

Pinnacles National Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Public Review and Comments

Draft Accessibility Self Evaluation and Transition Plan



Dear Neighbors, Friends, and Partners:

I am pleased to announce the availability of the draft Accessibility Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan for Pinnacles National Park. The preparation of an accessibility self-evaluation and transition plan is mandated by regulations under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as they apply to the US Department of the Interior. Public entities are required to evaluate their current programs, policies, and practices dealing with accessibility and develop a strategy for making the necessary changes to improve them.

All of this information is presented for your review in the draft plan. Because your feedback is important to the completion of the draft plan, we are asking for your thoughtful review and comments during the 30-day comment period. You may submit your feedback in several ways:

1. Attend the public meeting at Briggs Building, 365 4th St Room 4, Hollister, CA 95023 on October 8, 2015 between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.
2. Input your comments online at:
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=60690>
3. Fill out and mail the enclosed postcard or send us a letter.

Your comments will be most helpful if submitted by October 21, 2015

Thank you for your interest in Pinnacles National Park. We look forward to hearing from you about this important plan.

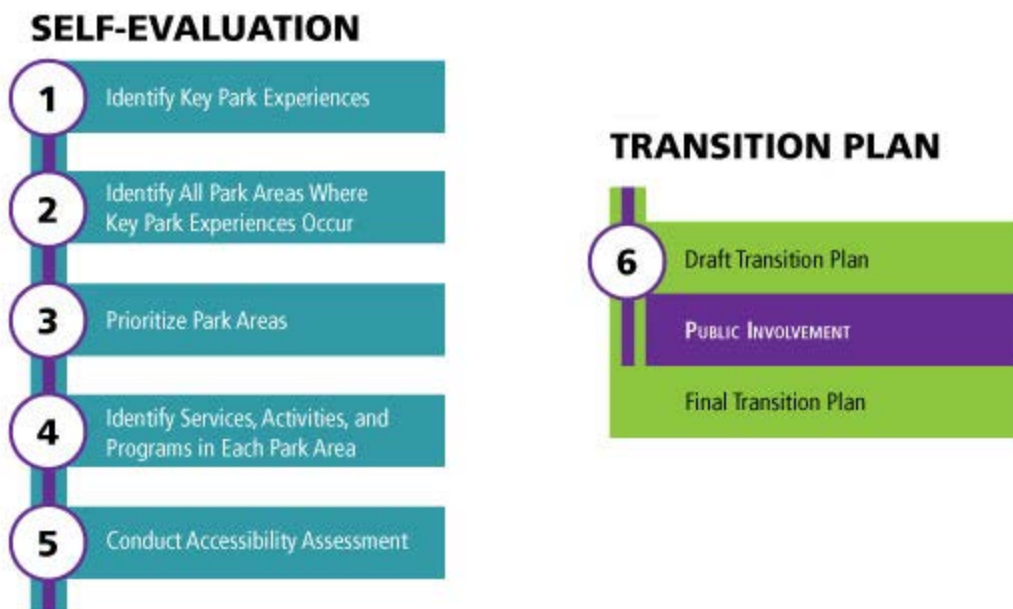
Sincerely,

Karen Beppler-Dorn
Superintendent
Pinnacles National Park

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS AND DRAFT COMPONENTS

The Department of the Interior guidance for implementing section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires parks to perform accessibility self-evaluations and to prepare transition plans. The following information is identified in the transition plan:

- What barriers limit accessibility to persons with disabilities.
- How barriers can be made accessible.
- When steps will be taken to remove barriers.
- Who is responsible for implementing the plan.



