



# A Vision For The Future

### Dear Friends, Neighbors, and Visitors

I am writing to announce the start of a comprehensive planning effort for Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. The result will be a new General Management Plan, which will guide how we preserve and manage the cultural and natural resources and provide for visitors at the park for the next 15 to 20 years.

Previous planning documents for Harpers Ferry National Historical Park are outdated and do not adequately address the many complex issues currently requiring management decisions. As a long-term vision for the management of the park, the General Management Plan will provide guidance and set the direction for subsequent, more narrowly focused planning efforts. However, the plan will not include specific facility designs, resolve all park issues, or guarantee funding for the actions proposed in the approved plan.

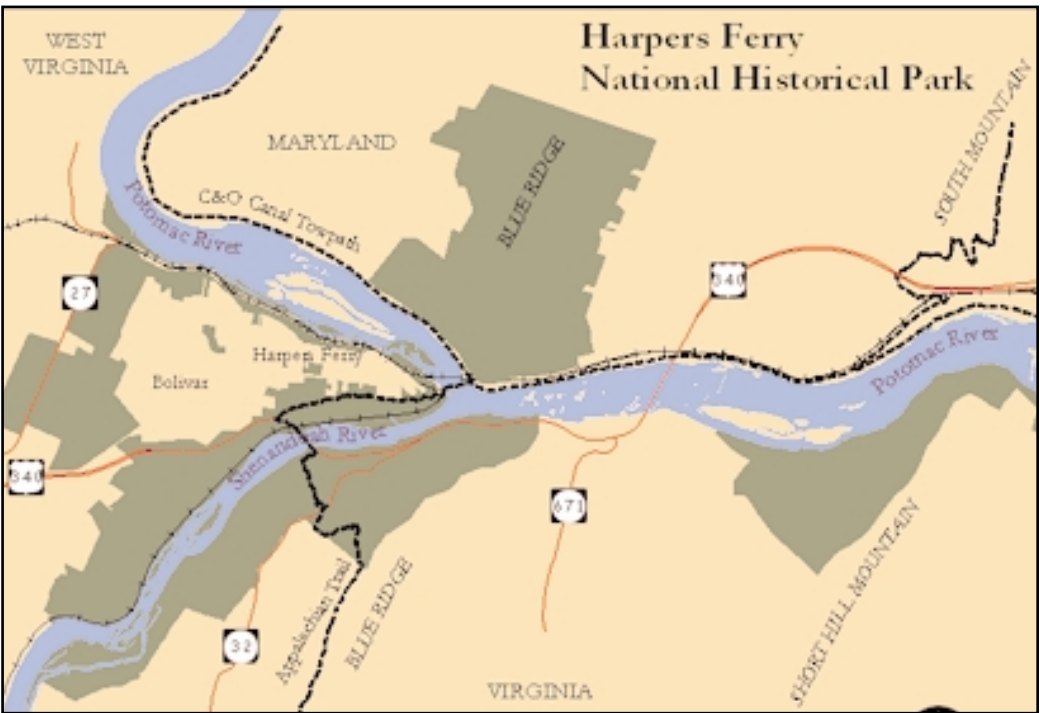
We invite your participation in developing the General Management Plan for Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. It is important for the planning team to learn from you early in the process so that we can address your ideas and concerns. A variety of ways for sharing your thoughts are available:

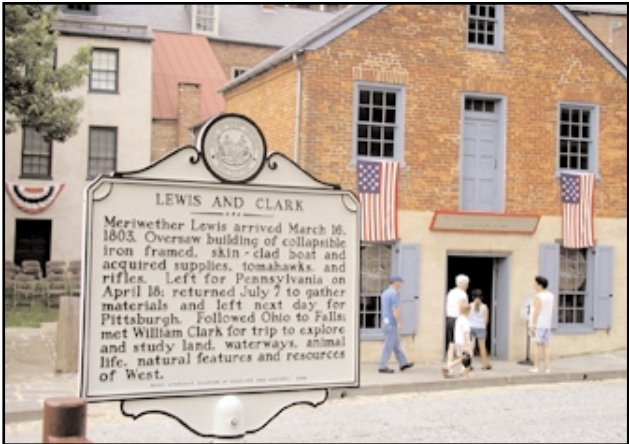
- Return the enclosed comment folder
- Mail your written comments to:  
Harpers Ferry National Historical Park GMP  
P.O. Box 65, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425
- Monitor our planning efforts at <[www.nps.gov/hafe](http://www.nps.gov/hafe)>
- Attend any of our public meetings, beginning January 2004; locations, dates, and times to be announced

Throughout the three-year planning effort we will arrange public meetings at key stages of the planning process, publish newsletters to keep you informed, and provide numerous opportunities for members of the public to review and comment about the ideas and solutions that evolve. Please join us in this important endeavor as we define how to preserve and manage Harpers Ferry National Historical Park into the future.

