

List of Preparers and Cooperating Entities



Oregon City on the Willamette River
Oil on canvas by John Mix Stanley, ca. 1850-1852
Courtesy of Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas



List of Preparers and Cooperating Entities

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Appendices

Appendix A: Fort Vancouver National Historic Site Legislation

Appendix B: Record of Decision

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Appendix A: Fort Vancouver National Historic Site Legislation



10. Fort Vancouver National Historic Site

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An Act To provide for the establishment of the Fort Vancouver National Monument, in the State of Washington, to include the site of the old Hudson's Bay Company stockade, and for other purposes, approved June 19, 1948 (62 Stat. 532)

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, for the purpose of establishing a Federal area of national historical importance for the benefit of the people of the United States, to be known as the "Fort Vancouver National Monument", the Administrator of the War Assets Administration and the Secretary of the Army are authorized to transfer to the Secretary of the Interior, without exchange of funds, administrative jurisdiction over such federally owned lands and other property, real or personal, under their jurisdiction, including the site of the old Hudson's Bay Company stockade in the State of Washington, as they shall find to be surplus to the needs of their respective agencies, such properties to be selected, with their approval, by the Secretary of the Interior for inclusion within the national monument. (16 U.S.C. § 450ff.)

Ft. Vancouver
National Monu-
ment, Wash.

SEC. 2. The total area of the national monument as established or as enlarged by transfers pursuant to this Act shall not exceed ninety acres. Establishment of the monument shall be effective, upon publication in the Federal Register of notice of such establishment, following the transfer to the Secretary of the Interior of administrative jurisdiction over such lands as the Secretary of the Interior shall deem to be sufficient for purposes of establishing the national monument. Additional lands may be added to the monument in accordance with the procedure prescribed in section 1 hereof, governing surplus properties, or by donation, subject to the maximum acreage limitation prescribed by this Act, upon publication of notice thereof in the Federal Register. (16 U.S.C. § 450ff-1.)

Total area.

Additional
lands.

SEC. 3. The administration, protection, and development of the aforesaid national monument shall be exercised under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior by the National Park Service, subject to the provisions of the Act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535), entitled "An Act to establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes", as amended. (16 U.S.C. § 450ff-2.)

Administra-
tion, etc.

16 U.S.C.
§ 1-4, 22, 43.

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	<p>An Act To revise the boundaries and to change the name of Fort Vancouver National Monument, in the State of Washington, and for other purposes, approved June 30, 1961 (75 Stat. 196)</p> <p><i>Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,</i> That, for the purpose of preserving certain historic properties associated with the Fort Vancouver National Monument, established pursuant to the Act of June 19, 1948, chapter 546 (62 Stat. 532; 16 U.S.C. 450ff-2), the Secretary of the Interior may revise the boundaries of the monument to include therein not more than one hundred and thirty additional acres of land adjacent to, contiguous to, or in the vicinity of the existing monument. (16 U.S.C. § 450ff-3.)</p>
Fort Vancouver National Monument, Wash.	
Land acquisition.	<p>SEC. 2. The Secretary of the Interior may acquire in such manner as he may consider to be in the public interest the non-Federal lands and interests in lands within the revised boundaries. (16 U.S.C. § 450ff-4.)</p>
Transfer authority.	<p>SEC. 3. The heads of executive departments may transfer to the Secretary of the Interior, without exchange of funds, administrative jurisdiction over such federally owned lands and other property under their administrative jurisdictions within the revised boundary as may become excess to the needs of their respective agencies for inclusion in the Fort Vancouver National Monument. (16 U.S.C. § 450ff-5.)</p>
Redesignation.	<p>SEC. 4. Fort Vancouver National Monument is redesignated Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. (16 U.S.C. § 450ff-6.)</p>

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Appendix B: Record of Decision



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT / GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

RECORD OF DECISION

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to 102 (2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, Public Law 91-190 (as amended), and the regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1505.2), the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, has prepared the following Record of Decision on the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site (NHS) Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/EIS).

