



Martin Van Buren National Historic Site General Management Plan & Environmental Assessment Overview

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The National Park Service has arrived at the final phase of the planning efforts for the General Management Plan for Martin Van Buren National Historic Site in Kinderhook, NY. The plan is the result of multiple years of development and valuable input from community partners and technical experts in the fields of resource protection, visitor use, partnerships and park operations.

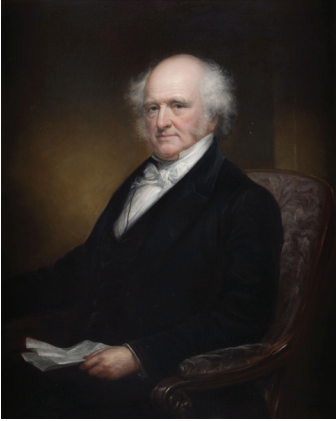
The Martin Van Buren National Historic Site is part of your community in Columbia County, and is a significant component of the heritage our country. We invite you to join us in this final phase of the planning process to review what has been developed thus far, and to provide your thoughts on the fully developed plan. For many of you that have been involved in this process over the past several years, you will see your ideas and vision captured in the preferred alternative that has been selected. After developing several alternatives and examining the impact of each, we believe that this is the best direction to

ensure the preservation of the resources of the site, as well as to ensure vibrant and engaging interpretations of our history in partnership with the community.

I invite you to hope that you will join us at one of our next public meetings on August 26th from 6-7:30 pm at the Columbia County Chamber of Commerce at 1 North Front Street in Hudson, NY; or on August 27th, from 6-7:30 pm at the Martin H. Glynn Municipal Building at 3203 Church Street in Valatie, NY. If you can't join us, and would still like to provide your thoughts, support or criticism, there are several options listed at further in this newsletter. Thank you for your interest in the Martin Van Buren National Historic Site and your support of our heritage.

Sarah Olson
Superintendent
Roosevelt-Vanderbilt-Van Buren
National Historic Sites

Background on Martin Van Buren National Historic Site



Martin Van Buren by Daniel Huntington.

Martin Van Buren National Historic Site (Martin Van Buren NHS or the park) was established in 1974 to protect and interpret Lindenwald, the home and farm of the eighth President of the United States. Martin Van Buren owned Lindenwald between 1839 and his death in 1862. The 36-room Lindenwald mansion, South Gatehouse, Old Post Road trace, Farm Cottage, archival and museum collection, cultural landscape, archeological sites, and overall historic setting and scenic views are the park's most significant resources. The park seeks to interpret the life and public career of Martin Van Buren and understand the issues facing America during

the formative years of the republic through the turbulent decades leading up to the Civil War.

In 2009, the park boundary was expanded from 39 acres to approximately 295 acres. The former Meyer farm structures are leased for operational support to Roxbury Farm. Roxbury Farm owns a 101-acre parcel in the park boundary, on which there is a permanent conservation easement. In 2013, Martin Van Buren NHS was aligned organizationally with the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site, Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site, and Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site.

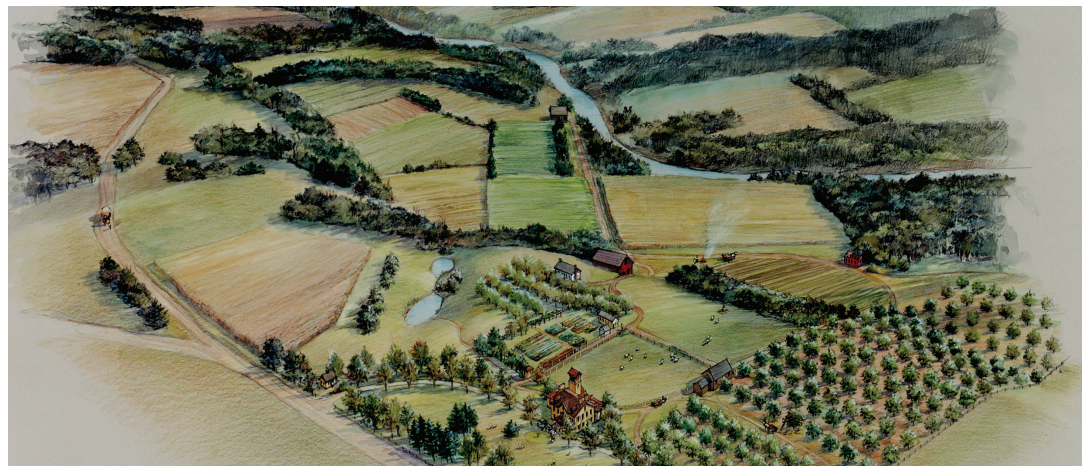
The General Management Plan

The Martin Van Buren NHS General Management Plan (GMP) defines the basic management philosophy that will guide park management decisions over the next 15-20 years. The GMP provides the first comprehensive planning strategy for the park since the park's 1970 Master Plan and the Environmental Assessment (EA) evaluates the possible impacts of proposed management alternatives.

