



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Pacific West Region
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IN REPLY REFER TO:
L7617 (PWRO-P)

25 JUN 2015

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, San Juan Island National Historical Park

From: Acting Regional Director, Pacific West

Subject: Environmental Compliance for English Camp Unit
Development Concept Plan

The finalized *Finding of No Significant Impact* (and supplementary *Statement of Findings for Floodplains*) for facility improvements and the establishment of visitor amenities at the recently acquired Westcott Bay and Mitchell Hill parcels is approved.

To complete this particular compliance effort, at the time when the park announces approval of the plan, copies of the *Errata* should be distributed directly to all recipients of the environmental assessment.

Congratulations to you and the park staff involved in completing this important step forward in fulfilling the vision of the 2008 General Management Plan.

Patricia L. Neubacher

Attachments: (2)

CC:
PWR-DRR



Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay Development Concept Plan Finding of No Significant Impact June 2015

This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) documents the decision of the National Park Service (NPS) to adopt a modification of Alternatives 3, which was described and analyzed in the Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay Development Concept Plan Environmental Assessment (EA). Attached is a determination that no impairment of park resources or values will result from implementation of the selected alternative. An Errata prepared as a technical attachment to the EA is also attached.

Purpose and Need

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay Development Concept Plan (DCP) is to:

- Preserve the unique character of Mitchell Hill, including the Garry oak woodlands, cedar grove, stream habitat, and range of recreational opportunities.
- Preserve the unique character of Westcott Bay, including the secluded coastal wetland and tidelands, forested area, and recreation opportunities associated with this landscape.
- Identify key resources to be protected.
- Provide appropriate public access and recreational opportunities in the new lands.
- Retain existing uses where possible and compatible with park purposes.
- Determine the suitability of relocating the education camp at English Camp as called for by the GMP.
- Work with park neighbors and interest groups to accomplish DCP actions as appropriate.
- Implement GMP goals and actions where applicable to new lands, including, but not limited to: preserving views, protecting the quality of the visitor experience, and continuing to allow compatible, non-motorized use on the multiuse trails at Mitchell Hill.

2. NEED

Needs common to Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay (including English Camp)

- Zone new areas consistent with GMP zoning definitions.
- Connect Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay areas to existing park facilities at English Camp.
- Link Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay Trails to the Island-wide trail system.
- Provide visitor access that is safe, protects park resources, and is coordinated with adjacent landowners.
- Provide parking, where needed and appropriate, with minimal impacts on park resources.
- Provide way-finding information along roads, trails and access points where needed.
- Analyze visitor use and determine need for interpretation and educational services.
- Provide for accessibility where appropriate (parking and trails).
- Inventory and evaluate cultural resources (including prehistoric and historic), and determine best management practices for protection and interpretation.

- Conduct natural resource inventories and assessments to identify ways to protect resource conditions, and enhance protection of sensitive resources such as: wetlands, stream habitats, shoreline, and steep slopes (soils).
- Determine whether to provide visitor facilities.

Needs specific to Mitchell Hill

- Inventory trails (location, length, type of use, signage).
- Conduct initial trail condition assessment to determine maintenance and resource protection needs.
- Determine appropriate trail use designations consistent with protection of park cultural and natural resources, including evaluation of Old Military Road use and protection.

Needs specific to Westcott Bay

- Determine how to best manage existing facilities.
 - Consider adaptive reuse for the existing non-historic buildings, including suitable administrative or public uses.
 - Add, upgrade, move or replace existing sanitary facilities.

Alternatives Analyzed

The No Action Alternative (Alternative 1) describes the conditions associated with the existing management of Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay. This alternative can be used as a baseline in which current conditions are described to compare proposed management actions in the other (action) alternatives (Alternatives 2-4). Alternatives 2-4 described different ways Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay could be managed to accommodate different visitor experiences.

The following are the alternatives considered for management of these sites:

- Alternative 1: No Action (Continue Current Management)
- Alternative 2: Low Impact Visitor Use Opportunities
- Alternative 3: Mix of Development and Visitor Use Opportunities (Preferred)
- Alternative 4: More Accommodation of Visitor Use Opportunities

Selected Alternative

- Alternative 3 (with modifications to accommodate more multiuse trails, with most trail management actions proposed at Mitchell Hill in Alternative 4)

1. Overview

English Camp, Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay: There would continue to be a range of low impact visitor use activities, including touring historic and cultural sites, hiking, picnicking, and bird watching. Accessible trails would be provided at Westcott Bay and Mitchell Hill.

In the selected alternative, a wide range of low impact visitor use activities would be available for individuals and organized groups. The education camp would be constructed on the north side of the English Camp Administrative Road. Visitor amenities at Mitchell Hill would be expanded to include low impact restrooms, and the parking area outside the gate would be expanded in cooperation with San Juan County on the county easement. The area would continue to offer hiking, bicycling and horseback riding trails. Trails, except the cedar grove, Old Military Road and access through the Sandwith Orchard would be designated multiuse. The Cedar Grove and Old Military Road trails would be hiking only and the Sandwith Orchard access trail would be hiker and equestrian. Trails that do not meet multiuse standards for grade and other characteristics would be modified to meet these standards. At Westcott Bay, the house would be retained for administrative use and there would be expanded opportunities to use the site for community groups, housing, and/or special park uses. Low impact restrooms, a parking area off West Valley Road and access trails would also be added at Westcott Bay.

Modifications from Alternative 3

The selected alternative was modified – to provide additional multiuse trails and access in response to public comments. In the selected alternative, several actions originally part of Alternative 4 and one from Alternative 1 were incorporated.

- The Traverse, Mitchell Hill Center, and Mitchell Hill North trails were changed from having hiking only segments (Alternative 3) to being fully multiuse (Alternative 4).
- R-10 was changed from a trail segment that would be removed (Alternative 3) to a hiking only trail because it is part of the Old Military Road.
- The Sandwith Orchard Trail was added to provide a safe alternative for equestrian access to Mitchell Hill (Alternative 4).
- A connector trail from the Roche Harbor Highlands trailhead was added to provide multiuse access to Westcott Bay (Alternative 4).

2. Zoning

English Camp, Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay: Most zoning designated in the GMP for English Camp would remain. This would include retaining the Sandwith Orchard in the Cultural Zone. Zoning of Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay would be consistent with the GMP and would be based on existing criteria and definitions. One exception to GMP zoning would be relocating the Education Camp Visitor Facilities Zone to the north side of the Administrative Road, instead of the south side, because there would be fewer impacts from constructing the education camp on the north side of the road, compared to the south side.

The cultural zone would be applied to the Old Military Road through Mitchell Hill. This DCP would also authorize an exception to the GMP definition of the Cultural Zone by allowing various Mitchell Hill trails that cross the Old Military Road to be multiuse, including a horse trail extending from West Valley Road up through the Sandwith Orchard that would provide safer equestrian access to Mitchell Hill than is currently available by continuing along the roadway to the Horse Trail Road entrance to Mitchell Hill.

3. Access and Parking

The park would work with San Juan County under all alternatives to provide roadway directional signs to identify designated public access to Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay.

Mitchell Hill: Administrative access would continue via Horse Trail Road and the English Camp Connector Trail would continue to provide public access from English Camp. In addition, there would be an expanded parking area on county lands outside the gate at Horse Trail Road that would accommodate approximately 5-8 vehicles. The parking area would be expanded in cooperation with San Juan County. In addition, the park would craft agreements to partner with private landowners willing to provide public access to the park through their adjacent private lands. If agreements could not be reached, access trails extending into Mitchell Hill from private lands would be closed.

To enhance access, park trails including the Sandwith Orchard Trail and the English Camp Connector Trail would be improved. For instance, the Sandwith Orchard Trail could be improved for equestrian use from the parking area to Mitchell Hill by adding a long switchback to decrease its grade. Other trails, except the Cedar Grove and Old Military Road, would be improved to accommodate multiuse. This includes trails that are too narrow, too steep or that have less clearance than needed to accommodate their proposed multiuse designation. Among these are the Mitchell Hill North, Mitchell Hill Center and Traverse trails.

