

## Glossary

**Accessibility.** The provision of park programs, facilities, and services in ways that include individuals with disabilities, or makes available to those individuals the same benefits available to persons without disabilities. Accessibility also includes affordability and convenience for diverse populations.

**Actions needed to achieve desired conditions.** The kinds of changes needed to achieve desired conditions. The actions can be minor or major, depending on how different the desired conditions are from the conditions currently existing in a given area. A description of these actions provides a better understanding of the implications of achieving desired conditions and provides the basis for impact analyses and cost estimating.

**Adaptive Management.** A process that promotes flexible decision making that can be adjusted in the face of uncertainties as outcomes from management actions and other events become better understood. Careful monitoring of these outcomes both advances scientific understanding and helps adjust policies or operations as part of an iterative learning process. It also recognizes the importance of national variability in contributing to ecological resilience and productivity.

**Adaptive reuse.** The process of adapting an historic structure for a new purpose, while retaining the character-defining features that contribute to the historic significance of the structure.

**Affected environment.** The existing biological, physical, cultural, social, and economic conditions that are subject to direct and indirect changes which result from actions described in alternatives under consideration.

**Alternative.** A possible course of action or one of several ways to achieve an objective or vision. The term is used in a GMP to describe different management actions.

**Archeological resource.** Any material remains or physical evidence of past human life or activities that are of archeological interest, including the record of the effects of human activities on the environment. An archeological resource can yield scientific or humanistic information through research.

**Barrier island.** A long broad sandy island lying parallel to a shore that is built up by the action of the waves, currents, and wind and that protects the shore from the effects of the ocean.

**Benthic resources.** Benthic resources include all things found within the benthic zone, which is defined as the bottom of a body of water. The organisms that inhabit the benthic zone are called Benthos. They include sessile forms (e.g., oysters,), creeping organisms (e.g., crabs), burrowing animals (e.g., many clams and worms), fish, plants and seagrasses such as eel grass.

**Best management practices (BMPs).** Practices that apply the most current means and technologies available to not only comply with mandatory environmental regulations, but also to maintain a superior level of environmental performance.

**Breach.** A continuous exchange of water between the ocean and bay at low tide.

**Breach management protocol or plan.** A plan which specifies the conditions under which the NPS would allow breach closure within the seashore, based on the best science available and conforming to the mission of the NPS and laws governing the seashore,

and taking into consideration human safety and protection of property.

**Carrying capacity** (visitor). The type and level of visitor use that can be accommodated while sustaining the desired resource and visitor experience conditions in a park.

**Climate Change.** Climate change refers to any change in climate over time, whether due to natural visibility or as a result of human activities.

**Consultation.** A discussion, conference, or forum in which advice or information is sought or given, or information or ideas are exchanged. Consultation generally takes place on an informal basis. Formal consultation is conducted for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and with Native Americans.

**Cooperating agency.** A federal agency other than the one preparing the National Environmental Policy Act document (lead agency) that has jurisdiction over the proposal by virtue of law or special expertise and that has been deemed a cooperating agency by the lead agency. State and local governments and/or Indian tribes can be designated cooperating agencies, as appropriate.

**Cultural landscape.** A geographic area (including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife and domestic animals therein) associated with a historic event, activity or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values. There are four types of cultural landscapes, not mutually exclusive: historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes, and ethnographic landscapes.

**Cultural resources.** Aspects of a cultural system that are valued by or significantly representative of a culture or that contain significant information about a culture. A cultural resource may be a tangible

entity or a cultural practice. Tangible cultural resources are categorized as districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects for the National Register of Historic Places, and as archeological resources, cultural landscapes, structures, museum objects, and ethnographic resources for NPS management purposes.

**Cumulative actions.** Actions that, when viewed with other actions in the past, the present, or the foreseeable future regardless of who has undertaken or will undertake them, have an additive impact on the resource the proposal would affect.

**Cumulative impact.** The impacts of cumulative actions.

**Deferred maintenance.** Maintenance that was not performed when it should have been, and therefore, is delayed. Continued deferment of maintenance results in deficiencies. Deferred maintenance is the cost to repair an asset's deficiencies.