This document is a concise statement of the decisions that were made, the alternatives considered (including identification of the environmentally preferred alternative), the basis for the decision, and the mitigating measures developed in order to avoid or minimize environmental impacts. It also provides background information on the project and the public involvement process that was used to develop and refine the proposed plan and alternatives.

DECISION

The National Park Service will replace the 1978 *Fort Vancouver National Historic Site General Management Plan* with the Proposed Action (Alternative B) contained in the *Fort Vancouver National Historic Site Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* dated October 2003. The Fort Vancouver National Historic Site Draft EIS was issued on November 2002 for a 60-day public comment period, and the Final EIS was released in January 2004.

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Establishment of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site

Fort Vancouver National Monument was established on June 19, 1948 "to preserve as a national monument the site of the original Hudson's Bay stockade (of Fort Vancouver) and sufficient surrounding land to preserve the historical features of the area" for "the benefit of the people of the United States" (62 Stat. 532 and the Senate Report on the legislation). The Department of the Interior report on the legislation further stated that the lands so dedicated should fulfill "two

essential requirements—the preservation of the historic stockade...and the preservation of the historic parade ground of the later United States Army Post.” In addition, the total area of the national monument was not to exceed 90 acres.

To improve the conditions for achieving the legislative requirements of the park, Congress passed an act June 30, 1961 (75 Stat.196), enlarging the boundaries of Fort Vancouver and designating the national monument as a national historic site. Congress also allowed for a revision of the boundaries of the monument to include an additional 130 acres of land “adjacent to, contiguous to, or in the vicinity of the existing monument”.

There are approximately 209 acres within the authorized Fort Vancouver National Historic Site boundary. The National Park Service (NPS) manages approximately 165 acres of this area and the U.S. Army, City of Vancouver, and Washington State manage the remainder of lands.

The authorized boundaries of Fort Vancouver NHS contain parcels obtained either by fee simple transactions or through federal property surplus actions. Some parcels are still part of the U.S. Army’s Vancouver Barracks operations and may be available only if the Department of the Army determines that the parcels are “excess to their needs.” This determination relates specifically to properties within what is referred to as the east and south barracks (note: the names “east barracks” and “south barracks” are used in this document to refer to properties located in the east or south portions of Vancouver Barracks within the authorized NHS boundary. The east barracks area includes that portion of Vancouver Barracks east of Fort Vancouver Way. The south barracks includes the area south of East Fifth Street.)

Establishment of McLoughlin House National Historic Site

On February 19, 1941, the John McLoughlin and Barclay houses in Oregon City, Oregon became a national historic site administered by the McLoughlin Memorial Association (Association) as an affiliated unit of the National Park System under a cooperative agreement with the Secretary of the Interior. The agreement required the Secretary to regulate the way that the Association maintained the historic character of the McLoughlin House and to provide planning and technical advisory assistance as requested and possible within existing appropriations limits.

In January 1966, the Fort Vancouver NHS officially took over responsibilities from the former NPS Portland, Oregon office including the annual inspection of the McLoughlin House. The amount of assistance by NHS staff has varied over the years. The City of Oregon City owns the land where the McLoughlin and Barclay houses are situated and is a “Charter Park”. As a Charter Park, the City of Oregon City must maintain title to the land.

Establishment of McLoughlin House Unit

On May 15, 2001, and during the GMP planning process, the citizens of Oregon City, Oregon voted to transfer the McLoughlin House National Historic Site from the city to the NPS via an

easement donation if authorized by Congress.

On July 29, 2003, President Bush signed Public Law 108-63 (known as H.R. 733), which authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to acquire the McLoughlin House National Historic Site in Oregon City, Oregon for inclusion in Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. This legislation changes the name of the site from the “McLoughlin House National Historic Site” to “McLoughlin House.” It also changes the status of the site from an affiliated unit of the National Park Service, not managed by the NPS, to a unit of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, managed by the staff at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. Ownership of the McLoughlin House, the Barclay House, and other associated real property, improvements, and personal property, changes from the McLoughlin Memorial Association to the NPS.

