

Volume 1
Final
General Management Plan
Environmental Impact Statement

**ROCK CREEK PARK
AND THE
ROCK CREEK AND
POTOMAC PARKWAY**

Washington, D.C.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

HISTORY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A notice of intent to prepare a general management plan and environmental impact statement was published on July 18, 1996, in the *Federal Register* (volume 61, number 139, page 37494). At that time, a press release was distributed to local media, and newsletter 1 (NPS 1996b) was published and distributed to the park mailing list. The newsletter contained information on the function of a general management plan, draft statements of the park purpose and significance, information on the planning team and the process for planning, and methods available to the public for communicating with the team and participating in the planning effort.

A public scoping meeting was held July 24, 1996, in the auditorium at the National Zoo. About 100 people attended and 35 spoke.

Based on discussions at the scoping meeting, the planning team hosted two focus group meetings at the Rock Creek Nature Center and Planetarium. One was on September 17, 1996, with representatives of three area bicycling organizations. The second was on September 18 with representatives of seven environmental organizations. In October 1996, members of the planning team attended a presentation on the history of planning and design for Rock Creek Park hosted by the Committee of 100 for the Capital City, an organization of professional planners and designers in Washington, D.C.

During early scoping, the superintendent and park staff met with District of Columbia congressional representatives Norton and Morella, the mayor's office, and 15 advisory neighborhood commissions (ANCs) to inform them of the planning project and to discuss their concerns for the future of the park.

Newsletter 2 provided updates on public outreach activities and progress on the planning process. The newsletter was distributed in January 1997 (NPS 1997b).

Focus group meetings were held on October 22, 1996, at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments headquarters with representatives of regional transportation and air quality agencies. A second set of meetings was held on February 2, 1997, with air quality and transportation agencies. The purposes of the meetings were to inform the agencies of the planning effort, inquire about sources of information pertinent to planning, share public scoping comments received to date, and discuss the insights and concerns of the agencies regarding their fields of expertise and potential environmental effects.

Public comments received during early scoping tended to focus on management of traffic through the park and the idea of returning the park to more natural conditions. In response, the NPS planning team prepared a range of four "preliminary alternative scenarios," characterizing four potential management directions for the park for public comment. The scenarios ranged from continuing current management to extensive closures of roads and removal of recreation facilities to return the park to a more wilderness-like state. The scenarios were published in newsletter 3 (NPS 1997c), which also included a postage-free response form. The newsletter was distributed to about 1,500 agencies, organizations, and individuals; was placed in area libraries; and was posted on the Internet (<http://www.nps.gov/rocr/gmpnewsletter3>).

Public open house meetings were held in conjunction with newsletter 3 at the Rock Creek Nature Center and Planetarium on June 25 and June 28, 1997. About 800 people attended the open houses. Planning team members and other park staff hosted the open house meetings to talk directly with people about the planning project and to hear their ideas and concerns. Comments were recorded on response forms, flip charts, and through interviews. A court reporter was provided at the open houses.

Approximately 1,000 comments on the preliminary alternative scenarios were received during the official review period that ended August 1, 1997. The range of comments was summarized in newsletter 4 (<http://www.nps.gov/rocr/gmpnewsletter4>) published in January 1998 (NPS 1998c). Public views varied widely about the management of park roads, but there was nearly universal opposition to closing the community gardens, the public horse stables, and the golf course in the park.

After the official review period ended, additional letters, email, and post cards were received. The large majority of these supported “Alternative 2½,” a recommendation developed by a new coalition of organizations entitled People’s Alliance for Rock Creek (see Alternative C in this document).

Newsletter 5 was published in June 1998 to inform the public of a schedule extension for producing the plan (NPS 1998f). The newsletter also announced that new alternatives were being developed that did not include closing traditional recreation facilities. The recent discovery in the park of a federally endangered amphipod was also announced.

