

I. Introduction

On July 29, 2003, President George W. Bush signed Public Law 108-63 authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to acquire the McLoughlin House National Historic Site in Oregon City for inclusion in Fort Vancouver National Historic Site (Fort Vancouver) in Vancouver, Washington. The McLoughlin House Unit, until recent acquisition by the National Park Service, was managed by the McLoughlin Memorial Association (Association), a non-profit organization established in 1909 to manage the McLoughlin House, which was designated by Congress in 1941 as an affiliated unit of the National Park System. As an affiliated unit, the McLoughlin House National Historic Site received technical and funding assistance from the National Park Service and was eligible to receive this assistance as available.

Because of the new legislation which authorized a change in ownership, the National Park Service needs to determine how the site will function as a unit of Fort Vancouver. The McLoughlin House Unit Management Plan as detailed herein, when approved, would become the guiding management plan for the McLoughlin House Unit. As part of Fort Vancouver, this plan tiers off (and is therefore subservient to) the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site Final General Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement (NPS 2003). The Record of Decision (ROD) for that General Management Plan (GMP) / Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was signed June 2, 2004. The Final General Management Plan called for potential future management of the McLoughlin House National Historic Site (NPS 2003: p. 2-3).

This Environmental Assessment has been prepared to satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 as amended, including the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations found at 40 CFR 1500 *et seq.* This Environmental Assessment also facilitates compliance with National Park Service policy and a variety of other federal laws, including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and the Wilderness Act, and other laws enacted for the protection of the environment.

NEPA requires the documentation and evaluation of potential impacts resulting from federal actions on lands under federal jurisdiction. An Environmental Assessment discloses the potential environmental consequences of implementing the proposed action and other reasonable and feasible alternatives. NEPA is intended to provide decision makers with sound knowledge of the environmental consequences of the alternatives available to them. In this case, the superintendent of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site and the Pacific West Regional Director are faced with a decision regarding how to facilitate future use and preservation of the McLoughlin House Unit.

The purpose of this Environmental Assessment is to identify, evaluate and document the potential effects of the proposed management plan for the McLoughlin House Unit. Existing conditions constitute the baseline for evaluating the effects of the proposed rehabilitation. The existing conditions are presented in the No Action Alternative (Alternative A). The preferred alternative is Alternative B.

An interdisciplinary team comprised of National Park Service and other experts, including natural and cultural resources professionals, determined the purpose and need for the project and identified the likely beneficial and adverse effects of the proposed actions compared to existing conditions.

Project Description and Setting

The project site is a charter park known as McLoughlin Park of Oregon City and contains the historic houses of Drs. John McLoughlin and Forbes Barclay and the associated historic landscape. On March 28, 2004, the McLoughlin Memorial Association (Association) sold the houses to the National Park Service (NPS) to allow for direct NPS management and maintenance of the structures. Oregon City granted the NPS a scenic easement

over the charter park but continues to retain ownership of the park land itself. The McLoughlin House Unit is located in Township 2 South, Range 2 East, Section 31, Willamette Meridian.

This management plan provides direction to the NPS concerning the future management, public use, and preservation of the McLoughlin and Barclay houses and the associated historic landscape. (For the purposes of this document, the McLoughlin House site in Oregon City, Oregon will be referred to as the McLoughlin House Unit and the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site in Vancouver, Washington as the Fort Vancouver Unit—both are units of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site.)