Westcott Bay: The administrative parking area at the end of Westcott Drive would be improved to accommodate approximately five vehicles. In addition, the park would provide access to Westcott Bay via Westcott Drive for administrative, and/or special uses as well as to accommodate accessible parking. The park would also work with San Juan County to develop an improved parking area off of West Valley Road, adjacent to the Westcott Bay site. An access trail (up to 0.5 miles long) to Westcott Bay from this parking area would also likely be constructed unless access to the parking area could be combined with a new trail extending from the

intersection of Roche Harbor and West Valley roads. Because the specific details of this proposed parking area and trail access still need to be determined, additional design and environmental impact analysis would be required. In addition, public parking and the Westcott Bay Connector Trail would continue to be available to connect Westcott Bay with English Camp.

4. Facilities

Mitchell Hill: Facilities at Mitchell Hill would include a bike rack and benches along trails, in appropriate areas, such as viewpoints or junctions. In addition, low impact public restrooms would be constructed.

Westcott Bay: A bike rack, picnic tables, and benches would be added, where appropriate. Low impact public restrooms, such as vault toilets, would also be constructed. The house would be retained for administrative use. Depending on the ultimate function, more frequent occupancy of the house would likely provide enhanced security for the site as well as a potential opportunity for small group gatherings/special events.

Among the recommendations from the Pacific West Region Interpretive Ranger Advisory Committee report that could be implemented would include:

- Use the building for a multitude of short-term administrative functions, particularly those that support visitor services.
- Offer it as a shelter for partners and cooperators who are on site during daytime hours to interact with the public, e.g. Native American elders and families preparing and providing cultural demonstrations.
- Use the building as an occasional staff training and meeting location.
- Given the need for affordable housing during different periods of the year, use the structure as short-term housing for interns, researchers, educators, regional staff, etc.. Don't use it as a permanent residence or other private use where visitors are not welcomed to approach the house or hang out on the deck (NPS PWR 2014).

5. Trail Use

a. Standards

Trail standards would be applied parkwide. In addition to the criteria used to develop the draft equestrian trail standards, trail standards for multiuse trails would be adopted. Trail standards are based on NPS guidelines and the trail inventory done for the park by the North Cascades National Park trail crew. For each type of trail (hiking only, hiker equestrian, or multiuse), the standards include ranges associated with characteristics, such as width, slope/grade and clearance. Based on research by the planning team, because there is no one set of standards for multiuse trails, the team applied those that were most consistent among the many options evaluated in the selected alternative.

Characteristic	Trail Standard	
	<i>Special Use</i>	<i>All-Purpose</i>
Routing	Conforms to the terrain except for minor modification where necessary to assure user safety and/or trail stability	Same as Special Use
Clearance	Lateral 6-8' Vertical 8-10'	Lateral 8' Vertical 10'
Maximum Grade	General 10% Midrange 15% for 500' High range 18% for 100'	10% 15% for 500' 20%for 100'
Switchback Radius	Minimum 6' Maximum 8'	Minimum 6' Maximum 8'

Drainage	Adequate to carry maximum runoff and designed to minimize down-slope erosion and scarring.	Adequate to carry maximum runoff and designed to minimize down-slope erosion and scarring.
Tread	Minimum 24" Maximum 36" Protrusions Over 2" high, loose material over 1" removed.	Minimum 24" Maximum 30" Protrusions Over 2" high, loose material over 1" removed.
Minimum Maintenance	Two or more times per year	At least once per year

Source: Trails Handbook, North Cascades National Park Service Complex, Skagit District (p. 3)

b. Designations

Because the existing trails at Mitchell Hill were developed prior to ownership of the area by the NPS, some of the trails do not meet the NPS definition of a sustainable trail. Therefore, trails designated as multiuse or hiker equestrian would be upgraded over time to ensure that they have minimal impacts to area natural and cultural resources (see section on *Trail Resource Protection Measures* below).

English Camp, Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay (General): All trails at English Camp, Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay would continue to be open to hiking. Bicycles would continue to be allowed on paved roads in the park and on some unpaved roads; however no bicycle use would be allowed on the unpaved English Camp Administrative Road.

English Camp: To minimize impacts on park resources, equestrian use in the park requires an annual permit that specifies which trails are open to equestrian use. In addition to the English Camp Administrative Road from West Valley Road to the Parade Ground, the Sandwith Orchard Trail would be open to equestrian use. The equestrian permit would continue to be used and would be modified to include the Sandwith Orchard Trail and other trails proposed for multiuse.

Mitchell Hill: Multiuse (hiking, equestrian and bicycling) trails would be retained (in all alternatives) throughout the site, excluding the access trail coming from the Sandwith Orchard at English Camp (hiker equestrian). The Old Military Road (0.5 miles) through the site would be marked and cleared and available for hiking and a single improved hiking trail would be established in the cedar grove (Cedar Grove Trail).

Hiking Only Trails

The following trails would be hiking only in the selected alternative:

- Cedar Grove
- Old Military Road (including trail segment R10, which had previously been identified for closure in Alternative 3)

Multiuse Trails

The following trails would be multiuse in the selected alternative

- Briggs Lake
- Cady Mountain
- Cady Viewpoint
- Dead End
- English Camp Connector
- Inner Loop Road
- Mitchell Hill Center
- Mitchell Hill North
- Mitchell Hill South
- Outer Limits
- Pipegate
- Traverse

Trails Segments Closed and Rehabilitated

The following trail segments, which have primarily been obscured by disuse would be closed and rehabilitated:

- R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9

Westcott Bay

Hiking Only Trails

The Point Trail would remain hiking only in the selected alternative, while the new trail from West Valley Road and/or the Roche Harbor Road/West Valley Road intersection to Westcott Bay would be multiuse. If needed, a connection to the proposed West Valley Road parking area would also be constructed.

c. Trail Linkages

Trail linkages would be focused on those trails that provide access to the Island-wide trail network and would include the trails that connect Mitchell Hill to the Roche Harbor Highlands trails as well as the connector trails from English Camp to Westcott Bay and Mitchell Hill, and the proposed trail from the intersection of Roche Harbor and West Valley roads.

In addition, the following community access trails would link to other private lands that border Mitchell Hill:

- Boy Scout Camp Community Access Trail
- Hops Farm Community Access Trail
- Pipe Gate South Community Access Trail

Designating these trails as multiuse community access trails would require agreements with private landowners that allow members of the public to use these trails. Otherwise these trails would be removed and rehabilitated within the park.

d. Trail Resource Protection Measures

A variety of resource protection measures have been identified to improve the condition of park natural and cultural resources on or adjacent to trails within the area associated with this DCP. These measures include closure of duplicate and social trails, monitoring and/or limiting use near sensitive habitats, such as the cedar grove, riparian areas, seasonal wetlands, and rocky moss-covered areas and closing or rerouting trails with a slope of greater than 20 percent.

English Camp, Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay: In all areas, the park would identify and eliminate some social trails through closure, which may include restoration. Where designated trails pass through sensitive habitat, such as wetlands, these surrounding resources would be protected by using raised trails, such as boardwalks or turnpike, appropriate to the designated uses (e.g. hiking or multiuse). This would also include providing drainage improvements, such as culverts, water bars, ditches or cross-drains where needed. Trails may also be rerouted to improve their sustainability.

The park would also work with federal land management surveyors and other public and private landowners to mark the new English Camp boundary. This would include ongoing efforts to remove non-historic fencing that interrupts safe visitor and wildlife passage through the landscape.

Mitchell Hill: A series of unnatural user-created features, such as mountain biking ramps, jumps, and dips, have been constructed at Mitchell Hill, primarily on the Mitchell Hill Center Trail. Trail features, such as banked turns and rolling terrain are specifically designed for mountain bike downhill use. Because these trail features have adversely affected the natural environment, they would be modified or removed and the area restored. NPS and International Mountain Bicycling Association experts in trail design would be contacted to determine whether trails designed specifically to accommodate mountain biking use could be designed to meet park trail standards.

The following are among those trails that would be rerouted, closed and/or rehabilitated:

- Trail sections not part of formal cedar grove designated trail.
- Trails that dead-end onto private property (where the private landowner is unwilling to accept public use via an agreement with the park).
- Extremely steep trails (above 20%).

- Trails that impact sensitive resources areas, such as moss-covered rocks. Depending on site-specific analysis, there may be other categories of trails that would be identified for closure, such as those impacting a specific resource.