In November 1998, a letter was sent to everyone on the mailing list announcing an indefinite delay in the production of the draft general management plan and environmental impact statement. The delay was caused by a congressionally directed reorganization and downsizing of NPS planning, design, and construction programs and personnel.

In January 2001, the Mayor of the District of Columbia sent a letter to the National Park Service suggesting that a new alternative be developed to implement weekday vehicular traffic restrictions on sections of upper Beach Drive in non-rush hour periods. A copy of this letter is included in appendix D. As described in the “Formulation of Alternatives” section, this led to the development of Alternative D, Mid-Weekday Recreation Enhancement.

Work on the plan was restarted in early 2001. A notice of availability for the *Rock Creek Park and the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* was published in the *Federal Register* on March 14, 2003. This action informed the public that the draft general management plan and environmental impact statement were ready for public review.

Consistent with the requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (40 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 1506), the draft environmental impact statement was available for public review for more than the minimum of 60 calendar days from publication of the notice of availability. The actual comment period during which the National Park Service accepted written comments was 123 days, and closed on July 15, 2003.

Oral comments were received during two public hearings, on May 20 and May 22, 2003. Approximately 800 people attended these meetings. The public also could provide comments in writing on paper, via e-mail, or from the NPS' Internet site. The National Park Service received more than 3,000 communications on the draft general management plan and environmental impact statement that contained more than 5,000 individual comments.

Based on public comments, the National Park Service modified the draft document to produce this *Final Rock Creek Park and the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement*. A companion volume entitled *Volume 2: Comments and Responses on the Draft Rock Creek Park and the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* provides complete reproductions of all comment letters from agencies, organizations, and businesses plus examples of each group submittal, including postcards, form letters, and petitions. That volume also summarizes the content of the substantive public comments and describes how each substantive comment was addressed.

Following publication of notification in the *Federal Register*, the National Park Service will provide the public with a 60-day period to comment on this final general management plan and environmental impact statement. A record of decision will then be issued and implementation of the general management plan will proceed.

LIST OF PREPARERS

PLANNING TEAM

Rock Creek Park

Adrienne Coleman, Superintendent
Cynthia Cox Assistant Superintendent
Bob Ford, former Supervisory Park Ranger
Regina Moriarty, former Chief of Interpretation and Resources Management
Susan Salmons, former Resource Management Specialist
Bill Shields, former Superintendent
Steve Strach, former Cultural Resource Specialist
Julia Washburn, former Chief of Visitor Services and Resource Protection
Perry Wheelock, Cultural Resource Manager
Bill Yeaman, Resource Management Specialist

Denver Service Center (DSC)

Craig Cellar, Project Manager
James Crockett, Architect
Betty Janes, former Project Manager
Helen Starr Kuykendall, former DSC Landscape Architect
Nat Kuykendall, former DSC Team Captain
Mark Matheny, Civil Engineer
Alice McClarty, former DSC Landscape Architect
Jeff Reinbold, former DSC Park Planner
Amy Schneckenburger, former DSC Project Manager
Harlan Unrau, Historian
Michael Wilderman, former DSC Natural Resource Specialist

National Capital Regional Office

Sally Blumenthal, Deputy Associate Regional Director
Patrick Gregerson, Chief of Planning
David Hammers, Transportation Specialist
John Parsons, Associate Regional Director, Lands, Resources and Planning
Rebecca Stevens, Historical Architect
Tammy Stidham, Geographic Information System Specialist

U.S. Park Police

Lt. Joe Cox
Sergeant Charles Orton

CONSULTANTS

Parsons

Maria Aguilar, Graphics Artist
Pat Ditzel, Word Processor
Michelle Johnson, Environmental Scientist
Don Kellett, Environmental Scientist
Greg Matthews, Geographical Information System Specialist
Lee Monnens, Environmental Scientist
Bruce Snyder, Project Manager
Janet Snyder, Environmental Scientist and Editor
Joe Springer, Transportation Planner

Rock Creek Park

Steve Lebel, Concessions Specialist

Robert Peccia & Associates, Inc.