Under the terms of agreement, the McLoughlin Memorial Association will sell the McLoughlin and Barclay houses to the NPS to allow for direct NPS management and maintenance of the structures. A NPS site manager and staff will administer the site and provide various enhancements, and support for a volunteer cadre to assist the NPS in site operation will be pursued. The Association will assist the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site superintendent and site manager. Additionally, the Association through their nonprofit status will continue to pursue private sector support for educational programming, site preservation, and other activities. It is intended that some of the proceeds from the sale of the two historic properties to the NPS will be used to establish an endowment fund administered by the Association’s Board of Directors. The endowment fund will be available to assist in the long-term preservation and public use of the site and the development of various education programs throughout the community and the Portland/Vancouver metropolitan region.

ACTIONS AFFECTING FORT VANCOUVER NHS AFTER ENABLING LEGISLATION

History of Reconstruction at Fort Vancouver NHS

The National Park Service’s *Management Policies 2001* reaffirm a long-standing position on the practice of reconstruction within National Park Service sites. The policies (Reconstruction of Obliterated Landscapes 5.3.5.2.4) state:

No matter how well conceived or executed, reconstructions are contemporary interpretations of the past, rather than authentic survivals from it. The National Park Service will not reconstruct an obliterated cultural landscape unless:

- There is no alternative that would accomplish the park’s interpretive mission;
- Sufficient data exist to enable its accurate reconstruction, based on the duplication of historic features substantiated by documentary or physical evidence, rather than on conjectural designs or features from other landscapes;

- Reconstruction will occur in the original location;
- The disturbance or loss of significant archaeological resources is minimized and mitigated by data recovery; and
- Reconstruction is approved by the Director. (National Park Service 2001: p.56)

The decision to reconstruct the stockade and key buildings at Fort Vancouver was made after years of discussion within the NPS and with public and private supporters of the National Historic Site. The discussion began with the earliest efforts by public groups in the years between 1915 and 1948 to establish a monument or memorial and reconstruct the stockade. It was complicated by conflicting land uses, including the presence of Pearson Field and its aviation easement that extended over the stockade site, limiting possibilities for both reconstruction and safe visitation. At the dedication of the monument in 1955, Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay, a descendant of Hudson's Bay Company employees, made it clear that:

...the reconstruction of the stockade and buildings is not favored. We would like to replant the orchard, fence in the fields and re-establish the old wagon roads now forgotten [but] the National Park Service does not favor reconstruction of historic structures, particularly when most or all evidence of the original building has disappeared (Merritt 1993: p.28).

In the earliest NPS planning for the site, Fort Vancouver was considered primarily as an archaeological site. The focus was on further archaeological investigations and a museum perched on the bench above the Fort that would utilize artifacts recovered from the site to interpret the Hudson's Bay Company era. The local community, however, continued to lobby for reconstruction, initially by supporting the re-designation of the monument as a national historic site. Such a designation, it was believed, would encourage NPS to interpret and develop the area under the authorities of the Historic Sites Act of 1935.

Ultimately, Congressional action determined that the reconstruction of the stockade and key structures would proceed. In 1965, with the concurrence of NPS Director Hartzog, Congresswoman Julia Butler Hansen arranged for an appropriation of \$83,000 to reconstruct a portion of the stockade. In subsequent years, through the efforts of Congresswoman Hansen, Congress funded an extensive program of archaeological research, excavation, and reconstruction. National Park Service planning for the Fort, beginning with the *Master Plan for Preservation and Use of Fort Vancouver National Monument, Mission 66 Edition*, reversed the initial course and cautiously endorsed reconstruction based on sound research and archaeological investigations and a clear identification of any resultant structures as "replicas." The 1969 *Master Plan* prepared by the park outlined reconstruction of the stockade, key structures to support "living history" interpretation (a keen interest of Director Hartzog), fields, pasture, and the "original surrounding forest environment." The most recent *Master Plan*, published in 1978 and scheduled for replacement by this general management plan, reaffirmed reconstruction as a priority, outlining a five-phase reconstruction program.