Because this plan results in formalizing social and user-created trails, it is likely that these trails may need to be modified (improved) to meet trail standards for their designated uses. For instance, a winding social trail may need to be rerouted slightly to avoid overly steep or eroding sections. Trails designated for multiuse may need to be modified to minimize the number of blind corners in uphill or downhill sections. A trail designated for multiple use that is currently too steep to limit erosion impacts from mountain biking may need to be rerouted to reduce its grade. Other trails may need to be modified where they cross the Old Military Road to avoid potential impacts to cultural resources.

Westcott Bay: The sensitive Westcott Bay lagoon shoreline has already been impacted by a network of social trails. The park would establish and define access to the area to prevent the adverse impacts from these trails (for example, to avoid contributing sediment to the bay during runoff). There is also a need to minimize impacts to adjacent privately-owned shoreline, by directing visitor use through trailhead signs and maps.

The Westcott Bay Connector Trail would be improved by installing culverts and turnpike where needed to minimize impacts to water resources. The Point Trail would also be improved to minimize potential impacts to archeological resources and to identify a single path onto the peninsula adjacent to the lagoon.

e. Trail Signs

English Camp, Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay: Through this plan the network of trails that could be retained for designation has been named. The park would create and produce a map of the trail system showing landmarks and trail junctions. New signs would primarily be located at trailheads and trail junctions. Trail junction signs would be low impact/low profile, while trailhead signs could be kiosks that contain more information, such as maps and trail rules and area regulations as well as important safety information about the area and trail use. Trail signs would also show appropriate uses (hiking, horseback riding, mountain bicycling) and would also include multiuse trail etiquette signs).

6. Accessibility

English Camp: In addition to providing for accessibility at English Camp and Westcott Bay, the park would designate accessible parking spaces in the expanded parking area at Mitchell Hill and in the new parking area off of West Valley Road for Westcott Bay. Other accommodations would include the ability to use the administrative access road to Westcott Bay by prior arrangement, such as for accessible parking.

Mitchell Hill / Westcott Bay: Over the long-term, the park would develop accessible trails at Mitchell Hill, such as in the cedar grove area, and at Westcott Bay, such as to the point area. Because trail grade modifications and other improvements would be necessary, it is likely that these actions would require additional environmental impact analysis. At both sites, accessible parking would be provided when parking areas are improved. In addition, access to Westcott Bay via the Westcott Drive entrance could be provided upon request for those with accessibility placards.

7. Interpretation

English Camp, Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay: In addition to offering the same range of interpretive programming currently available at English Camp, the park map and guide (brochure) would be revised to reflect Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay. Existing interpretive information at English Camp would be supplemented by providing bulletin boards, trailhead kiosks, brochures and trail maps at Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay. There would also be opportunities to create self-guided trails. These trails could be via signs, brochures and/or podcasts. Occasional special

event programming would also occur and there would be opportunities for occasional ranger-led hikes and talks at each site.

8. Education Camp

English Camp: Instead of relocating the education camp to the south side of the Administrative Road as called for by the GMP, the camp would be relocated to the north side of the Administrative Road. Because the north side of the road has already been disturbed through park maintenance use for wood-cutting, and because it is flatter and has a lower density of trees, overall impacts from constructing an improved facility would be reduced.

For the education camp, the park would work with contractors and partners to provide a flexible area for up to 40 students and 10 staff, including the following amenities:

- Campfire circle
- Group shelter with kitchen and picnic tables (flexible space)
- Approximately 10-15 tent pads
- Accessible toilet
- Nearby parking for 4-6 vehicles and one bus
- Nearby turnaround for buses
- Loading/Unloading area adjacent to camp
- Utilities (connections to water and electricity)
- Septic system

These improvements would enable continued use by the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry and by a variety of other educational groups.

9. Resource Protection

English Camp, Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay: The park would continue to conduct natural and cultural resources assessments and inventories and would begin monitoring programs for key resources as needed to determine baseline conditions, as well as to analyze impacts from park actions and to move resources toward desired future conditions. Non-historic infrastructure, such as former tent cabin platforms at Westcott Bay, would be removed.

Streams and stream corridors (riparian areas) would be protected. Resource protection measures could include limiting use to hiking and improving drainage. Other sensitive resources, such as cutthroat trout, shallow soils and rare or unusual plants and vegetation communities could also be protected by using buffer areas, where appropriate, and by managing visitor use, such as by designating trails and/or not permitting off-trail use.

10. Special Park Uses (Permit Activities)

The park would continue to manage horse use through special use permits to ensure riders understand where riding is available and how they can mitigate impacts.

English Camp and Mitchell Hill: There are currently no additional proposed special park uses planned for Mitchell Hill.

Westcott Bay: There would continue to be opportunities for special events, including those hosted by the park as well as others. The park could provide opportunities for small-scale special events, such as community meetings, picnics or weddings.

11. Kayaking

English Camp: Kayak launching and landing along the English Camp shoreline would be formalized with special use permit parking at the end of the Administrative Road, with formal launching allowed from the English Camp dock.

Westcott Bay: Informal kayak launching and landing along the Westcott Bay shoreline would be discouraged to protect fragile resources. No kayak launching and landing would be permitted in the cove and formal launching would be available from the English Camp dock.

12. Camping

There would continue to be no public visitor camping available in the park.

Summary of Other Alternatives Considered

- **Alternative 1: No Action (Continue Current Management)**

English Camp

Visitor Experience: At English Camp, there would continue to be ongoing historical and natural resources interpretation (walks, talks, etc.). Visitors would continue to take part in low impact activities, such as touring the historic landscape, hiking, bird watching, and small boat use.

Education Camp: Initially, the education camp would remain in its current location at English Camp near the end of the Administrative Road, with ongoing use of the camp by the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI). Later, as called for by the GMP, it would be relocated to the south side of the Administrative Road.

Mitchell Hill

Access: There would continue to be a small number of offsite parking spaces on the county easement at the end of Horse Trail Road. Hiking access would also continue to be available from English Camp via the English Camp Connector Trail.

Visitor Experience: Since there are no road signs directing visitors to the site, visitors would continue to arrive on their own based on prior knowledge of the site or on recommendations from others. Upon arrival, there is little to identify the site as part of San Juan Island NHP. The 3-5 parking spaces used for informal head-in parking are on the south side of Horse Trail Road. A San Juan Island Trails Committee map is usually available on a signpost near the road gate. The trails committee map shows much of the trail network, including connections to Roche Harbor Highlands trails, and provides some information about mileage. The network of trails, however, is unsigned.

Alternatively, visitors may arrive on foot from English Camp. From English Camp, the Mount Young trails merge seamlessly with the Mitchell Hill trails via the English Camp Connector Trail. Upon arrival at Mitchell Hill, however, there are few indications, other than NPS boundary signs that mark the former boundary, to show entry into the area.

Trail Designations: Consistent with former Washington Department of Natural Resources management of the area, all trails would continue to be open to hiking, bicycling and horseback riding.

Westcott Bay

Access: There would continue to be offsite parking at English Camp with access on foot to Westcott Bay via the Westcott Bay Connector Trail.

Visitor Experience: Public access to Westcott Bay is via the Westcott Bay Connector Trail from English Camp. This trail is accessed off the Bell Point Trail at English Camp. Upon arrival at Westcott Bay, there are few indications that this site is part of the park and no route-finding or site information is available. Because the existing house deck can be seen upon arrival, most visitors head toward it and/or the Point Trail along the lagoon.

Although there is currently no access to Westcott Bay for vehicles via Westcott Drive, it is likely that some visitors attempt to enter the area this way despite the "No National Park Access" sign at the Roche Harbor Road and Westcott Drive junction. If visitors do venture down Westcott Drive, there are a few manufactured signs installed by landowners that deter entry, stating "no

park access," "no turnaround," etc. These signs are on private property that borders Westcott Drive, a county road.

Because the administrative vehicle access to Westcott Bay is shared with the Westcott Bay Oyster Farm, visitors to the oyster farm have been encouraged to go down Westcott Drive to obtain oysters. A sign at the Westcott Drive junction with Roche Harbor Road directs visitors to the oyster farm via Westcott Drive.

Trail Designations: All trails at Westcott Bay would continue to be open to hiking only.