Doug Widmayer, Transportation Planning Specialist/Project Manager

LIST OF RECIPIENTS

PUBLIC OFFICIALS, AGENCIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS

16 th Street Civil Association	American Hiking Society	Beach Drive Commuters Alliance
3016 Tilden Street, NW, Inc.	American Whitewater.	BFI Company
92 nd Infantry Division World War II Association	American Recreation Coalition	Bike the Sites
AAA Mid-Atlantic	American Rivers	Blair Road Garden Association
AAA Potomac	Ariba, Inc.	Booz Allen Hamilton
Accokeek Foundation	Arnold & Porter	Boston House, The
Adler & Robin Books, Inc.	Audubon Naturalist Society	Boy Scouts of America (80)
Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, Members of	Audubon Naturalist Society of Central Atlantic States	Brownstein & Zeidman, P.C. Law Offices
Advisory Neighborhood Commissions 3, 3C, 3F, 3FO4, 4A, 4C, 4G	Audubon Society of the District of Columbia	CAPRA
Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners' Assembly	Auto Free D.C.	Carter Barron Community Task Force
American Automobile Assoc		
American Discovery Trail		

Cary Ridder & Associates
 Center for Environmental
 Citizenship
 Chesapeake & Potomac Re-
 gional Alliance
 Chesapeake Bay Foundation
 Chesapeake Bay Program Of-
 fice, NPS
 Chevy Chase Advisory
 Neighborhood Commis-
 sion 3/4G
 Chevy Chase Citizens Assoc.
 Chevy Chase Land Company
 Chevy Chase Village
 Chronicle of Higher Educa-
 tion, The
 City Bikes in Adams Morgan
 City of Rockville Recreation
 Program
 Coalition for the Capital
 Crescent Trail
 Coffin & Coffin
 Committee for Children
 Committee of 100, Members
 of
 Council of D.C., Members of
 Council of D.C., Ward 3
 Council of D.C., Ward 4
 Council of Governments
 Transportation Planning
 Board
 Crestwood Neighborhood
 League
 Cushman & Wakefield of
 Washington DC, Inc.
 D.C. Historic Preservation
 Office
 D.C. Bicycle Coordinator
 D.C., Department of Health
 D.C. Dept. of Public Works
 D.C. Dept. of Recreation
 D.C. Dept. of Recreation Of-
 fice of Planning & Policy
 D.C. Engineering Services.
 D.C. Natural Heritage Pro-
 gram
 D.C. Office of Planning
 D.C. Office of Tourism &
 Promotion
 D.C. Sewer Services
 D.C. Statehood Green Party
 D.C. Water Resources Man-
 agement

D.C., Dept of Planning
 D.C. Dept. of Public
 Works, DELP
 D.C. Dept. of Public
 Works, OPP
 D.C. Fisheries Office
 D.C., Office of Policy
 & Planning
 D.C., State Historic
 Preservation Officer
 Defenders of Wildlife
 Deluxe Restaurant
 Group
 Dept. of Preventative
 Medi-
 cine/Biometrics,
 USUHS
 Dept. of Public Works
 & Trans./Traffic &
 Parking Division
 Dumbarton Oaks Mu-
 seums & Gardens
 E.W. Stokes Commu-
 nity Freedom Pub-
 lic Charter School
 Endangered Species
 Coalition
 Exotic Pest Plant
 Council
 Federal Highway Ad-
 ministration
 Federation of Citizens
 Association of the
 District of Columbia
 Fillmore Art Center
 Fine Arts Commission
 Flower and Nature
 Photography
 Forest Hills Citizens
 Association
 Fort Reno Garden As-
 sociation
 Fort Stevens Garden
 Association
 Francis Scott Key
 Foundation
 Friends of Meridian
 Hill
 Friends of Open Park-
 ways
 Friends of Peirce Mill
 Friends of Rose Park
 Friends of the Earth

