

TRUST BOARD OF EBHEY'S LANDING

NATIONAL HISTORICAL RESERVE

September 2006

Dear Friend of Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve:

It is with great pleasure that we submit to you the *Final General Management Plan for Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve*. This plan is a vision for the next 15-20 years and will guide our management of the Reserve in its operation and further development.

This final General Management Plan presents the Proposed Action of the Reserve Trust Board and the National Park Service for the Reserve. The actions proposed in this plan will enhance public use and enjoyment of the Reserve, protect natural and cultural resources, and improve the overall management of this unique unit of the National Park System.

This General Management Plan is the result of five years of thought, planning and discussion about the Reserve, with the public and with our partners. During this time your involvement has been critical in shaping this plan. After three public meetings were held on the draft General Management Plan, we received numerous verbal comments and 51 letters noting issues and ideas. We have listened to your concerns and have made many revisions to the final General Management Plan presented here

We are most grateful for the time and effort contributed by the National Park Service, Washington State Parks, Island County, and the Town of Coupeville, as well as past and present Trust Board members. This plan is a blueprint for action. It provides a guideline, but one that can be tempered with the realities of the future and the fact that the Reserve is a living, working landscape and community. This plan holds promise for the development of a vibrant and responsive Reserve. To fulfill the goals and objectives, we are striving for the continued involvement of you, the community, and our partners to preserve the past and blend the demands of the future. We look forward to working with our partners as they adopt this plan into their comprehensive planning processes.

Since its creation in 1978, Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve has benefited from strong community support and broad public participation. We hope that you will join with us in making this vision of the future a reality for ourselves and for future generations.

Marshall W. Bronson, Chair
Trust Board of Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve



OH BEAUTIFUL PRAIRIE

*Oh beautiful prairie
How did you come to be?
Tell me your story,
Of how you came to be.*

*I will tell you my story
Of how I came to be,
I started under a glacier
that sat on top of me.*

*It pushed me out of the way,
It made my hills you see today,
It made a hollow deep and wide
and sat there a long, long time.*

*And finally the sun came and melted it away,
It left behind a beautiful lake
That many years ago dried up to make,
The prairie you see today.*

Emma Ruggiero



Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve

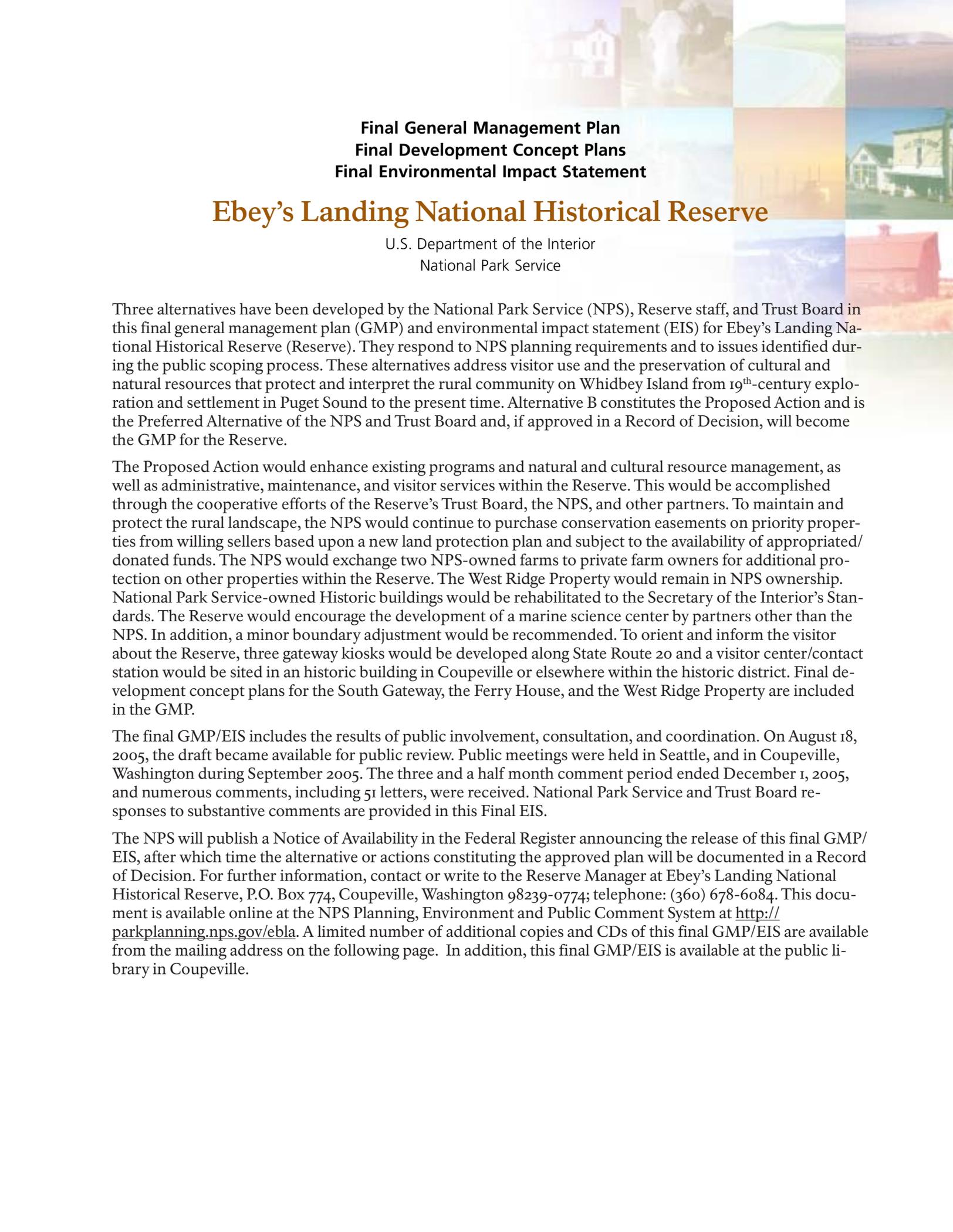
Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve
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Cover: Trail along Isaac Ebey Donation Land Claim boundary which skirts the western edge of Ebey's Prairie. Mt. Baker in background.