- **Alternative 2: Low Impact Visitor Use Opportunities**

In this alternative, a wider range of activities would be available to individuals and organized groups. In addition to the range of low impact visitor use activities currently available, accessible trails would be added. At English Camp, the education camp would be improved on the north side of the road, instead of the south side, and would continue to provide a variety of overnight and day use activities for organized groups. At Mitchell Hill, offsite parking on the county easement would be expanded and the area would continue to offer hiking, bicycling and horseback riding trails. This alternative would emphasize resource protection and favor hiking over other uses, with fewer multiuse trails than in Alternatives 1, 3 and 4. Parking and hiking access to Westcott Bay would continue to be available from English Camp via the Westcott Bay Connector Trail. In addition, a small number of parking spaces would be open to those needing accessibility or taking part in small special events. To retain a more natural setting, the house would be removed or modified to become a picnic shelter / gathering space.

- **Alternative 4: More Accommodation of Visitor Use Opportunities**

This alternative would include more visitor amenities than other alternatives. In addition to providing a range of low impact visitor uses at English Camp and Westcott Bay, there would be a greater focus on providing multiuse trails, not only at Mitchell Hill, but also that link English Camp with Westcott Bay and Mitchell Hill and the island-wide trail system. Therefore, bicycling and horseback riding would be permitted on the connector trails. There would be expanded onsite parking inside the gate at Mitchell Hill with a trailer turnaround (if feasible). There would also be low-impact walk-in camping at Mitchell Hill and a new kayak launch site at Westcott Bay would be constructed. A new entrance road off of West Valley Road would provide access to a new day use parking area at Westcott Bay. The existing house would become a visitor contact station or nature center. With parking and facilities, Westcott Bay could offer larger special events.

Preliminary Alternatives and Actions Considered But Dismissed

Under NEPA and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) *Forty Questions*, alternatives may be eliminated from detailed study based on the following reasons [40 CFR 1502.14 (a)]:

- Technical or economic infeasibility
- Inability to meet project objectives or resolve need for the project
- Duplicate other less environmentally damaging alternatives
- Conflict with an up-to-date valid plan, statement of purpose and significance, or other policy, and therefore would require a major change in that plan or policy to implement
- Environmental impacts are too great.

The following alternatives or variations were considered during the planning process, but were rejected because they met one of the above criteria.

- ◇ **English Camp**

Improving Rather than Relocating the Education Camp or Relocating the Education Camp Nearer to its Existing Location: In addition to conflicting with the GMP, these alternatives were rejected because they would have had greater impacts on the wetland where the camp is now located.

- ◇ **Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay**

Equestrian Only or Mountain Biking Only Trails or Timing that Limits User Conflicts: The level of use is low and conflicts between users are rare. Therefore isolating use on specific trails is not necessary to reduce or prevent conflicts or other resource impacts.

♦ **Mitchell Hill**

Constructing Education Camp: Constructing an education camp at Mitchell Hill instead of English Camp would conflict with the GMP (this location was considered in the GMP non-selected alternative) and would have greater impacts than other alternatives considered in the DCP because of inadequate access and infrastructure.

♦ **Westcott Bay**

Constructing Education Camp: As described above, constructing an education camp at Westcott Bay instead of English Camp would conflict with the GMP and would have greater impacts than other alternatives considered in the DCP because of inadequate access and infrastructure. The fragile shoreline environment, including estuarine and archeological resources, and adjacent neighborhood would also preclude heavier use.

Swimming in Pond / Cove: Because both the pond and cove are small sensitive areas that would not be able to withstand impacts from swimming, this potential visitor use opportunity was considered but dismissed.

Public Camping: Because of limited access, sensitive resources and the size of Westcott Bay, providing for hike-in or kayak-in (paddle-in) camping was considered but dismissed. Compared to other visitor uses, providing for camping would have greater impacts on water resources, soundscapes, and air quality (depending on whether campfires were permitted).

Power Boat Access/Launch: Motorized boating is inconsistent with the GMP and would have adverse impacts on eelgrass areas in Westcott Bay as well as at any shoreline launch sites.

Environmentally Preferable Alternative

The environmentally preferable alternative is the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment and that best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources (46 FR 18026 – 46 FR 18038).

In accordance with NPS Director's Order-12, *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-making* and CEQ requirements, the NPS is required to identify the "environmentally preferable alternative" in all environmental documents, including EAs. The environmentally preferable alternative is determined by applying the criteria suggested in Section 101(b) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

Consistency with NEPA Section 101(b)

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) (46 FR 18026 - 46 FR 18038) provides direction that the "environmentally preferable alternative is the alternative that would promote the national environmental policy as expressed in NEPA's Section 101," including:

1. Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
2. Assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
3. Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk of health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences;
4. Preserve important historic, cultural and natural aspects of our national heritage and maintain, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice;
5. Achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities; and

6. Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources (NEPA Section 101(b)).

Analysis

1. Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations.

Because the education camp would be relocated from a wetland, and wetland impacts from the Point Trail would be mitigated, and because resource protection measures would be implemented to minimize adverse impacts occurring at Westcott Bay and Mitchell Hill, all action alternatives would meet this criterion. Alternative 2 would also minimize the extent of new development, providing new restrooms and allowing for parking in existing disturbed areas at Westcott Bay, closing some trails and designating others hiking only at Mitchell Hill, while other alternatives call for additional development at both locations. Therefore Alternative 2 would best meet this criterion.

2. Assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings.

All alternatives would meet this criterion. All would protect natural and cultural resources, however specific measures in the action alternatives (2-4) would increase the level of protection for both natural and cultural resources while maintaining a range of recreational uses and would therefore best meet this criterion.

3. Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk of health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences.

All of the action alternatives (2-4) would meet this criterion. Alternatives 3 and 4, would also provide a wider range of trail types, including community access trails at Mitchell Hill and improvements in kayaking access, therefore increasing the range of beneficial uses of the park, however because Alternative 4 would also increase the level of development for parking at Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay (including a new road), Alternative 3 would best meet this criterion.

4. Preserve important historic, cultural and natural aspects of our national heritage and maintain, where possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice.

All of the alternatives would meet this criterion; however the action alternatives would increase the level of protection for park resources while providing a greater diversity of activities, such as hiking only trails at Mitchell Hill, restrooms, improved accessibility, picnicking, and Old Military Road access in Alternatives 2-4; improvements to kayaking in Alternatives 3 and 4; and new backcountry camping in Alternative 4. Therefore Alternatives 2-4 would best meet this criterion.

5. Achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities.

All of the alternatives would meet this criterion. Alternatives 2 and 3 would best meet this criterion because they offer additional resource protection measures, the same modifications to visitor use opportunities noted in the criterion 4 explanation, and also provide limited expansion of parking.

6. Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.

All alternatives call for relocation of the education center, including new construction. In conformance with NPS standards, buildings must be environmentally sustainable and all alternatives would meet this criterion. Although no additional specific measures in Alternative 1 call for additional resource use, it is likely that ongoing management of Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay would include reconstruction of poorly situated or poorly constructed trail bridges at Mitchell Hill and construction of additional trail structures that would protect resources at both sites over time. For this and for the action alternatives, use of additional resources would rely heavily on renewable and/or recycled materials for trail structures, such as boardwalk construction. Reuse of the house, which is located in an upland at Westcott Bay and which currently provides

outstanding opportunities for use, would occur in Alternatives 1, 3 and 4, therefore these alternatives would minimize the loss of resources used to construct it. Alternatives 2-4 call for relocation of the education center out of a wetland to an upland site that is preferable because it is already moderately impacted, is more open, and contains fewer trees that would need to be removed. Improvements and changes in the interpretive and educational visitor experience would result in long-term regional beneficial impacts. Because Alternative 4 calls for additional development and Alternative 2 for removal of the house and reconstruction of a new picnic shelter in its place, which may or may not use existing materials, Alternative 3 would likely best meet this criterion.

Selection of Environmentally Preferable Alternative

Based on the preceding analysis, alternatives 2 and 3 would be environmentally preferable for different reasons. Alternative 3 would minimize additional development by retaining the house, rather than removing or modifying it as a picnic shelter, and thus would be considered environmentally preferable. Alternative 2, however, would minimize construction of new parking areas and would maximize use of previously disturbed areas on the existing sites for parking. Alternative 3 best met five of the six CEQ criteria, while Alternative 2 best met four of the six criteria, but could also best meet criterion 6 if more of the existing materials from the house were used for the picnic shelter at Westcott Bay. Although Alternative 4 best met some of the criteria, because it would provide the most development, it was not selected as environmentally preferable.