Gallaudet Research In-
 stitute
 Gateway Coalition,
 The
 Gateway Georgetown
 Condominium
 Assoc.
 Girl Scout Council of
 the Nation's Capital
 Glover Archbold Gar-
 den Association
 Glover Park Citizens'
 Assoc., Inc.
 Golf Course Specialists
 Inc. E. Potomac Park
 Great Falls Group, Si-
 erra Club
 Greater Washington
 Board of Trade
 Green Peace
 Harkins Conningham
 Hillandale Community
 Group
 Hillwood Museum
 Honorable Anthony A.
 Williams
 Honorable Chris Van
 Hollen
 Honorable Eleanor
 Holmes Norton
 Humane Society of
 D.C.
 Hunton & Williams
 ICF Consulting
 IFPTE
 Indigo Spokes
 Inst. for Public Rep.,
 Georgetown Univ.
 Law Ctr.
 International Mass Re-
 tail Association
 Interstate Commission
 of Potomac River
 Basin
 Izaak Walton League
 of America
 Jack Faucett Associa-
 tion, Inc.
 Jonathan Woodner C.,
 Woodner Apts.
 Kalorama Citizen's As-
 sociation

Knollwood Army Retirement Residence	Montrose & Dumbarton Oaks Parks,	Pham and Roodman, Parenting Division
League of American Bicy- clists	Friends of	Potomac Appalachian Trail Club
Leather Industries of America	Mount Pleasant	Potomac Peddlars Touring Club
Lobel, Novins & Lamont	ANC1D	Rabbi Emeritus, Adas Israel Synagogue
Mamie D. Lee Garden Asso- ciation	NAHB Research Cen- ter	Rails to Trails Conser- vancy
Marigold Productions	NASA Goddard	Regional and Intermo- dal Planning
Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources	Spaceflight Center	Rivendell Assoc.
Maryland Department of Transportation	National 4-H Council	Robert & Quigg Attor- neys & Counselors
Maryland Department of the Environment	National Capital Plan- ning Commission	Rock Creek Garden Assoc.
Maryland Native Plant Soci- ety	National Park Founda- tion	Rock Creek Park Golf Course
MD Dept. of Housing & Comm. Dev.	National Park Hospi- tality Assoc.	Rock Creek Somm. Garden Assoc.
MD Dept. of the Env., Tech. & Reg. Serv. Admin.	National Parks Con- servation Assoc.	Rock-it! Media
MD Dept. of Transportation	National Trust for His- toric Preservation	Rollingwood Citizens Assn.
MD Hist. Trust	National Wildlife Fed- eration	Rummel, Kleppter, and Kahl
MD-National Capital Park & Planning Commission	National Zoological Park	Sheppard Park Citizens Assn.
MD Office of Planning	Nature Conservancy, The	Shoreham North, The
MD State Highway Admini- stration	Neotropical Bird Club	Sierra Club
Meadowbrook Riding Stables	New Columbia Audu- bon Society	Sierra Club Legal De- fense Fund
Medlantic Healthcare Group	New Columbia Coali- tion, MD Native	Signatory Residents of the 1400 block of Taylor Street
Melvin Hazen Community Garden Association	Plant Society	State Resource Strate- gies Committee of 100
Metro Teleproductions	News Channel 8	StreamSage, Inc.
Metro Washington Council of Governments	NIH Office of Com- munications and	Temple Shalom
Metroped, Inc.	Public Liaison	Tifereth Israel
Montgomery County Chap- ter, MD Ornithological So- ciety	Northwest Side Story	Tilden Gardens, Inc.
Montgomery County Council	NOVA Lighting Co., Inc.	Trail Riders of Tomor- row (TROT) - 50
Montgomery County Dept. of Park & Planning Comm. (NR)	Oak Hill Cemetery	U.S. Naval Observa- tory
Montgomery County Dept. of Park & Planning	Oakcrest School	U.S. Secret Service
Montgomery County Dept. of Permitting Services	Park View Citizens Association	University of the D.C., Water Resources Center
Montgomery County Parks- Eastern Area	Parsons Transpiration Group, Inc.	US Environmental Pro- tection Agency
Montgomery County Dept. of Env. Protection	Pascal & Weiss	
Montgomery County Dept. of Park & Planning	Patricia McPherson Interiors	
	Peabody Garden As- sociation	
	People's Alliance for Rock Creek	