**Desired condition.** A qualitative description of the integrity and character for a set of resources and values, including visitor experiences, that park management has committed to achieve and maintain.

**Direct effect.** An impact that occurs as a result of the proposed action or alternative in the same place and at the same time as the action.

**Enabling legislation.** Laws authorizing units of the national park system.

**Endangered.** A species in danger of extinction through all or a significant portion of its range.

**Environmental consequences.** The scientific and analytic basis for comparing alternatives in an environmental impact statement, based on their environmental effects, including any unavoidable

adverse effects. Environmental consequences include short-term, long-term, and cumulative impacts to ecological, aesthetic, historical, cultural, economic, and social environments.

**Environmental impact statement.** A detailed National Environmental Policy Act document that is prepared when a proposal or alternatives have the potential for significant impact on the human environment.

**Ethnographic resources.** Objects and places, including sites, structures, landscapes, and natural resources, with traditional cultural meaning and value to associated peoples. Research and consultation with people identifies and explains the places and things they find culturally meaningful. Ethnographic resources eligible for the National Register are called traditional cultural properties.

**Environmentally preferred alternative.** Of the action alternatives analyzed, the one that would best promote the policies in NEPA Section 101. This is usually selected by the planning team members. The Council on Environmental Quality encourages agencies to identify an environmentally preferable alternative in the draft environmental impact statement or environmental assessment, but only requires that it be named in the record of decision.

**Fundamental resources and values.** Those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes, including opportunities for visitor enjoyment, determined to warrant primary consideration during planning and management because they are critical to achieving the park's purpose and maintaining its significance.

**Gateway community.** A community that exists in close proximity to a unit of the national park system whose residents and elected officials are often affected by the decisions made in the course of managing the park, and whose decisions may affect

the resources of the park. Because of this, there are shared interests and concerns regarding decisions. Gateway communities usually offer food, lodging, and other services to park visitors. They also provide opportunities.

**General Management Plan (GMP).** A National Park Service planning document which clearly defines direction for resource preservation and visitor use in a park, and serves as the basic foundation for decision making. GMPs are developed with broad public involvement.

**Historic site.** A landscape significant for its association with a historic event, activity or person.

**Impact topics.** Specific natural, cultural, or socioeconomic resources that would be affected by the proposed action or alternatives (including no action). The magnitude, duration, and timing of the effect to each of these resources are evaluated in the impact section of an EIS.

**Impairment.** An impact so severe that, in the professional judgment of a responsible NPS manager, it would harm the integrity of park resources or values and violate the 1916 NPS Organic Act.

**Indicators of user capacity.** Specific, measurable physical, ecological, or social variables that can be measured to track changes in conditions caused by public use, so that progress toward attaining the desired conditions can be assessed.

**Indirect effect.** Reasonably foreseeable impacts that occur removed in time or space from the proposed action.

**Interpretation.** Activities or media designed to help people understand, appreciate, enjoy, and care for the natural and cultural environment.

**Issue.** Some point of debate that needs to be decided. For GMP planning purposes issues include major management concerns to be addressed by the GMP and “NEPA issues”. NEPA issues are environmental, social, and economic problems or effects that may occur if a proposed action or alternatives (including no action) are implemented or continue to be implemented.

**Lead agency.** The agency either preparing or taking primary responsibility for preparing the National Environmental Policy Act document.

**Management concept.** A brief, inspirational statement of the kind of place a park should be. It could also be described as a vision statement.

**Management zone.** A geographical area for which management directions have been developed to determine what can and cannot occur in terms of resource management, visitor use, access, facilities or development, and park operations. Each zone has a unique combination of resource and social conditions and a consistent management direction. Different actions are taken by the National Park Service in different zones.

**Mitigation.** Modification of a proposal to lessen the intensity of its impact on a particular resource.

**Mitigating measures.** Modification of a proposal to lessen the intensity of its impact on a particular resource.

**National Register of Historic Places (National Register).** The official list of historically significant national, state, and local districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects maintained by the National Park Service on behalf of the U.S. Secretary of the Interior; established through the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

**Native species.** Plants and animals present as a result of natural processes in parks.

**Natural resources.** Collectively, physical resources, such as water, air, soils, topographic features, geologic features, and natural soundscapes; biological resources such as native plants, animals, and communities; and physical and biological processes such as weather and shoreline migration, and photosynthesis, succession, and evolution.