Why the Selected Alternative Will Not Have a Significant Effect

The NPS has determined that the Selected Alternative can be implemented with no significant adverse effects on soils, water quality, prehistoric and historic archeology, historic structures and cultural landscapes, visitor experience including safety, and park operations or other resources. This was determined based on analysis of the selected actions with respect to the following factors (CEQ 40 CFR 1508.27),

The Selected Alternative has a wide range of beneficial and adverse effects (see Measures to Minimize Environmental Harm below).

The Selected Alternative will not adversely affect public health or safety.

The Selected Alternative will not impact the unique characteristics of the area, including prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers or ecologically critical areas.

The effects on the human environment are known, and there were no controversial impacts or aspects of the proposed project that surfaced during the environmental analysis process.

The Selected Alternative neither establishes an NPS precedent for future actions with significant effects, nor represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The Selected Alternative will have *no adverse effect* on historic properties.

The Selected Alternative will have *no effect* on species listed or proposed for listing and is *not likely to adversely affect* coastal cutthroat trout, which are not federally listed, but which are a federal species of concern.

No significant cumulative effects and no highly uncertain, unique or unknown risks were identified during preparation of the EA or during the public review period.

The Selected Alternative will not violate any federal, state or local environmental protection laws.

Measures to Minimize Environmental Harm

Table 2: Impact Mitigation Matrix identifies the impacts and mitigation required for satisfactory implementation of the selected alternative. This summary assigns responsibility for ensuring the measures which minimize, eliminate or avoid these impacts are implemented. All mitigation measures described in this section will be implemented. Further mitigation measures may be developed in response to ongoing formal and informal consultation on this project and may also augment the measures described below. These measures are designed to ensure that impacts to San Juan Island National Historical Park natural and cultural resources, visitor use/experience and park operations are avoided, minimized or mitigated.

Public Involvement

San Juan Island National Historical Park conducted internal scoping with appropriate NPS staff and the public and interested and affected groups, agencies, and tribes to determine the range of issues to be discussed in the EA. This interdisciplinary process defined the public and interested and affected groups, agencies, and tribes to determine the range of issues to be discussed in the EA. This interdisciplinary process also defined the purpose and need for federal action, identified potential actions to address the need, determined the likely issues and impact topics, and identified the relationship of the preferred alternative to other planning efforts in the park.

Public and Alternatives Scoping: Public scoping for the DCP began March 19, 2013 for Westcott Bay with a public scoping meeting and 30-day public comment period. In 2013, the park held two public meetings with equestrian and bicyclist user groups, on July 23 and July 24, respectively. A general public scoping meeting for Mitchell Hill occurred on July 31, 2013.

In 2014, Mitchell Hill was combined with the already in-process Westcott Bay DCP planning process and a trails work-session was held on January 22, 2014. On April 22, 2014 an Alternatives Scoping meeting (based on a preliminary range of alternatives for both Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay) occurred. The formal alternatives scoping period for the combined DCP ended on May 22, 2014, however comments continued to be accepted through the development of the environmental assessment.

In addition to comments received during the seven public meetings/workshops, the park received 82 letters, emails, and comments on the optional public comment form during the DCP comment periods. These comments included a variety of concerns about

- access and parking at both sites;
- trails at Mitchell Hill and trails connecting both sites to English Camp;
- recreational opportunities at both sites (including kayaking, camping, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, motorized use, sightseeing, boat launching and anchoring, etc.);
- development intent at both sites; and
- facilities, including the educational camp and where it should be located.

Release of EA for Public Review: The Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay Development Concept Plan EA was released for a 30-day public review period from April 14, 2015 through May 15, 2015. The EA was available on the PEPC website (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/sajih>) and copies were also available at the park and advertised in a constant contact email from the park. In addition, approximately 10 printed EAs were distributed. Numerous meetings with individuals at their requests and two public meetings (from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. and from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.) were held on the proposed plan on April 28, 2015 at the San Juan Island Grange Hall. Approximately 21 people signed in at the first meeting and 17 people signed in at the second meeting. A press release announcing the public comment period was sent to San Juan Island Journal to begin the public comment period. This was picked up in the local paper, the San Juan Island Journal on April 17, 2015.

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Table 2: Impact Mitigation Matrix
Note: The project manager is the Contracting Officer's Representative for the Education Center Construction

Resource	Impact	Measures to Avoid, Minimize or Mitigate Impacts	Responsibility
Soils	<p>Minor to moderate localized adverse impacts from relocation and construction of education camp.</p> <p>Negligible to moderate impacts from modifying trails at Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay to meet their designated uses.</p> <p>Additional impacts from creating parking areas at Westcott Bay and Mitchell Hill and from improving connector trails.</p> <p>Beneficial effects from implementing trail resource protection measures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement standard erosion control measures such as silt fences and/or sand bags to minimize the potential for soil erosion. Revegetate disturbed areas and/or restore the areas as close as possible to pre-construction conditions as soon as practicable following construction. Cover excavated areas during non-work periods. Use a raised boardwalk type construction to reduce impacts on wetland soils, vegetation, and hydrologic functions, including floodplains. Incorporate drainage improvements alongside the edges of parking areas to improve infiltration and slow runoff. <p>Measures Specific to Education Camp</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve natural resources within the project boundary and outside the limits of work in their existing condition or restore to an equivalent or improved condition. Coordinate construction activities to minimize pollution (erosion, trash, etc.) to maximum practical extent. Limit clearing, excavation, and grading to those areas in the project area necessary for construction. Complete excavation and grading during the dry season to the maximum extent possible. Construct new facilities on soils suitable for development (NPS PWR 2008). Minimize soil erosion by limiting the time that soil is left exposed and by applying other erosion control measures, such as erosion matting, silt fencing, and sedimentation basins in construction areas to reduce erosion, surface scouring, and discharge to water bodies (NPS PWR 2008). Spray water on the construction site, if necessary, to reduce fugitive dust generated by construction and soil disturbance (NPS PWR 2008). Reuse excavated materials where possible in the project area (NPS PWR 2008). 	Project Manager Chief of Maintenance Chief of Integrated Resources

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and approve a Hazardous Spill Plan before construction begins. Ensure that spill containment supplies are kept on site (NPS PWR 2008). • Minimize possible petrochemical leaks from construction equipment by regular monitoring and checking of construction equipment to identify and repair any leaks (NPS PWR 2008). • Encourage the use of vegetable oil in place of hydraulic fluid in heavy equipment (NPS PWR 2008). 	
Water Resources: Water Quality and Water Quantity	<p><i>Water Quality:</i> Short-term minor to moderate adverse impacts from unimproved trails at Mitchell Hill, which would be improved by adding trail drainage structures.</p> <p>Negligible impacts from informal kayak access to Garrison Bay. Minor impacts from more frequent use of septic system from use of house.</p> <p>Additional negligible to minor adverse impacts from improving small parking areas at Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay, including beneficial impacts from adding runoff protection measures.</p> <p>Long-term beneficial effects from use of trail and wetland resource protection measures, including long-term beneficial effects from relocation of education camp.</p> <p><i>Water Quantity:</i> Ongoing negligible to minor adverse impacts from provision of water to education camp plus additional short-term minor impacts from use of water during construction and continued use at Westcott Bay.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with San Juan County (an aquifer recharge area) to implement appropriate mitigation measures to help reduce impacts on water quality at Westcott Bay. • Provide education through required permits for kayak launching and for equestrian use to minimize visitor use impacts on water resources. • Integrate runoff control systems into designs for parking areas and other development near water features to minimize potential for water pollution. • Develop sediment control and prevention plans for projects that could affect water quality, including for stormwater runoff. • Implement erosion control measures to avoid or minimize discharge to nearby water bodies. • Regularly inspect construction equipment for petroleum leaks to prevent water pollution. • Construct low impact toilets, such as vault toilets, rather than flush toilets. <p>Measures specific to Education Camp</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erosion control measures would consist of appropriate BMPs for storm water discharge, such as silt fencing, barrier protectors, straw bales, temporary soil retention blankets, excelsior drainage filters, sediment traps and/or berms. • Berms and drainage filters would be used to form sediment traps and to control runoff on access roads, well areas, and the staging areas. • Erosion control measures would be used to contain direct precipitation in the construction zone. The contained water would be allowed to percolate into the ground or drain slowly. • Excess water used for dust control would be contained within the demolition areas by the erosion control measures. • The contractor would furnish, install, maintain, and operate 	Project Manager Contractor Chief of Maintenance Chief of Integrated Resources