US Fish and Wildlife Service
USDA, Cooperative Extension (NRCS)
USGS, Biological Res. Div.
Walter Reed Army Medical Ctr.
Washington Area Bicycle Assoc.
Washington Metro. Area Transit Authority

Washington Post
Washington Regional Network for Livable Community
Washington Tennis Foundation
Washington Times
Whitehaven Garden Assoc.

Wilderness Society,
The
Woodland Normanstone Neighborhood Assoc.
Woodrow Wilson Bridge Center

EMBASSIES

Embassy of Algeria
Embassy of Argentine
Embassy of Australia
Embassy of Austria
Embassy of Bahamas
Embassy of Bangladesh
Embassy of Barbados
Embassy of Belgium
Embassy of Belize
Embassy of Bolivia
Embassy of Bruneidarussalm
Embassy of Burkina Faso
Embassy of Canada
Embassy of Cape Verde
Embassy of Chile
Embassy Chile Military Mission
Embassy of Columbia
Embassy of Costa Rica
Embassy of Cyprus
Embassy of Czechoslovakia
Embassy of Denmark
Embassy of Djibouti
Embassy of Ecuador
Embassy of Egypt
Embassy of El Salvador
Embassy of Fiji
Embassy of France
Embassy of Germany
Embassy of Ghana
Embassy of Great Britain
Embassy of Greece
Embassy of Grenada
Embassy of Guatemala
Embassy of Guinea
Embassy of Guyana
Embassy of Haiti
Embassy of Honduras
Embassy of India
Embassy of Indonesia

Embassy of Ireland
Embassy of Israel
Embassy of Italy
Embassy of Japan
Embassy of Jordan
Embassy of Kenya
Embassy of Kuwait
Embassy of Latvia
Embassy of Lebanon
Embassy of Lesotho
Embassy of Liberia
Embassy of Luxembourg
Embassy of Madagascar
Embassy of Malaysia
Embassy of Malta
Embassy of The Marshall Island
Embassy of Mauritius
Embassy of Mexico
Embassy of Mongolia
Embassy of Morocco
Embassy of Mozambique
Embassy of Nepal
Embassy of New Zealand
Embassy of Nicaragua
Embassy of Niger
Embassy of Nigeria
Embassy of Norway
Embassy of Oman
Embassy of Pakistan
Embassy of Panama
Embassy of Papua New Guinea
Embassy of Paraguay
The Peoples Republic of China
Embassy of Peru

Embassy of Portugal
The Republic of Surinam
Embassy of Romania
Embassy of Rwanda
Embassy of Saudi Arabia
Embassy of Senegal
Embassy of Singapore
Embassy of South Africa
Embassy of Spain
Embassy of Sri Lanka
Embassy of Sudan
Embassy of Sweden
Embassy of Switzerland
Embassy of Syria
Embassy of Tanzania
The Central African Republic
Embassy of Dominican Republic
Federated States of Micronesia
Embassy of The Gambia
Islamic Republic of Mauritania
Embassy of Kingdom of Swaziland
Lao People's Dem. Republic
Embassy of The Netherlands
Peoples Republic of Mozambique
Embassy of The Philippines

Embassy of Republic of Benin
Embassy of Republic of Cameroon
Embassy Republic of Cape Verde
Embassy Republic of Hungary