**Final General Management Plan
Final Development Concept Plans
Final Environmental Impact Statement**

Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Three alternatives have been developed by the National Park Service (NPS), Reserve staff, and Trust Board in this final general management plan (GMP) and environmental impact statement (EIS) for Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve (Reserve). They respond to NPS planning requirements and to issues identified during the public scoping process. These alternatives address visitor use and the preservation of cultural and natural resources that protect and interpret the rural community on Whidbey Island from 19th-century exploration and settlement in Puget Sound to the present time. Alternative B constitutes the Proposed Action and is the Preferred Alternative of the NPS and Trust Board and, if approved in a Record of Decision, will become the GMP for the Reserve.

The Proposed Action would enhance existing programs and natural and cultural resource management, as well as administrative, maintenance, and visitor services within the Reserve. This would be accomplished through the cooperative efforts of the Reserve's Trust Board, the NPS, and other partners. To maintain and protect the rural landscape, the NPS would continue to purchase conservation easements on priority properties from willing sellers based upon a new land protection plan and subject to the availability of appropriated/donated funds. The NPS would exchange two NPS-owned farms to private farm owners for additional protection on other properties within the Reserve. The West Ridge Property would remain in NPS ownership. National Park Service-owned Historic buildings would be rehabilitated to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The Reserve would encourage the development of a marine science center by partners other than the NPS. In addition, a minor boundary adjustment would be recommended. To orient and inform the visitor about the Reserve, three gateway kiosks would be developed along State Route 20 and a visitor center/contact station would be sited in an historic building in Coupeville or elsewhere within the historic district. Final development concept plans for the South Gateway, the Ferry House, and the West Ridge Property are included in the GMP.

The final GMP/EIS includes the results of public involvement, consultation, and coordination. On August 18, 2005, the draft became available for public review. Public meetings were held in Seattle, and in Coupeville, Washington during September 2005. The three and a half month comment period ended December 1, 2005, and numerous comments, including 51 letters, were received. National Park Service and Trust Board responses to substantive comments are provided in this Final EIS.

The NPS will publish a Notice of Availability in the Federal Register announcing the release of this final GMP/EIS, after which time the alternative or actions constituting the approved plan will be documented in a Record of Decision. For further information, contact or write to the Reserve Manager at Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve, P.O. Box 774, Coupeville, Washington 98239-0774; telephone: (360) 678-6084. This document is available online at the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment System at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ebla>. A limited number of additional copies and CDs of this final GMP/EIS are available from the mailing address on the following page. In addition, this final GMP/EIS is available at the public library in Coupeville.



How To Use This Document

This final general management plan/environmental impact statement is presented in six chapters and includes appendices, bibliography, and an index.

The summary at the beginning of the document provides a synopsis of this document.

Chapter 1 sets the stage by describing the development of Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve and Trust Board, the role of the four partners, and important actions that have occurred since establishment of the Reserve. It also provides the Reserve's purpose, significance, and desired future conditions that were developed with public involvement during the planning process.

Chapter 2 describes the purpose and need for this GMP/EIS.

Chapter 3 provides detailed information on the environment, which could be affected by the decisions contained in the individual management alternatives.

Chapter 4 describes three management alternatives including the Preferred Alternative of the National Park Service and the Reserve Trust Board. The alternatives represent reasonable sets of management decisions that are considered within the parameters of the GMP. The end of this chapter includes two summary charts: Summary of Actions for Each Alternative and Summary of Impacts.

Chapter 5 describes the impacts of each alternative on resources.

Chapter 6 summarizes public involvement and the consultation process that was an integral part to the creation of this final GMP/EIS. Chapter 6 also includes summaries of public comments received by the NPS and scanned comment letters received on the draft GMP/EIS by agencies and organizations.

The **appendices** provide more detailed information, including a glossary, which some readers may find helpful when reviewing the main text of the document.

A limited number of additional copies of this final GMP/EIS are available from the mailing address below. In addition, this final GMP/EIS is available at the public library in Coupeville.

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