		<p>necessary control measures and other equipment necessary to prevent erosion as described in the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before the work begins, sufficient equipment would be available on the site to ensure that the operation and adequacy of the erosion control system could be maintained. • The contractor would ensure erosion and sediment control structures remain effective throughout excavation and grading operations, including by inspecting control structures after each rain event and promptly repairing breaches. <p>Trail Resource Protection Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close social trails and trails that go down steep embankments toward streams. • Close or reroute trails above 20% slope to multiuse. • Remove or bicycle jumps and modify other user-created features to avoid adversely affecting park resources on multiuse trails. • Maintain trails to prevent soil erosion, improve trail drainage, and improve water quality through installation of water bars, dips, cross-drains, culverts, raising and stabilizing surface, etc. • Install bridges or boardwalks where appropriate, such as to the point at Westcott Bay. • Conduct bank stabilization where needed to protect archeological and marine resources. • Allow horse and mountain bike use only on those trails identified on NPS maps. • Encourage multiuse only when trails are dry. • Encourage visitors to stay on designated trails. • Implement projects undertaken adjacent to or near wetlands during the dry season (usually late summer). • Employ appropriate best management practices when working in or near wetlands. • Stage and protect excavated materials to prevent potential sedimentation impacts, including minimizing the amount of disturbed earth area and the duration of soil exposure to rainfall. • Develop and implement a comprehensive Spill Prevention/Response Plan that complies with federal and 	Project Manager Chief of Maintenance Contractor
Water Resources: Wetlands	<p>Long-term beneficial impacts from relocating education camp and constructing boardwalk for wetland portion of Point Trail.</p> <p>Additional beneficial impacts from constructing trail structures where trails pass through wetlands and from implementing other resource protection measures and from</p>		

	<p>conducting active and passive wetlands restoration.</p> <p>Long-term minor adverse impacts from retaining drainfield line in wetlands, possibly including beneficial effects if relocation of this line occurred when repairs were needed.</p>	<p>state regulations and addresses all aspects of spill prevention, notification, emergency spill response strategies for spills occurring on land and water, reporting requirements, monitoring requirements, personnel responsibilities, response equipment type and location, and drills and training requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPP). Ensure that actions consider high tides and the high groundwater table at Westcott Bay. Integrate runoff control systems into designs of parking areas and other developments near water to minimize water pollution. Design proposed activities to avoid surface water, ponds, seeps, springs, and wetlands to the degree possible. <p>Prevention of Fuel Spills (best management practices)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct refueling activities at least 100 feet from water sources. Identify and provide containment devices, such as temporary earth berms, for areas where refueling or maintenance of equipment would occur. Make absorbent pads available at worksite to clean up spills. Restrict the location of fueling sites and ensure requirements for spill containment, and other measures to safeguard aquatic and terrestrial habitat from construction-related contaminants are identified. 	
<p>Water Resources: Floodplains</p>	<p>Ongoing minimal adverse impacts to floodplains from use of the existing facilities located in a floodplain affected only by storm surges during extreme high tides.</p> <p>Mitigation measures would reduce risks to people and property.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use low impact development (LID) techniques for stormwater management (see current San Juan County – Town of Friday Harbor Hazard Mitigation Plan). Construct administrative parking area to allow permeability, thereby avoiding increases in surface water runoff from storm events. Construct new facilities, such as vault toilet and parking area, in uplands to avoid impacts on floodplains. Construct a raised boardwalk for a portion of the Point Trail to reduce impacts on wetland soils, vegetation, and hydrologic functions, including floodplains. <p>Actions to Minimize Risk to Life</p>	<p>Project Manager Chief of Maintenance Contractor Superintendent</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancel temporary special events planned in the area if major seasonal storms that may cause flooding are forecasted. • Close the gate and post signs warning visitors of the potential flood hazard from coastal flooding, tidal surges, and high winds. • Remove residents of the Westcott house to temporary shelter during major storm events (heavy rains and high winds). (Occupants would be instructed to evacuate the premises immediately and not return until storm warnings and any flood waters have subsided.) • Use the audible alarm system on the house septic tank as a warning for residents and visitors to the area to evacuate. (Note: This warning system does not indicate that water is entering the building, only that the ground is saturated to a point that seawater intrusion has likely occurred into the tank and that low level flooding/ponding surrounding the house is occurring or may occur.) • Ensure that the house has phone line and that the phone is in good working order to allow overnight occupants to call for help if needed. Post emergency phone numbers near the phone. • Locate a copy of the current San Juan County/Friday Harbor Hazard Mitigation Plan in the Westcott house and ensure that it is easily accessible and periodically reviewed. • Develop park standard operating procedures for overnight use of the house, including evacuation procedures (in case of a flood caused by either coastal storm surges or a tsunami). • Westcott Bay occupants would evacuate immediately to higher ground in extreme conditions, such as in the rare case of a tsunami. <p>Actions to Minimize Risk to Property</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No new capital investments (buildings) would be constructed in the floodplain. • Locate vault toilet in an upland area (above 100-year floodplain). • Store NPS valuable equipment or important documents on the loft level of the house, or temporarily relocate these items to park headquarters during the winter. • Construct the accessible trail to the scenic overlook (Point
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		<p>Trail) to avoid impeding floodwaters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop proposed parking in an upland site and include mitigation measures to avoid increasing stormwater runoff. • Loss of the house at Westcott Bay is a rare risk the NPS is willing to accept. Such loss or damage could also include impacts to future associated small-scale development, such as an unpaved administrative parking area, vault toilet, and short accessible trail. 	
Vegetation	<p>Initial ongoing adverse impacts to education camp (approximately one acre) in wetland, followed by later restoration. Loss of vegetation from up to 1.5 non-wetland acres from relocation of camp on north side of Administrative Road. (Actual facilities would encompass approximately a third of an acre within an overall area of approximately 1.5 acres.)</p> <p>Ongoing fragmentation of vegetation from social and way trails, nonnative plants, and poorly constructed trails and/or trails through sensitive areas.</p> <p>Beneficial effects from removal of derelict structures.</p> <p>Resource protection measures, such as trail sustainability standards, trail closures and rerouting trails to meet the guidelines for their standard would result in long-term beneficial effects, reducing some effects of fragmentation.</p> <p>Additional minor adverse and beneficial effects from Mitchell Hill parking area improvements, Westcott vault toilet construction, and trail construction in both areas (Old Military Road, Point Trail, and Cedar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor visitor use areas for impacts beyond the footprint of developed areas. • Use public education, revegetation of disturbed areas with native plants, erosion control measures, and barriers to reduce impacts on plants from erosion or creation of social trails. • Develop revegetation strategies for disturbed areas, including requiring the use of genetically appropriate native species. • Develop revegetation plans for the former education camp. • Minimize the introduction of nonnative species by using only weed-free materials for road and trail construction, repair, and maintenance; ensuring equipment arrives on-site free of mud or seed-bearing material; certifying all seeds and erosion control material as weed-free; identifying and treating areas of noxious weeds before and after construction; importing clean materials, such as topsoil and/or treating these before they arrive on site; regularly inspecting areas that serve as introduction points for invasive plants (education camp construction sites, staging areas, and other development zones); certifying rock and gravel sources to ensure these are free of noxious weed species; and monitoring locations of ground-disturbing operations for at least three years following the completion of construction projects. 	<p>Project Manager</p> <p>Chief of Integrated Resources</p> <p>Chief of Interpretation</p> <p>Chief of Maintenance</p>