Embassy of Republic of Mali
Embassy of Republic of Namibia
Embassy of Russian Federation
Embassy of State of Bahrain

Embassy of Togo
Embassy of Tunisia
Embassy of Turkey
Embassy of Uruguay
Embassy of Venezuela
Embassy of Zimbabwe

LIBRARIES

Chevy Chase Library
Cleveland Park Library
Georgetown Library
Juanita E. Thornton-Shepherd Park Library
Langston Community Library

Library of Congress
Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library
Mt. Pleasant Library
Northeast Library
Petworth Library

Tenley-Friendship Library
Watha T. Daniel/Shaw Library
Woodridge Library

SCHOOLS

Adams Elementary School
American University School of Law
Annunciation School
Bancroft Elementary School
Banneker Senior High School
Barnard Elementary School
Bell Multicultural High School
Blessed Sacrament School
Briewood Elementary School
Bruce-Monroe Elementary School
Capitol Hill Day School
Cardozo Elementary School
Clark Elementary School
Clayton Singleton, Principal
Cook J.F. Elementary School
Cooke, H.D. Elementary School
Coolidge Community School
Coolidge Elementary School
Deal Junior High School
Discovery Creek Children's Museum of Washington
Dunbar Elementary School
Eaton Elementary School
Edmond Burke School
Edmund Burke School

Ellington School of the Arts
Env. Awareness Group, Nat'l Cathedral School
Francis Junior High School
Gage-Eckington Elementary School
Garnet-Patterson Middle School
George Mason University, School of Public Policy
Georgetown Day School
Georgetown Univ. Law Ctr./Inst. for Public Rep.
Georgetown Visitation Preparation School
Gonzaga College High School
Hardy Middle School
Holton Arms School
Holy Redeemer School
House of Rep. Page School
Hurst Elementary School
Hyde Elementary School
Sr. Donna Marie Coward, RSM

Janney Elementary School
Key Elementary School
Lafayette Elementary School
Lewis Elementary School
Lincoln Junior High School
Lowell School
MacFarland Junior High School
Mann Elementary School
Maret School
Meyer Elementary School
Montgomery Elementary School
Murch Elementary School
Nannie Helen Burroughs School
National Cathedral School
National Presbyterian School
Nativity Catholic Academy

Nat'l. Cathedral Elem. School/Beauvoir	Sidwell Friends School	Thompson Elemen- tary School
Northwestern University	Sidwell Friends School	Truesdell Elemen- tary School
Our Lady of Victory School	Slater-Langston Elemen- tary School	Tubman Elementary School
Oyster Elementary School	St. Ann's Academy	University of the D.C.
Park View Elementary School	St. Augustine School	Walker-Jones Ele- mentary School
Parkmont School	St. Gabriel's School	Washington Ethical High School
Paul Junior High School	St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School	Washington Interna- tional School
Powell Elementary School	St. John's Collee Middle School	Washington Interna- tional School
Rabaut Junior High School	Stevens Elementary School	Washington M.M. Elementary School
Raymond Elementary School	Stoddert Elementary School	West Elementary School
Reed Community School	Takoma Community School	Whittier Elementary School
Reed L.C. Elementary School	Takoma Elementary School	Wilson W. Elemen- tary School
Roosevelt Adult Ed. Ctr.	Terrell, R.H. Junior High School	
Roosevelt Elementary School	The Field School	
Ross Elementary School	The Kingsbury Day School	
Rudolph Elementary School	The Lab School of Wash- ington	
Sacred Heart School		
School Without Walls		
Seaton Elementary School		
Sharpe Health School		
Shaw Community School		
Shaw Junior High School		
Shepherd Elementary School		
Sheridan School		

CITIZENS

A complete list of citizens who received notification of the availability of this *Final Rock Creek Park/Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* is available on request from the superintendent, Rock Creek Park.