**No Action Alternative.** An alternative in an environmental impact statement that continues the current management direction. This alternative serves as a benchmark against which action alternatives are compared.

**Nonnative species.** Species that occupy or could occupy parklands directly or indirectly as the result of deliberate or accidental human activities.

**Notice of intent.** The notice submitted to the Federal Register that an environmental impact statement will be prepared. It describes the proposed action and alternatives, identifies a contact person in the National Park Service, and gives time, place, and descriptive details of the agency’s proposed scoping process.

**Organic Act (National Park Service).** The 1916 law (and subsequent amendments) that created the National Park Service and assigned it responsibility to manage the national parks.

**Other important resources and values.** Those attributes that are determined to be particularly important to park management and planning, although they are not related to the park’s purpose and significance.

**Park partner.** Any state or local government (or subdivision thereof), public or private agency, organization, institution, corporation, individual, or

other entity which is engaged in helping to ensure the protection, enhancement and enjoyment of the park's natural, cultural and recreation heritage.

**Park purpose.** The specific reason(s) for establishing a particular park.

**Potential wilderness.** Lands which possess wilderness characteristics which would normally qualify them for designation within the National Wilderness Preservation System but contain temporary non-conforming or incompatible conditions (such as structures or roads) or uses (such as in-holdings, valid mining claims or operations) which prevent their being immediately designated as wilderness. These lands may be identified as “potential wilderness” in NPS wilderness proposals, wilderness recommendations, and by Congress in legislation designating other portions of a park as wilderness. Designated potential wilderness should be converted to designated wilderness once the non-conforming uses have been extinguished by publishing a notice in the Federal Register.

**Preferred alternative.** The alternative an NPS decision-maker has identified as preferred at the draft EIS stage. It is identified to show the public which alternative is likely to be selected to help focus its comments.

**Preservation.** The application of measures to sustain the existing form, integrity, and material of a historic structure, landscape, or object. May include preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, but generally refers to the ongoing preservation, maintenance, and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new work. For historic structures, exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make

properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.

**Primary interpretive themes.** The most important ideas or concepts to be communicated to the public about a park.

**Projected implementation costs.** A projection of the probable range of recurring annual costs, initial one-time costs, and life-cycle costs of plan implementation.

**Proposed wilderness.** The findings and conclusions of a formal wilderness study that have been submitted as the NPS proposal by the Director to the Department of the Interior, but has not been approved by the Secretary.

**Recommended wilderness.** An eligible wilderness area that has been studied and proposed by the NPS, recommended for wilderness designation by the Secretary to the President, and then transmitted by the President as his recommendation for wilderness designation to Congress.

**Record of decision.** The document that is prepared to substantiate a decision based on an environmental impact statement. It includes a statement of the decision made, a detailed discussion of decision rationale, and the reasons for not adopting all mitigation measures analyzed, if applicable.

**Recurring Maintenance.** Preventive maintenance activities that recur on a periodic and scheduled cycle of greater than 1 year, but less than 10 years.

**Rehabilitation.** Making possible an efficient, compatible use for a historic structure or landscape through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, and architectural values.

**Resiliency.** The ability of a social or ecological system to absorb disturbance while retaining the same basic structure and ways of functioning, the capacity for self-organization, and the capacity to adapt to stress and change.

**Restoration.** Accurate depiction of the form, features, and character of a historic structure, landscape, or object as it appeared in a particular historic period by removing features from other periods and reconstructing missing features.

**Scoping.** Internal NPS decision-making on issues, alternatives, mitigation measures, the analysis boundary, appropriate level of documentation, lead and cooperating agency roles, available references and guidance, defining purpose and need, and so forth. External scoping is the early involvement of interested and affected public.

**Significance.** Statements of why, within a national, regional, and systemwide context, the park's resources and values are important enough to warrant national park designation.