	Grove Trail), as well as from rerouting trails that do not meet standards for their designated uses.		
Special Status Species and Communities	<p>Ongoing negligible to moderate adverse effects to sensitive species (coastal cutthroat) and communities (herbaceous balds, cedar grove, wetlands) from existing conditions.</p> <p>Implementation of resource protection measures (improvement of drainages/culverts, wetlands, etc.) would improve conditions for sensitive species and communities.</p> <p>There would also be improvements from relocation of septic line and rerouting or other modifications to trails (including monitoring) to accommodate multiuse when passing through herbaceous balds and other sensitive forest communities.</p> <p>Actions would be not likely to adversely affect coastal cutthroat.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase monitoring of special status species and communities where impacts are likely to occur. • Determine the type and severity of impacts from future management actions and visitor use at English Camp, including Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay. • Identify visitor use management strategies that would provide long-term protection for special status species and communities. • Mitchell Hill: Monitor trail use near herbaceous balds and bluffs to determine whether changes in trail designations are necessary to prevent resource degradation. Use monitoring to inform resource protection decisions/strategies. • Remove and rehabilitate duplicate trails, especially where these adversely affect sensitive plant communities. • Require visitors to stay on designated trails where applicable (in sensitive plant communities as identified on revised NPS trail map). • Eliminate and rehabilitate social trails. <p>Measures to minimize impacts to coastal cutthroat trout:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate creek and creek crossings for opportunities to improve bank stabilization and water quality. • Minimize access to creek from Mitchell Hill trail system. • Consider installation of a stream gauge at the most downstream culvert (near Cady Mountain Trail). • Establish and involve local youth in fish monitoring projects. • Provide outreach to local landowners downstream of the park regarding trout conservation, encouraging involvement with monitoring projects and potential future habitat restoration. • Consider adopting buffers for the creek, similar to San Juan County ordinances for critical areas for fish and wildlife habitat. 	Project Manager Chief of Integrated Resources Chief of Maintenance
Archeology	Resource protection and mitigation measures would be used to avoid impacts to potentially unidentified and known archeological resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct archeological surveys prior to implementation of any actions that require ground disturbance. • Monitor archeological resources for evidence of potential impacts from natural processes or from visitor use and 	Project Manager Chief of Integrated Resources

	<p>These include archeological monitoring where called for by initial surveys.</p> <p>Some potential for both beneficial and adverse effects from opening Old Military Road as a hiking trail and from constructing part of the Point Trail as a boardwalk as well as from connector trails and parking areas.</p> <p>No effect or no adverse effect on archeological resources.</p>	<p>address concerns as they are identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct archeological survey prior to actions along the Old Military Road to identify potential areas of concern and monitor proposed work to ensure identified areas are not disturbed during work to reopen the route. • Inform contractors of resource protection measures, including those to protect archeological site and historic properties. • Should presently unidentified archeological resources be discovered during construction, work in that location would be halted, the site secured, and the park would consult according to 36 CFR 800.11 and, as appropriate, provisions of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990. Any archeological site would be properly recorded by an archeologist and evaluated under the eligibility criteria of the National Register of Historic Places. • Any construction, maintenance, or visitor use activity that results in inadvertent discovery of human remains would stop immediately and follow provisions outlined in the NAGPRA. In compliance with NAGPRA, the NPS would also notify and consult concerned Native American representatives for the proper treatment of human remains, funerary and sacred objects, should these be discovered during the course of the project. • If found resources are determined eligible, appropriate measures would be implemented either to avoid further resource impacts or to mitigate their loss or disturbance (e.g., by data recovery excavations or other means) in consultation with the Washington State Historic Preservation Office. • Nominate the Old Military Road through Mitchell Hill to the National Register as part of the English Camp National Historic Landmark. 	<p>Project Manager Chief of Integrated Resources Chief of Interpretation</p>
<p>Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes</p>	<p>Sandwith Orchard: Long-term beneficial and minor short-term adverse effects from using the Old Military Road as a hiking trail.</p> <p>Old Military Road: Ongoing minor to moderate adverse effects on Old Military Road. Beneficial effects from preservation, including from potential listing as part of the English Camp National Historic Landmark.</p> <p>No effect on English Camp National</p>		

<p>Visitor Experience: Access and Transportation, Visitor Use Opportunities, and Interpretation and Education</p>	<p>Historic Landmark. <u>Visitor Use Access</u> <i>Mitchell Hill:</i> Beneficial effects from improving parking at Horse Trail Road in cooperation with county. <i>Westcott Bay:</i> Beneficial effects from providing accessible parking. More beneficial effects from providing small parking area (tbd) near West Valley Road and access trail from Roche Harbor Highlands parking. <u>Visitor Use Opportunities, Interpretation and Education</u> <i>Education Camp:</i> Long-term beneficial effects from improving education camp facilities. Improved visitor use opportunities from new and modified trails, trail linkages, trail signs, opportunities for interpretation, and finding resources in better condition. Beneficial effects from increasing recreational opportunities, including from maintaining multiuse trails at Mitchell Hill, from improving access to restrooms, and from improving parking at both sites. There would also continue to be access from private landowners willing to provide it. Minimal adverse effects would continue to occur from providing a small number of hiking only trails.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor visitor use at Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay to help quantify potential future impacts to visitor experience (including use and enjoyment/satisfaction). Among the monitoring factors which should be considered are: perceived tolerance levels among diverse user groups, visitor conflicts, changes in resource conditions and visitor use levels due to changes in park visitor management/policies, and visitor expectations. • To the extent practicable implement construction projects that would directly impact visitor experience (including use, enjoyment and safety) outside peak visitor use periods. • Manage noise levels during construction projects to minimize noise, and use standard noise abatement measures such as locating noise sources distant from high visitor use areas and scheduling work to minimize noise levels in visitor use zones. • Provide alternative means of access to visitor use areas if needed to improve visitor safety during construction periods. • Publicize construction closures that affect visitor use areas, and provide project updates through press releases and the park's website. • Manage vehicle traffic and contractor hauling of materials, supplies, and equipment within the construction zone to minimize traffic disruptions nearby, especially along Administrative Road. • Develop a safety plan prior to the initiation of construction to ensure the safety of visitors, workers, and park staff. • Use structures such as boardwalks and fences to route people away from sensitive natural and cultural resources, while still allowing access to key visitor use opportunities, such as viewpoints. • Provide vegetative screening, where appropriate, to protect key views or vistas. • Develop strategies to minimize conflicts between bicyclists, hikers, and equestrians at Mitchell Hill (such as by installing yield signs, instituting a Leave No Trace program, and involving local user groups in trail projects). • Ensure maps and trailhead information have authorized NPS trails labeled with approved uses. • Construct sustainable facilities that adhere to mitigation 	<p>Project Manager Chief of Integrated Resources Chief of Maintenance</p>
<p>Park Operations</p>	<p>Generally unchanged, with additional</p>	<p>Chief of</p>	

	<p>responsibilities for new sites and new education camp facilities being absorbed into existing budget and staffing unless a budget or staffing increase occurred.</p> <p>More facilities (education camp, improved and new trails, parking areas, trail structures, signs) would increase maintenance and management operational needs.</p> <p>Adverse effects from increased responsibilities for funding and managing new actions, some of which would make visitor use easier to manage.</p>	<p>measures to reduce impacts on park natural and cultural resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek commitment from NPS and regional offices for implementation funding. • Identify opportunities for partnerships to accomplish the selected alternative. 	Maintenance Superintendent
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Summary of Public Comments

The EA for the Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay Development Concept Plan was released for a 30-day public review period on April 15, 2015 (ending May 15, 2015). During this time, 63 correspondence entries were made, including handwritten comments, Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website comments, emails, submission of optional public comment forms, and comments from public meetings. Most of these were PEPC entries made by individuals. Two were made by non-profit organizations (National Parks Conservation Association and International Mountain Bicycling Association), two were petitions, and two were entries summarizing the notes taken at the two public meetings held on San Juan Island. Approximately twelve duplicate comments were also received.

The correspondence was analyzed and 257 comments were coded into 72 concern statements. Of these, there were 17 substantive comments which were addressed through ten responses (several raised the same issues). Responses to these substantive comments are provided in the Errata. These comments gave new information about island planning, requested a coalition of user groups be formed, and requested specific trail features, including technical mountain bike trails.

Despite initial comments during public scoping, there were very few comments about access to Westcott Bay, no comments about the proposed education camp relocation, and no comments that corrected information in either the Affected Environment or Environmental Consequences chapters. Most comments related to specific provisions in the alternatives. The highest number of comments received was a request for all trails at Mitchell Hill to remain multiuse, either including or not including comments about the Cedar Grove Trail. Other key comments identified numerous reasons for maintaining multiuse trails at Mitchell Hill, specific information about aspects of multiuse and general comments about impacts, including from steep trails. Overall, there were very few comments about Westcott Bay.