I look forward to hearing from you.  
Sincerely,

Donald Campbell  
Superintendent





## GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Park Planning is a decision- making process, and general management planning is the broadest level of decision- making for national parks. General management plans, which are required for all units in the national park system, are intended to guide the park’s management direction for the next 15 to 20 years. Previous planning documents for Harpers Ferry National Historical Park are outdated and do not adequately address the many complex issues currently requiring management decisions.

The *General Management Plan* for Harpers Ferry National Historical Park is being developed by the park staff and planning professionals of the National Park Service (NPS). Participation by the full park staff, park partners and neighbors, other agencies, and the public will be crucial to the planning effort’s success.

Long- term planning in the national park system is intended to answer this question: *What range of resource conditions and visitor experiences should be provided, and where?*

The *General Management Plan* will define the fundamental management direction for this unit of the national park system. It will focus on why the park was established and what needs to be done to protect significant park resources while allowing for visitor enjoyment of those resources. The park will be considered holistically in its full ecological and cultural context and as a part of the surrounding region.

Several possible visions for the park’s future (called management alternatives) will be developed and analyzed before a preferred direction is selected. Evaluating a set of alternatives enables the planning team to compare the advantages and disadvantages of the various courses of action.

As a long- term vision for the management of the park, the *General Management Plan* for Harper’s Ferry National Historical Park will provide “big picture” guidance and set the direction for more program- specific planning efforts. The plan will not include specific facility designs, resolve all park issues, or guarantee funding for the actions proposed in the approved plan.

Why do we do a general management plan?

- to create a vision and clear direction for the park’s future
- to establish park preservation priorities for allocating resources
- to set and achieve park goals
- to foster cooperative partnerships
- to comply with public law and NPS policies.



## PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF HARPERS FERRY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

### Purpose

Park purpose statements are based on the legislation that established each park. Such statements help to guide management decisions. Our purpose is as follows:

*To preserve Harpers Ferry National Historical Park for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the United States as a public national memorial commemorating historical events that occurred at or near Harpers Ferry.*

- Harpers Ferry’s strategic location near Washington, D.C., resulted in nearly complete military occupation throughout the American Civil War. Serving as a garrison and supply depot, it played a critical role in the Maryland campaign in 1862 and the Shenandoah campaign in 1864.
- Harpers Ferry hosted the broad range of African- American experiences, beginning in the mid- 1700s and including Storer College. The college, which was established in 1867, was one

of the first institutions of higher learning for freed slaves. It was the site of the second Niagara Movement Convention in 1906, where W. E. B. DuBois devised the first modern philosophy and strategy for civil rights. This led to the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

- The view of the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac, which inspired Thomas Jefferson to say it is “worth a voyage across the Atlantic,” continues to inspire visitors today.

### Significance

Significance statements identify the park’s resources and values on which the Park Service should focus its management and protection efforts. They also place each park in its current regional, national, and international context.

- The geography of the Harpers Ferry area has made this a key travel, trade, and communications crossroads from the times of the earliest human habitation by Indigenous Peoples to the present.
- George Washington designated Harpers Ferry as the second federal armory in 1796 because of its geography and natural resources. It became a nationally important center for technological innovation such as the machine manufacture of interchangeable parts. The federal armory provided key arms technology and supplies for the Lewis and Clark expedition.
- Harpers Ferry preserves the site of John Brown’s raid of 1859, an epic event occurring in opposition to slavery, precipitating the Civil War.





INTERPRETIVE THEMES OF HARPERS FERRY NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

- These are the basic stories around which all park interpretation programs and exhibits will focus.

  - The physical and historical geography of the Harpers Ferry area demonstrates how landscapes shape human history and how human endeavors profoundly affect natural landscapes — a powerful reminder that the actions of today determine the opportunities of tomorrow.
  - The invention of interchangeable parts in arms manufacturing at the Harpers Ferry Armory provided unprecedented momentum to the Industrial Revolution, forever changing the
- human experience and intensifying the ongoing dialogue regarding the costs and benefits of technological innovation.

  - The story of the cataclysmic impact of John Brown’s raid, followed by the intense and pervasive effects of the Civil War on the community of Harpers Ferry and the nation, can provide myriad insights into the violent, transformative reality of war.
  - The history of Harpers Ferry chronicles many critical milestones and issues in the continuing struggle to achieve the evolving American ideals
- of freedom, education, and equality for African-Americans.

  - The history of Harpers Ferry weaves together many common threads in the tapestry of 18th, 19th, and 20th century America, offering a deeper understanding of the roots of the great American experiment and providing important contexts for the challenges and opportunities facing us today.



PLANNING TIMEFRAME

The general management planning process for Harpers Ferry is expected to take several years to complete. A summary of the process and anticipated timeframe are presented below. The public will have opportunities to share ideas and comments throughout the process.

Next Steps

After we receive your comments, the planning team will begin to identify alternative future visions for Harpers Ferry. These broad descriptions of desired resource conditions and visitor experiences will form the basis for the development of alternative management strategies that address issues generated from the planning team and the public. The team will also develop management prescriptions that can be applied in various zones around the park to achieve the desired future conditions for those places.