All future reconstruction at Fort Vancouver will continue to adhere strictly to the historical and archaeological research requirements of NPS *Management Policies 2001*, as cited above. The park will continue to work with qualified professionals, as well as build its own professional capabilities, to support these requirements. Guidelines will be developed to identify, justify, and prioritize future reconstructions, based on research, educational, and interpretive goals.

Pearson Field

When the Hudson's Bay Company departed Vancouver in 1860, the U.S. Army assumed management of the properties within the boundaries of the Vancouver Barracks Military Reservation. During the early decades of the 20th century, the open fields of Vancouver Barracks were the site of a number of early experimental flights by both civilian and military aviation enthusiasts. In 1925, Pearson Field was formally dedicated within Vancouver Barracks and functioned as an Army Air Corps station during the interwar period between World War I and World War II. Shortly after World War II, the NPS received the site of the Fort and Parade Ground and the city received the airfield for the purpose of aviation operations from the War Assets Administration.

In 1972, the City of Vancouver sold the western portion of the airfield (approximately 72 acres) to the NPS but reserved a 30-year "use and occupancy" of the property allowing for continued operations of the airport until 2002 and development of a new airfield facility at another county location. The Fort Vancouver National Historic Site master plan proposed to reestablish the historic HBC scene in this area after the airfield ceased operation.

In 1996, Congress extended city use of the airfield until 2022. During this extension period general aviation uses may continue subject to FAA approval. After 2022, the focus will be on operations of historic aircraft. Related portions of Public Law 104-134 and a Memorandum of Agreement between the NPS and the city cite the following conditions:

Public Law 104-134

Sec. 334. The National Park Service, in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement between the United States National Park Service and the City of Vancouver dated November 4, 1994, shall permit general aviation on its portion of Pearson Field in Vancouver, Washington until the year 2022, during which time a plan and method for transitioning from general aviation aircraft to historic shall be completed; such transition to be accomplished by that date. This action shall not be construed to limit the authority of the Federal Aviation Administration over air traffic control or aviation activities at Pearson Field or limit operations and airspace of Portland International Airport.

Memorandum of Agreement between United States National Park Service and City of Vancouver

(8) The Vancouver Partnership will be requested to prepare a long-term master plan for

Pearson Airpark within a timetable to be established by the Partnership. Said master plan would be completed as soon as possible, but no later than 36 months from the date of this Agreement. Said master plan shall include, as a minimum, the following:

(A) A plan and method for transitioning from general aviation aircraft to historic aircraft which transition shall be completed by the year 2022. Historic aircraft shall be defined as aircraft based on a design from: (1) World War II era or earlier, (2) which are 50 years or older, or (3) which is determined by a qualified aviation advisory group selected by the Vancouver Partnership to be of historical significance.

Fort Vancouver Waterfront

Part of the vision and implementation of the *City of Vancouver Central Park Plan* in the late 1970s involved construction of a landscaped greenbelt along the Columbia River on federal property. (The Vancouver Central Park consists basically of the surplus areas of the military reservation.) In March 1982, the City of Vancouver and the NPS signed an agreement to allow the city to utilize, develop, and maintain the federal waterfront property as a public park. This agreement expires on March 9, 2007 and was negotiated with the understanding that NPS would eventually restore portions of the waterfront's historic landscape based on its 1978 master plan. In April 2003, the City of Vancouver, in consultation with the NPS and consistent with the agreement, "requested to terminate the lease and relinquish control of the NPS portion of the Vancouver waterfront back to NPS." The NPS formally assumed responsibility of the NPS waterfront in May 2003.

Pearson Air Museum

In 1995, the City of Vancouver and the National Park Service jointly conducted an environmental assessment to site a proposed aviation museum on federal lands and in federal buildings within the national historic site. This action required an amendment to the 1978 park master plan to justify the use of federal land for a nonprofit public museum. Three historic aviation buildings comprise the principal structural components of the museum complex. Under the amended 1978 master plan, these buildings qualified as an approved element within the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site master plan since it provides for adaptive reuse of historic properties (these properties are recorded on the Washington State Register of Historic Places and are eligible for the National Register). Museum use is thematically linked with the historical interwar period of aviation and is one of the themes of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve (Reserve).

