



SAGAMORE HILL



National Historic Site



GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN



SAGAMORE HILL

WAS THE HOME OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT, 26TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, FROM 1885 UNTIL HIS DEATH IN 1919. FROM 1902 TO 1908, AS THE “SUMMER WHITE HOUSE,” SAGAMORE HILL WAS THE FOCUS OF INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION, PLAYING HOST TO NUMEROUS INDIVIDUALS AND EVENTS THAT HAD FAR REACHING INFLUENCE OVER DOMESTIC AND WORLD AFFAIRS.

IN THE 1950s, THE THEODORE ROOSEVELT ASSOCIATION PURCHASED THE PROPERTY FROM THE ROOSEVELT FAMILY AND LATER DONATED IT TO THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE. TODAY, THE THEODORE ROOSEVELT ASSOCIATION CONTINUES TO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN THE PARK.



TAKING SAGAMORE HILL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE INTO THE 21ST CENTURY



Roosevelt Home draped with flags for a public reception, c. 1902,
Sagamore Hill NHS



The Roosevelt family preparing for a ride, c. 1903, Sagamore Hill NHS

The National Park Service is preparing a general management plan for Sagamore Hill National Historic Site. This “master plan,” which will take about three years to complete, will lay out a vision for the future of the park and provide guidance for park management and development over the next 15 to 20 years.

A comprehensive management plan is needed for Sagamore Hill because no such formally approved plan exists for the site. Since the site’s establishment as a unit of the National Park System in 1962, the types of visitors and the way in which they experience the site has changed. A great deal more is now known about how Theodore Roosevelt and his family lived, worked, and played at Sagamore Hill and also about how this place was shaped by and reflected Roosevelt’s personal philosophies – much of which is not yet adequately represented at the site.

We are now celebrating the centennial of Theodore Roosevelt’s Presidency which ushered the nation into the 20th century. It is an appropriate time to think about Sagamore Hill National Historic Site in the 21st century and how best to convey the relevance of Theodore Roosevelt to contemporary audiences. The National Park Service looks forward to working collaboratively with the park’s partners and the public to develop a general management plan for the site.

WHY WE PLAN

The National Park Service holds and manages Sagamore Hill National Historic Site in the public trust and is therefore accountable to the public for decisions about and outcomes derived from certain management actions. 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 our 388 national parks.




Dining Room, Sagamore Hill NHS





PLANNING ISSUES

The GMP will look at a full range of topics – for example, protecting resources, serving visitors, operating and maintaining the site. The following are among the issues to be examined.

 In 1993, the typical experience of visitors at the park changed. Tours of the Roosevelt house, which had previously been self-guiding, became ranger- or docent-led with limitations placed on the number of participants per tour. Visitors often have to wait an extended period of time to tour the house and sometimes are unable to tour the house at all. Few well-developed park programs exist for these visitors, so visitors may leave without learning about or appreciating the significance of the site. As a result, these visitors may depart uninformed and dissatisfied with their experience.






 Sagamore Hill National Historic Site was established by Congress in 1962 for the purpose of interpreting to the public “the spirit and image of Theodore Roosevelt, his family and significant events associated with him during his years at Sagamore Hill.” However, current park facilities limit the interpretive potential of the site by focusing mostly on the house and not on the property as a whole.


Photo at left: Theodore and Edith Roosevelt with family in the library, 1917, Sagamore Hill NHS


 Sagamore Hill is located in metropolitan New York, home to a very large, ethnically and economically diverse population, yet Sagamore Hill does not seem to attract diverse audiences.

 Visitor services facilities are dispersed across multiple locations on the site making them difficult to staff and confusing to the visitor.

 Throughout most of its history as a National Park Service unit, the property has been treated primarily as a cultural resource with little attention given to its natural resource values.


 The site’s vast collection of artifacts, both on display and in storage, is not adequately protected. The collection is currently housed in several locations on the property and not all storage is properly climate-controlled.


 A number of activities (e.g. interpretive offices, collection storage, and kitchenette) are located in the Roosevelt house and are not considered appropriate uses for that structure.

 Administration and other park operations functions are placed in numerous locations, which results in operational inefficiencies.



Roosevelt Arch at the north entrance to Yellowstone NP, dedicated by Roosevelt in 1903, Yellowstone NP

 The existing maintenance facility is overcrowded and does not meet current federal safety standards in some areas.

 There are numerous institutions, historic sites and monuments associated with Theodore Roosevelt located across the country. The desired relationship between Sagamore Hill and these sites has not been clearly defined and may present interesting opportunities.



YOUR IDEAS ARE IMPORTANT

A first step in planning the future of the park is to gather the ideas and interests of visitors, park neighbors, elected officials, partners, and other interested groups and individuals. Your input will help shape the goals, principles and strategies that form the core of the general management plan.

PLANNING PROCESS – STEPS

Project Scoping

Research, Data Collection & Analysis

Establish Foundation for Planning
(Purpose, Significance, Primary Resources)

Define Goals

Develop Planning Alternatives

Review and Refine Planning Alternatives

Prepare Draft General Management Plan/
Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/EIS)

Review and Revise Draft GMP/EIS

Prepare Final GMP/EIS

Review Final GMP/EIS

Approve GMP/EIS



President Theodore Roosevelt at home at Sagamore Hill, 1903,
Sagamore Hill NHS

FEEDBACK

We will seek public comment throughout the planning process and will issue periodic newsletters to keep you informed as the planning process unfolds. We encourage you to share your ideas and concerns with us. Call, send a fax, write a letter, or e-mail your thoughts and suggestions to the planning team. Please include your name and address. Send your comments to:

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