STEP 1: IDENTIFY KEY PARK EXPERIENCES

The planning team worked with park staff to identify key park experiences. Key park experiences are those park experiences that are iconic and important for visitors to understand the purpose and significance of the park. The following experiences at Pinnacles National Park have been identified as key park experiences:

- Geology and Talus Caves
- Qualities of a Wilderness Setting, Such as Solitude, Night Skies, and Deep Quiet
- Hiking
- View Scenic Vistas and Wild Character
- Climbing
- Camping and Picnicking Wildflowers
- Bird Watching, Especially of Condors
- Human History of American Indian Archeology, Early California Settlement, and Park Development by the Civilian Conservation Corps
- Wildlife

STEP 4: IDENTIFY SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND PROGRAMS

After priority park areas were determined, all services, activities, and programs offered within those areas were identified. A service, activity, or program is a way in which a park provides information and experiences to visitors. The list of services, activities, and programs were the basis for conducting the park area assessments and documenting all elements as they pertain to providing improved accessibility. Examples include:

- Car parking
- Accessible routes and walking surfaces
- Picnic facilities
- Wayfinding and orientation
- Audiovisual systems

STEP 5: CONDUCT ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

The planning team and park staff conducted an accessibility assessment of the services, activities, and programs in each priority park area. When evaluating the barriers and identifying potential strategies to address the barriers, each barrier was rated on its level of access.

The levels of access were identified to understand how usable the existing park program is for people with cognitive, mobility, vision, and hearing disabilities. The three general levels of access were defined by the team as follows:

1. Level 1: The majority of people, including those with disabilities, can fully participate.
2. Level 2: Assistance or modification may be required for full participation.
3. Level 3: It is unlikely that people with disabilities can participate to any extent.

Existing conditions and barriers to services, activities, and programs were discussed on-site by the assessment team to determine the current level of access. The assessment team then developed a reasonable range of potential recommended actions for consideration, while universal access solutions were of primary concern. In some cases, programmatic alternatives needed to be examined, as it was not always possible to eliminate all physical barriers due to limitations such as historic designations, environmental concerns, topography, or sensitive cultural and natural resources. Other park areas not assessed at this time will be improved as part of future facility alterations or as a component of a future planned construction project.



STEP 6: DRAFT AND FINALIZE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The final step of the process was collecting the data and drafting the transition plan, which makes specific recommendations for addressing barriers to accessibility and identifies time frames and the person responsible for barrier removal. Refer to pages 26-97 in the draft plan to view the draft implementation strategy for priority park areas at our website, provided in the “How to Comment” section of this newsletter. Time frames are identified as follows:

- Short-term (0–3 years)
- Mid-term (3–7 years)
- Long-term (>7 years)

Also, a thorough review and analysis of barriers created by current park policies and practices was conducted. We wanted to be sure that park communications, the reservation system, NPS publications, and websites are accessible. Staff training, park standard operating procedures, and the currently available assistive technologies were also evaluated and modified as necessary. Refer to pages 100-102 in the draft plan to view park policies and practices.

What's Next?

Planning Activity	Approximate Time Frame
Public input on draft Accessibility Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan	Fall 2015
Revise draft Accessibility Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan as necessary	Winter 2015
Release final Accessibility Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan	Spring 2016



High Peaks wildflowers

Pinnacles National Park
5000 Highway 146
Paicines, CA 95043

HOW TO COMMENT

Comments on the Accessibility Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan are welcome and will be most helpful if received during the 30-day public review and comment period from September 23, 2015 to October 21, 2015. There are several ways to submit comments. You may submit your comments during the public meeting that will be held from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on October 8 2015 at Briggs Building, 365 4th St., Room 4, Hollister, CA 95023. If you plan on attending the public meetings and require accommodations such as assistive listening devices, large print, braille, a sign language interpreter, or real time captioning, etc., please contact the park accessibility coordinator at (831)389-4286 or debbie_simmons@nps.gov. To ensure that the requested accommodations are available, please contact the accessibility coordinator a minimum of seven days prior to the meeting.

You may also submit your comments electronically on the NPS planning website <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectId=60690>. To submit a comment, select "Document List" from the left menu. You may also submit written comments by returning the enclosed postcard or by sending a letter by October 21, 2015.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comments, you should be aware that your entire comment (including your personal identifying information) may be made publicly available at any time. Although you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.