A memorandum of agreement signed in November 1994 between the City of Vancouver and the NPS allowed for the development of the new museum within the national historic site. A December 1995 cooperative agreement authorized the City of Vancouver to assist in the historical interpretation of Pearson Field aviation history.

Vancouver National Historic Reserve

Significant historical events occurring in Vancouver, Washington resulted in a rich collection of cultural resources, including sites such as Fort Vancouver, Vancouver Barracks, Pearson Field, the Columbia Riverfront, and Kaiser Shipyards. In 1990, (Public Law 101-523) Congress directed a commission to study the feasibility of establishing a Vancouver National Historic Reserve (Reserve). Five representatives served on the commission. A private citizen served as one representative and four were representatives from the following public agencies: the National Park Service, the Department of the Army, the City of Vancouver, and the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. Completing its study in April 1993, the commission recommended establishment of the Reserve. Kaiser Shipyards was not included in the Reserve boundary.

The 366-acre Reserve was established in 1996 (Public Law 104-333, Section 502). Though not a unit of the National Park System, it is an affiliated area, making the Reserve eligible for technical and financial aid from the National Park Service. Congress gave national status to the area when it established the Reserve. As part of a public/private partnership, Congress provides support to the Reserve through appropriations that match other public and private funds. The Reserve is cooperatively managed by a partnership composed of the same four agencies that served on the commission. A cooperative agreement signed by the Reserve Partners provides for specific funding and program support for various Reserve functions. The National Park Service is the lead Reserve Partner for interpretation, education, and cultural resource protection. Leadership in these areas provides an important contribution in fulfilling the goals of the *Vancouver National Historic Reserve Cooperative Management Plan*.

Fort Vancouver NHS is essentially a park within a park because of the legislatively established Reserve that surrounds it. As a partner in the Reserve and a signatory agency to its cooperative management plan, NPS staff is committed to communicate and coordinate its planning and operational activities within the context of the larger Reserve.

Conveyance of West Portion of Vancouver Barracks

On October 30, 2001, Congress approved Public Law 106-398 [114 Stat.1654A], Section 2843. This section of the act authorized the conveyance of property situated within the Vancouver National Historic Reserve from the Secretary of the Army to the City of Vancouver, Washington. The property included 19 structures at Vancouver Barracks that are identified by the Army using numbers between 602 and 676 in the west barracks area.

The city intends to actively pursue the adaptive reuse of these historic properties for a variety of public and private uses. Any reuse will be accomplished in adherence to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and in the spirit of the preservation of the historic features of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve.

SELECTED PLAN AND ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Two action alternatives and a No Action Alternative were analyzed in the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site GMP/EIS. The alternatives were developed and refined through a three-year public planning and environmental review process and include the Proposed Action-Alternative B, the No Action-Alternative A, and Alternative C. The Proposed Action is selected because it improves visitor experience and understanding of the site and provides increased protection for the park's significant natural and cultural resources while avoiding significant environmental impacts. In addition, partnerships are emphasized.

The Proposed Action contains several new elements for implementation that will result in expanded opportunities for the visitor to appreciate the broad sense of history that occurred at Fort Vancouver and its place in Northwest history. Specific actions include the reconstruction of nine Hudson's Bay Company period structures within the fort palisade and two at the Village. A research and education center will be developed within the Fort. Interpretive components will be added, including wayside exhibits and delineation of structures in certain locations. Much of the historic landscape will be restored. The NPS staff will develop an interpretive area at the Waterfront by partially reconstructing the Salmon Store as an interpretive shed, and delineating several other historic HBC structures. The original location of the wharf will be simulated and the historic pond delineated with plants. A portion of Columbia Way will be realigned to better accommodate visitor circulation and interpretation.