**Special mandates.** Legal mandates specific to the park that expand upon or contradict a park's legislated purpose.

**Stabilization.** Rendering an unsafe, damaged, or deteriorated property stable while retaining its present form.

**Stakeholders.** Individuals and organizations that are actively involved in the project, or whose interests may be positively or negatively affected as a result of the project execution/completion. They may also exert an influence over the project and its results. For GMP planning purposes, the term stakeholder includes NPS officials/staff as well as public and private sector partners and the public, which may have varying levels of involvement.

**Standard.** The minimum acceptable condition for an indicator of a desired condition.

**Stewardship.** The cultural and natural resource protection ethic of employing the most effective concepts, techniques, equipment, and technology to avoid or mitigate impacts that would compromise the integrity of park resources.

**Storm surge.** The abnormal rise of water generated by the winds of a storm, over and above that from predicted astronomic tides.

**Sustainability.** The quality of integrating economic, environmental, and equity (health and well-being of society) considerations in decisions so that the Earth's resources are passed on to future generations in a healthy and abundant manner.

**Sustainable design.** Design that applies the principles of ecology, economics, and ethics to the business of creating necessary and appropriate places for people to visit, live, and work. Development that has been sustainably designed sits lightly upon the land, demonstrates resource efficiency, and promotes ecological restoration and integrity, thus improving the environment, the economy, and society.

**Sustainable practices/principles.** Choices, decisions, actions, and ethics that will best achieve ecological/biological integrity; protect qualities and functions of air, water, soil, and other aspects of the natural environment; and preserve human cultures. Sustainable practices allow for use and enjoyment by the current generation, while ensuring that future generations will have the same opportunities.

**Threatened.** A species likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future through all or a portion of its range.

**Traditional.** Pertains to recognizable, but not necessarily identical, cultural patterns transmitted by a group across at least two generations. Also applies to sites, structures, objects, landscapes, and natural resources associated with those patterns. Popular synonyms include “ancestral” and “customary.” traditionally associated peoples. May include park neighbors, traditional residents, and former residents who remain attached to a park area despite having relocated. Social or cultural entities such as tribes, communities, and kinship units are “traditionally associated” with a particular park when (1) the entity regards park resources as essential to its development and continued identity as a culturally distinct people; (2) the association has endured for at least two generations (40 years); and (3) the association began prior to establishment of the park.

**User capacity.** The types and levels of visitor and other public use that can be accommodated while sustaining the desired resource conditions and visitor experiences that complement the purposes of a park.

**Value analysis/value engineering.** An organized, multi-disciplined team effort that analyzes the functions of facilities, processes, systems, equipment, services, and supplies for the purpose of achieving essential functions at the lowest life-cycle cost consistent with required performance, reliability, quality, and safety.

**Visitor.** Anyone who uses a park’s interpretive, educational, or recreational services.

**Visitor experience.** The perceptions, feeling, and interactions that visitors have with the park’s environment and programs. The experience is affected by the setting, the types and levels of activities permitted, and the interpretive techniques used to convey park themes.

**Wayfinding.** The ways in which people and animals orient themselves in physical space and navigate from place to place. Wayfinding is typically used in the context of the built environment to refer to the user experience of orientation and choosing a path, but it also refers to the set of architectural and/or design elements that aid orientation.

**Wilderness.** For the purposes of applying NPS policies, wilderness includes the categories of eligible, proposed, recommended, and designated wilderness. Potential wilderness may be a subset of any of these categories.

**Wilderness character.** The combination of biophysical, experiential, and symbolic ideals that distinguishes wilderness from other lands. The five qualities of wilderness character are Untrammeled, Undeveloped, Natural, Solitude or a Primitive and Unconfined Type of Recreation, and Other Features of Value.

**Wilderness study.** A formal study that evaluates the acreage that has been determined to be eligible for wilderness designation through the completion of a wilderness eligibility assessment. The purpose of the wilderness study is to provide a detailed review necessary to develop official proposals and recommendations for wilderness designation to the Director, the Department, the President and Congress.

**Wildlife.** Including animals divided into various sub-groups, some of which include: vertebrates (birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, fish); molluscs (clams, oysters, octopuses, squid, snails); arthropods (millipedes, centipedes, insects, spiders, scorpions, crabs, lobsters, shrimp), annelids (earthworms, leeches); sponges; and jellyfish.

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