How Can I Participate?

The planning team welcomes your thoughts, ideas, and concerns now and throughout the planning process. Your responses to this initial scoping effort will be most helpful if received by January 30, 2004. You may return the enclosed comment card or mail your written comments to Harpers Ferry National Historical Park GMP, P.O. Box 65, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425. We also encourage you to think about your vision for Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, as well as any concerns or issues that should be addressed in this long- term plan, and bring them with you to one of our upcoming public meetings.

Step	Timeframe	Planning Activity	How To Be Involved
1	Summer 2003	Initiate Project The planning team assembles, defines the project’s scope, customizes the planning process, and establishes contacts with participants.	
We Are Here	Fall 2003 – Winter 2004	Define Planning Context and Foundation The team affirms the park’s mission, purpose, and significance. Team members collect and analyze relevant data and public comments.	➤ Read newsletter ➤ Send us your ideas and comments. ➤ Come to a public meeting.
3	Winter 2004- Fall 2005	Develop and Evaluate Alternatives Using staff and public input, the team explores what the park’s future should look like and proposes a range of reasonable alternatives.	➤ Read newsletter ➤ Send us your ideas and comments.
4	Winter 2005- Winter 2006	Prepare a Draft Document A <i>Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement</i> is published. The draft document describes the alternatives and impacts of implementing each. Based on the impacts and public input, a preferred alternative is identified in the document.	➤ Review the draft plan ➤ Send us your comments. ➤ Come to a public meeting.
5	Winter 2006- Summer 2006	Publish Final Document Based on review by the National Park Service and the public, the team revises the <i>General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement</i> and distributes a final plan. The plan is approved in a published record of decision.	➤ Read the final plan, including NPS responses to substantive public comments and official letters.
6	Summer 2006 and beyond	Implement the Approved Plan After the record of decision is issued, and as funding allows, the plan is implemented	➤ Work with the park to implement the plan.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
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DENVER CO 80225- 0287

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Harpers Ferry National Historical Park  
General Management Plan  
Newsletter #1, November 2003

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



*How to stay involved:*

- Over the course of the project you will have several other opportunities (through newsletters and meetings) to share your concerns, ideas, and comments. Your involvement throughout this process is a key component for the success of the general management plan.
- The next step of the process involves collecting your thoughts on opportunities and concerns for managing the park. Please take a moment to fill out the enclosed comment form and return it to the NPS planning team by January 30, 2004. Your thoughts and concerns provide valuable information on the goals and issues to be addressed in the document.
- Please plan to attend one of the public meetings to find out more about this planning project. During these meetings, we would like you to meet some of the park staff and planning team and express your ideas about the park. The meetings will be held as open houses. We hope to see you there.

*Thank you for  
your continued interest  
and involvement with  
Harpers Ferry National  
Historical Park.*

**You're Invited:**

We welcome your comments on this newsletter and hope to see you at one of the public meetings. Meetings will be scheduled for the week of January 12 - 16. Times and locations will be announced closer to that week.

Assistance for individuals with special needs can be arranged by calling Harpers Ferry National Historical Park at least four days prior to the meeting.

# Comment Form

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park  
West Virginia



We would like to have your comments and thoughts. Please return this form by January 30, 2004.  
Additional sheets may be attached.

What do you value most about Harpers Ferry National Historical Park?

What are the top priorities that the National Park Service should address at Harpers Ferry?

Given the purpose and significance statements, what would you change about Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in the next 20 years?

What do you see as the most important issues affecting the park now and in the future?

Additional comments:

Please be aware that due to public disclosure requirements, the National Park Service, if requested, is required to make the names and addresses of commentors public. However, individual respondents may request that we withhold their name and address from the public record which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. If you wish to withhold your name and or/address from the public record, please check the appropriate box on the other side. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

COMMENT FORM CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

# Thank you for your interest in Harpers Ferry National Historical Park!

Do you wish to remain on the mailing list for the *General Management Plan*? YES\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_

We will send you future newsletters and information concerning Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Please affix your mailing label or print your name and address in the space provided. If the mailing label we used is incorrect, please indicate any corrections in the space below. To help us keep our mailing list accurate and up- to- date, please check the boxes below that apply to your wishes. Thank you for your assistance.

- ☐ The name or address you have is incorrect; (please change it as indicated below or see my mailing label above).
- ☐ Please add my name to the mailing list.
- ☐ Please remove my name from the mailing list.
- ☐ Please withhold my name and/or address from the public record.

Name:\_\_\_\_\_

Organization, if any:\_\_\_\_\_

Address:\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip:\_\_\_\_\_

Please fold this form in half, showing the National Park Service preprinted address on the outside, tape it closed (no staples please), and drop it in the mail.

FOLD AND INSERT THIS COMMENT FORM IN AN ENVELOPE AND MAIL IT TO THE ADDRESS BELOW:

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
DENVER SERVICE CENTER – CRAIG CELLAR, PD  
12795 WEST ALAMEDA PARKWAY  
PO BOX 25287  
DENVER CO 80225-9901