In cooperation with the City of Vancouver and the Washington State Department of Transportation, a land bridge will be constructed to link the Fort and Village areas with the Waterfront. The design will allow for interpretation devices and the use of vegetation as transitional elements. A local transit authority, in cooperation with NPS and other Reserve Partners, will implement a shuttle system to facilitate visitation. Other cooperative sharing measures will include administrative, maintenance, and the development and operation of visitor facilities with Reserve Partners. One of the four buildings fronting the historic Parade Ground, as determined excess by the Secretary of the Army, will be renovated as the joint administrative headquarters for the park and other Reserve offices. Maximum use will be made of existing structures including renovation of the existing Fort Vancouver visitor center as the Vancouver National Historic Reserve visitor center jointly managed by the Reserve Partners, including the NPS.

Implementation of the Proposed Action will result in the development of additional educational outreach programs and new research facilities related to the Hudson's Bay Company and early U.S. Army period. The Preferred Alternative in the draft GMP recommended that the McLoughlin House National Historic Site in Oregon City, Oregon become a unit of Fort Vancouver NHS and be managed by Fort Vancouver National Historic Site staff. On July 29, 2003, President Bush signed into law H.R. 733, which authorized the Secretary of the Interior to acquire the McLoughlin House in Oregon City, Oregon for inclusion in Fort Vancouver National

Historic Site.

Alternative A constitutes the No Action Alternative and assumes that existing conditions, including programming, facilities, staffing, and funding would generally continue at their current levels. This alternative would include fulfilling the existing commitments and relationships with the Reserve Partners and providing technical assistance to the McLoughlin House National Historic Site in Oregon City, Oregon, currently an affiliated unit of the National Park System. Since park operations are not static, but often evolve and change over time, this alternative makes the assumption that there would be corresponding incremental increases, such as operational funding due to inflation.

Alternative C contains much of the same actions that would be proposed for implementation under Alternative B with some noted changes. Full reconstruction within the fort palisade would occur, along with the reconstruction of the two historic School Houses and a barn to the north of the Fort. Additional delineation of structures would occur at the Waterfront and the Village. The historic Salmon Store would be reconstructed along the Columbia River shoreline, as would the historic wharf and other waterfront features. An ethnobotanical garden would be constructed to interpret the local historic uses of native plants. An opening in the railroad berm would be created to visually link the Fort to the Waterfront. The current NHS visitor center would be renovated and retained for more detailed interpretation concerning Fort Vancouver, while a new location would be sought for a joint Vancouver National Historic Reserve visitor facility to provide the public with information and orientation to all the Reserve stories and venues.

ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The environmentally preferred alternative is defined as the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment. It is also the alternative which best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources.

The largest change to the biological environment will be the development of the Village. Presently the Village is undeveloped and therefore infrequently visited at this time. Because of this, the area serves as open space in a city environment and is frequented by a number of wildlife species. Both Alternatives B and C propose actions that modify this habitat and increase visitation. Certain displaced species (such as coyotes) probably would not return.

There are many actions common to both Alternatives B and C that will protect and preserve the historic, cultural, and natural resources over the No Action Alternative. Both these alternatives will restore a portion of historic prairie south of the Fort and enhance the natural shore conditions along the Columbia by planting native trees and shrubs and removing concrete fill. In both alternatives cultural resources are protected and preserved.

In Alternatives B and C historic resources are enhanced to varying degrees. In Alternative C,

more structures are reconstructed or delineated in the Village, Fort, and at the Waterfront. Additional actions proposed in Alternative C that enhance the historic scene include closing Columbia Way around the interpretive area, reconstructing the wharf, and introducing livestock to the historic scene.

However, in enhancing historic resources, Alternative C would initiate more development in the 100-year floodplain including constructing a wharf within a designated riparian wetland corridor. The proposed construction of the wharf into the Columbia River would have potential environmental impacts, including pile driving, dredging of the intertidal area, and possible fuel leakage.

