for agricultural use. Once the site was cleared, it took considerable effort to keep grasses, shrubs, and trees from reestablishing. Regular cultivation, mowing, or clearing was necessary to maintain the farm grounds.

¹ NPS CLI, 53.

Historical Structures and Cultural Landscapes

Detailed information on historic structures and cultural landscape features associated with the farm is provided in chapters 2 and 3.

Archeological Resources

Detailed information on the historic archeological resources associated with the farm is provided in chapter 3. Although not specifically addressed in park planning and resource documents, it is possible that prehistoric archeological artifacts are also present in the Truman Farm parcel. Extensive disturbance and cultivation of the farm makes it likely that any artifacts present would be isolated and not part of a historic property.

Vegetation

Vegetation at the Truman Farm is typical of properties that have been continuously modified by human disturbance. Little, if any, of the vegetation is reflective of conditions present before agricultural use of the site. The vegetation surrounding the Farm Home and parking lot consists of upland turfgrass dominated by fescue (*Festuca* sp.), Bermudagrass (*Cynodon dactylon*), bluegrass (*Poa* sp.), and foxtail (*Setaria glauca*). A thick line of trees lines the fence line to the east and south of the Farm Home. The southern and eastern parcels past the fence lines are dominated by smooth brome (*Bromopsis inermis*), switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), fescue, and dropseed (*Sporobolus* sp.). A small clump of trees and shrubs is present in the southeast corner of the property. There are not sensitive or unusual vegetation communities or species present in either the farm parcel or the recently acquired parcel to the south. Additional information on vegetation in the context

1 of the cultural landscape is provided in
2 Chapter 3.

3 4 **Visitor Experience**

5 The farm opened to the public for ranger-
6 guided tours in 1996. Guided tours are
7 currently offered to the public on Friday
8 through Sunday beginning Memorial
9 Day and through Labor Day. On a busy
10 summer day, the farm has 30 to 40
11 visitors.²

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13 The urban development surrounding
14 the farm causes difficulty in conveying
15 a sense of the farm as it was when
16 Harry S Truman lived there between
17 1906 and 1917.³ Most of the current
18 interpretation occurs inside the house;
19 however, most of the significant activities
20 on the farm happened outside. This
21 creates a challenge for the interpreters
22 in relating some of the primary stories
23 that are not clearly tied to the furnished
24 rooms. Guided tours are limited to six
25 people. A park ranger meets visitors at
26 the side porch where a table displays
27 informational literature. The tour, which
28 involves the negotiation of two separate
29 stairways, leads visitors to rooms on both
30 the first and second floors. Interpreters
31 sometimes encounter preservation and
32 security concerns if visitors choose not to
33 climb one or both of the stairs. A photo
34 album that illustrates all areas of the
35 house is available for those not willing or
36 who are unable to negotiate the stairs.⁴
37 Introduction to the farm is provided
38 to the public through use of a wayside
39 exhibit, site bulletins, a temporary exhibit
40 panel discussing the Truman family, and
41 through ranger contact.⁵ A cell phone tour
42 is also available of the farm.

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47 2 NPS LRIP, 16.

48 3 NPS LRIP, 14.

49 4 NPS LRIP, 14.

50 5 NPS GMP, 43.

1 **Park Operations**

2 The Truman Farm consists of the
3 restored Farm Home, Garage (former
4 Grandview post office), smokehouse,
5 privy, Poultry House, and surrounding
6 remnant agricultural landscape. There
7 are no visitor facilities at the farm. Under
8 the current operation, park rangers lead
9 visitors on ticketed tours. Rangers meet,
10 greet, and distribute tickets to visitors
11 from the kitchen porch of the Farm Home,
12 which causes additional wear and tear
13 to the resource.⁶ Maintenance operations
14 at the farm are currently housed in a
15 temporary shed located on the farm
16 grounds, which compromises the historic
17 scene and presents an inaccurate view of
18 the farm to visitors.

19
20 The Truman Farm has no permanent
21 full-time staff dedicated solely to staffing
22 or maintaining the Grandview Unit.
23 During the summer, employees from the
24 Independence Unit, seasonal staff, and
25 volunteers fill the staffing requirements
26 at the farm. The recent purchase of
27 the adjacent paint store (to be used as
28 a visitor contact center) would likely
29 increase staffing needs at the farm.

31 **Visual Resources**

32 Detailed information on the visual
33 resources associated with the Truman
34 Farm is provided in chapter 3.

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47 6 NPS GMP, 43.