An overwhelming majority of the correspondence came from Washington State, with one letter from Colorado. Most were in favor of multiuse on all trails at Mitchell Hill or all trails except the Cedar Grove Trail. Very few comments were received on most aspects of the plan. No comments were received on the proposed move of the Education Camp.

Most of the correspondence on the Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay DCP EA did not contain substantive comments. Some examples of non-substantive comments received on the DCP/EA included comments in favor of retaining multiuse trails at Mitchell Hill, support for equestrian or mountain bike trails, comments on the planning process, comments related to dog walking, comments about preference for certain alternatives, facilities or recreational opportunities, personal stories, and assertions that trails may still be ridden by mountain bikes even if they are closed to multiuse. Many, even non-substantive comments provided information used by the planning team to craft the selected alternative and all comments were analyzed as part of the planning process.

Overall the comment letters raised issues covered in the impact analysis and alternatives. Very few new ideas were raised by the comment letters. Those that were raised were addressed by the planning process (but not described in the EA), by correcting the Alternative 3 map and through the modifications incorporated in the selected alternative described above.

Agency Consultation

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Endangered Species Act)

Federal agencies must consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to ensure their actions will not jeopardize the continued existence of any federally listed or proposed threatened or endangered species, or designated or proposed critical habitat [ESA, Sec. 7 (a)(2), 16 USC 1531 et seq.]. If listed species are present, the Federal agency must determine if the action will

have *no effect*, *may affect*, *[is] not likely to adversely affect* or *may affect*, or *likely to adversely affect* those species. The NPS made the determination of effect for the Selected Alternative following guidance outlined in the *Endangered Species Act Consultation Handbook: Procedures for Conducting Section 7 Consultations and Conferences* (1998 USFWS and National Marine Fisheries Service). NPS has determined that the selected alternative is "not likely to adversely affect" federally listed, candidate or proposed species or their designated critical habitat. Concurrence with this determination of effect is not necessary because coastal cutthroat trout are currently not federally listed.

State Historic Preservation Officer / Advisory Council for Historic Preservation (National Historic Preservation Act)

Archeological survey of the proposed education camp facility did not located features or sites considered eligible for the National Register, however archeological monitoring was recommended to ensure that there would be no effect on archeological resources.

Although the Old Military Road is likely eligible as a historic property, this portion of it has not been nominated or added to the National Register of Historic Places. The Sandwith Orchard (at English Camp, adjacent to Mitchell Hill) was also analyzed for potential effects from actions in the alternatives. Although the Sandwith Orchard has been found ineligible for the National Register, the park manages the orchard as part of its GMP Cultural Zone. Because no historic structures or cultural landscapes are known from Westcott Bay, there is no additional analysis of this area.

The public outreach called for by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act NHPA was integrated into the NEPA process in accordance with the *NPS Programmatic Agreement* (2008) and *Management Policies* (2006). In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, a letter notifying the state SHPOs of the proposed undertaking was sent during public scoping.

Implementation of the selected alternative would have a range of effects, including *no historic properties affected* and *no adverse effect* on resources contributing to the significance of San Juan Island National Historical Park. As each action associated with the selected alternative is implementation, concurrence with this determination of effect would be sought with the Washington State Historic Preservation Office.

Finding

On the basis of the information contained in the EA as summarized above, the NPS has determined that implementing the selected plan is not a major federal action nor is it an action without precedent or similar to an action that normally requires an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The conclusions of non-significance are supported by the conservation planning and environmental impact analysis completed and the capability of listed mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate impacts. No adverse effects to cultural or historical resources will occur; and there are no unacceptable impacts. This determination also included due consideration of the minor nature of agency, tribal and county recommendations, and public comments.

Therefore, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, an EIS will not be prepared, and portions of the selected project may be implemented immediately, while other

project elements will be implemented as soon as practicable, pending other requirements, funding and staffing.

Recommended:




Lee Taylor, Superintendent
San Juan Island National Historical Park

6/15/15

Date

Approved:

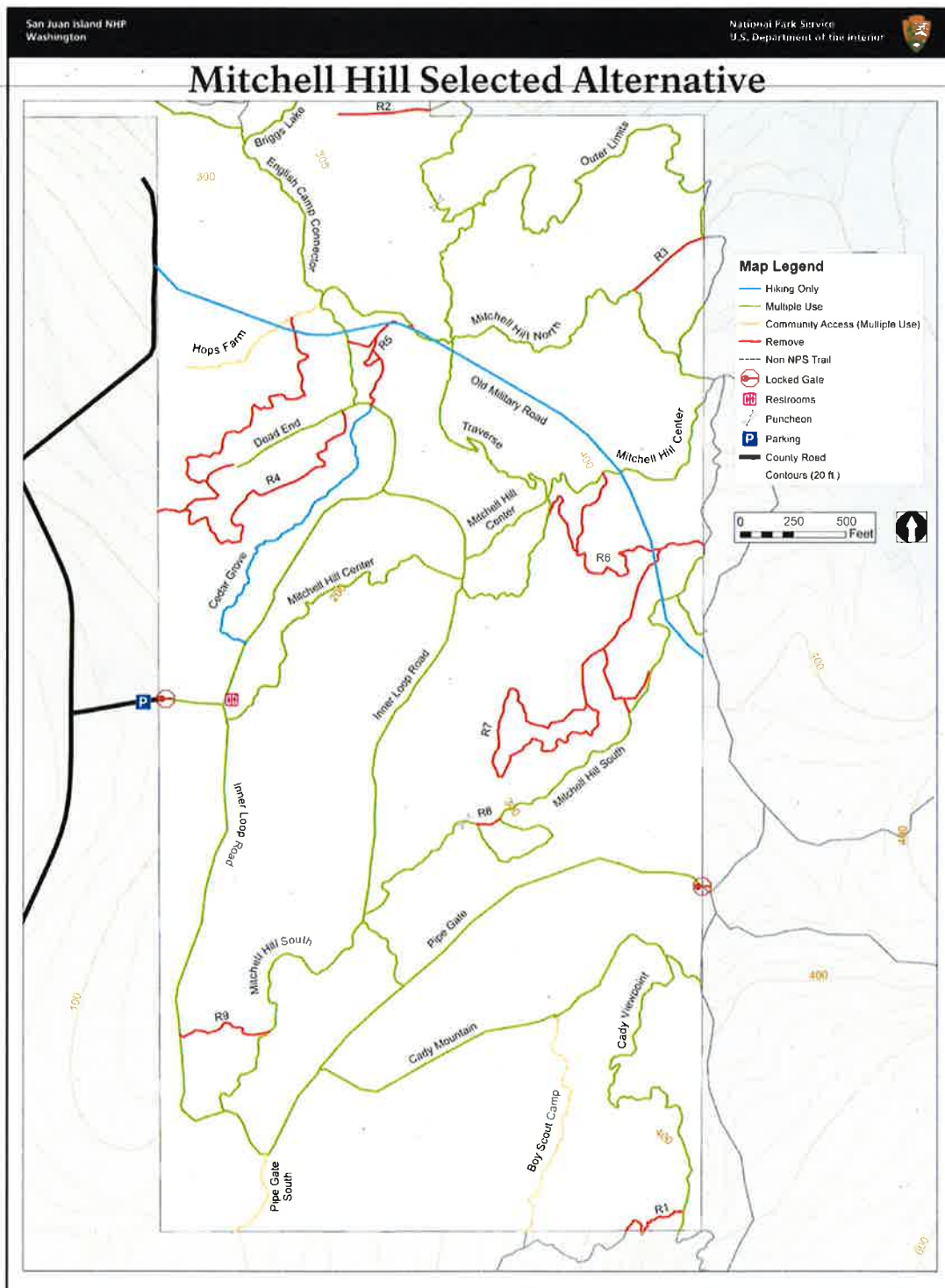


Patricia L. Neubacher, Acting Regional Director
Pacific West Region

6/25/15

Date

Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay Development Concept Plan Finding of No Significant Impact



Mitchell Hill and Westcott Bay Development Concept Plan Finding of No Significant Impact