The Selected Plan provides the appropriate balance between protection and rehabilitation of the NHS's significant cultural and natural resources, and minimizes the long-term environmental effects associated with its use. Therefore the National Park Service considers Alternative B as the environmentally preferred alternative over the No Action Alternative and Alternative C.

The minor changes to the Alternative B from the draft to the final EIS (retention of ADA parking near the Fort and keeping East 5th Street open to vehicle access) do not change the Selected Plan from being the environmentally preferred alternative.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Extensive opportunities were provided for public participation with public meetings conducted in both Washington and Oregon states during the scoping and draft plan phases. The scoping process was initiated through a Notice of Intent published in the *Federal Register* on January 7, 1999 (Volume 65, Number 5, page 1171). In the spring of 1999, the National Park Service organized an interdisciplinary planning team consisting of staff at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site and the NPS Columbia Cascades Support Office in Seattle, Washington to begin a new general management plan for the NHS to replace the outdated 1978 master plan. The public process officially began in December 1999 when the NPS produced and mailed a newsletter to approximately 600 people on the park's mailing list. Page three of the newsletter had a "return form" for writing comments which could be mailed back to the NPS.

The NPS held four public meetings in Washington and Oregon in January 2000 and received and recorded over 150 oral comments during the two meetings. National Park Service staff received a total of 42 letters. Of these, 29 were written from residents of Washington State (25 were from Vancouver); 9 letters were from Oregon; and single letters came from Minnesota, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. There was also one letter from Canada. Though many new actions and ideas were suggested by the public during the public comment period, no new issues were identified.

On November 21, 2002, over 670 copies of the draft GMP/EIS were distributed to agencies, organizations, and interested individuals. Documents were placed in local libraries in Vancouver,

Washington and Oregon City, Oregon. A Notice of Availability was published in the *Federal Register* on December 3, 2002 (Volume 67, Number 232, Pages 71981-83), noting that the draft GMP/EIS was available for public review. In addition, advertisements were placed in the *Oregonian*, in Portland, Oregon, and *The Columbian*, in Vancouver, Washington announcing the release of the draft document and locations, times, and dates for four public meetings.

To coordinate with the mailing of the draft GMP/EIS, 4,500 newsletters were printed and distributed and made available at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site visitor center, several venues at the Vancouver National Historic Reserve, and other places through the City of Vancouver including the library, museums, the Chamber of Commerce, City Hall, and the Parks and Recreation Department. In addition, copies were available at the McLoughlin House in Oregon City, Oregon. The newsletter included a mailback postage-paid response form for people to provide comments concerning the plan.

Four public meetings were held in Washington and Oregon attended by 65 people. A total of 185 comments were recorded. At the close of the public comment period a total of 118 pieces of written correspondence had been received by the planning team in response to the *Fort Vancouver National Historic Site Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement*. These were received from the following locations in the Pacific Northwest: 57 from Vancouver, Washington, 21 from Portland, Oregon, 5 from Oregon City, Oregon, 12 from other locations in Washington State, 7 from other locations in Oregon State, and 2 from Idaho. A total of 14 letters arrived from California, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Arizona, Maryland, New York, Massachusetts, and Washington, D.C. All are included in this document.

As part of this planning process, consultation for NEPA Section 7 was held with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, Washington State Fish and Wildlife, and the Washington Natural Heritage Program. For NHPA, 106 Compliance, the Washington and Oregon State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO), and the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation were also contacted. Only the Washington State Historic Preservation Office responded with formal written comments. Neither the SHPOs nor the Advisory Council raised any concerns regarding the implementation of the Selected Plan and supported the Selected Plan. Three tribes prepared written comments; the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon.

The formal comment period on the draft GMP/EIS extended from November 21, 2002 until February 8, 2003. Public response was highly supportive of actions in the Preferred Alternative including the following: additional reconstruction and living history, development of a research and education center, centralizing the visitor center for the Reserve at the park, construction of a land bridge connecting the Company Village to the waterfront, NPS management and treatment

of the second HBC cemetery, and in the acquisition of the McLoughlin House as a unit of Fort Vancouver NHS.