As part of the GMP/EA process, staff of Martin Van Buren NHS and an NPS planning team gathered input from the public, partners, public agencies, and other interested parties about the future of the park. This GMP/EA for Martin Van Buren National Historic Site represents contributions from park partners, neighbors and those

interested in shaping the future of this National Park.

With the finalization of the plan, we have a strong strategy to ensure resource protection, vibrant and engaging visitor services, well maintained grounds that reflect the historic cultural landscape, and a facilities plan to better meet the needs of the park. Based on analysis of the resources of the park and the comments received, the team shaped three management alternatives. Alternative C has been identified as the NPS's preferred alternative for implementation and is also the environmentally preferable alternative. The following is a synopsis of all three alternatives that were considered:



Artist rendering of the Van Buren farm.

The Alternatives

Alternative A

Under Alternative A, the NPS would continue current management practices without proposing any major new actions. NPS would work to preserve and maintain the significant resources of the site and provide for a visitor experience using existing facilities. The museum collection will be moved to Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt NHS; the archeological collection will continue to be housed at Fort Stanwix NHS. Agricultural production will continue on lands within the park boundary.

Alternative B

The emphasis of Alternative B is on Martin Van Buren's political life and the value of civic participation and education. Visitors would come to the park to engage in discussions, programs and activities related to history, politics, and civic life.

The primary focus of Alternative B would be on the park's Historic Management Area, most substantially Lindenwald. This alternative emphasizes developing activities and programs on site in a visitor contact station and off site at schools and colleges, specifically connecting antebellum history and civic life to contemporary issues. As with Alternative A, The museum collection will be moved to Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt NHS; the archeological collection will continue to be housed at Fort Stanwix NHS. Agricultural production will continue on lands within the park boundary

Alternative C

Under Alternative C, visitors would walk in the footsteps of Martin Van Buren – as the former president, family man, and gentleman farmer. Focal points would be Lindenwald and the farm landscape. As with Alternative B, this alternative would interpret his presidency and political career at Lindenwald and the visitor contact station. The cultural landscape surrounding the Lindenwald mansion would be restored as fully as feasible to Martin Van Buren's period. Recognizing the continuity of agriculture at Lindenwald, the surrounding farmland would provide a context for interpreting the history of progressive farming from Van Buren's time to the present day operations of Roxbury Farm.

A new multi-use visitor/administrative facility would be built and a maintenance facility would be established outside the historic core in a purpose-built facility. The museum collection will be relocated to a shared facility with the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic and the archeological collection will continue to be housed at Fort Stanwix NHS. This is the preferred alternative.

Public Comments & Plan Implementation



Breakfast Room in the Lindenwald Mansion.

The Martin Van Buren GMP/EA will be available for public review and comment online at the National Park Service's Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website, which is at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>. The final day to provide your input is October 5, 2015.

Comments on the plan can also be submitted to:

Justin Monetti, Site Manager
Martin Van Buren National Historic Site
1013 Old Post Road
Kinderhook, NY 12106

What's Next?

Once all comments have been reviewed, the NPS may issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), selecting an alternative for implementation as the final GMP for Martin Van Buren NHS. The FONSI will identify any changes made to the approved GMP as a result of the comments received from the public and other agencies, and contain responses to comments, as appropriate. If a FONSI is issued, it will be followed by a 30-day no action period,

after which the approved GMP will be implemented.

The implementation of the approved plan will depend on future NPS funding levels and service-wide priorities and on partnership resources. The approval of a GMP does not guarantee that funding needed to implement the plan will be forthcoming. Full implementation of the GMP could be many years in the future.

Notice of Public Meeting to Present General Management Plan

We invite you to join us at one of two public meetings to present the General Management Plan/Environmental Assessment (GMP/EA). These will be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss any concerns as we move into implementing the plan. The first public meeting will be held on August 26th from 6-7:30 pm at the Columbia County Chamber of Commerce

at 1 North Front Street in Hudson, NY and the second on August 27th, from 6-7:30 pm at the Martin H. Glynn Municipal Building at 3203 Church Street in Valatie, NY. A presentation on the contents of the General Management Plan will be made, and comments and questions from the public will be solicited.



The dedicated staff at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site.