COMMENTS RECEIVED FOLLOWING RELEASE OF THE FINAL EIS

The Notice of Availability for the Final EIS was published in the *Federal Register* on January 22, 2004 (Volume 69, Number 14, Pages 3172-3174). During the No Action period ending February 17, 2004, one individual letter of comment was received regarding the Final EIS/GMP. This letter was sent by the Cultural Protection Specialist for the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon. The author was concerned that the Army Reserve 70th Regional Support command may not be leaving the East Barracks of Fort Vancouver NHS and expressed “hope that the Army Reserve will vacate the East Barracks and leave the management of this highly significant National Historic Reserve to the more respectful and responsive National Parks Service.”

BASIS FOR DECISION

During the planning process for the project, the National Park Service, working with the public established goals or future conditions that were used as a framework for evaluating potential new uses and site improvements at Fort Vancouver. The goals are presented in the Background of the Park chapter of the EIS and contain the following:

- Protect, restore and maintain park resources through preservation in accordance with NPS policies. These resources include recovered and *in-situ* archaeological resources, collections, and reconstructed structures and landscapes.
- Provide park visitors with effective interpretation, education, and orientation about the history and significance of the park resulting in a greater understanding of HBC and early U.S. Army resources and support for their preservation.
- Provide park visitors with safe and interesting park facilities and services.
- Promote formal partnership programs with Reserve Partners and others to assist in education, interpretation and in the conservation and preservation of park resources related to the HBC and early U.S. Army periods.
- Assist the Vancouver National Historic Reserve Partners in the interpretation and preservation of resources related to other Reserve themes.
- Use the most current management practices, systems, and technologies to accomplish these future conditions.

The basis for the decision to adopt the Selected Plan is its ability to successfully fulfill the goals of the project. The Selected Plan provides the most desirable combination of promoting the NPS mission and public use, while preserving the park’s resources, yet minimizing environmental effects. The selected action will preserve and significantly enhance Fort Vancouver in the following ways:

- Continued reconstruction (reconstruction originally initiated by Congress) of nine additional buildings within the Fort and two residences within the Village. Delineation of other HBC

structures.

- Reconstruction of the cultural landscape evocative of the HBC period.
- The addition of the McLoughlin House National Historic Site as a unit of Fort Vancouver NHS.
- Removal of parking from the waterfront area for an interpretive core area. Use of the existing lots within the Reserve for additional parking.
- Establishment of a shuttle system.
- Restoration of approximately 13 acres of original prairie south of the fort.
- Preservation of the park's open space, shoreline and natural habitats for city, Reserve, and park visitors.
- A Research and Education Center within the Fort to advance archaeological research.
- In partnership with the City of Vancouver, the Confluence Project, and Washington State Department of Transportation, the construction of a land bridge over State Route 14 and the railroad to reconnect the Fort Vancouver Waterfront with the Company Village.
- Development of an ethnobotanical garden to interpret the local historic uses of native plants.
- Adapting the current Fort Vancouver NHS visitor center as the co-managed Reserve's visitor center.
- Using one of the four buildings fronting the Parade Ground as the joint administrative building for the Reserve (if the East Barracks is determined excess by the Secretary of the Army).
- Visitor education and involvement through NPS interpretive and stewardship programs, living history, visitor center, and interpretive signing and exhibits.
- Preservation and enhancement of appropriate public uses including walking, jogging, scenic viewing, and non-motorized boating.
- Incorporation of principles of sustainability in design, construction, and operation of the site.
- Mitigation requirements to avoid or minimize environmental impacts associated with new uses, including the reduction of traffic and the protection of natural, cultural, and scenic resources.

CHANGES MADE IN THE FINAL EIS

The following is a list of minor corrections or other revisions to the Final EIS, including several changes that were made in response to public comment. None of these revisions will change the Selected Plan and have been incorporated into the Final EIS. Since no substantive changes were deemed necessary to the Final EIS, an abbreviated format was approved by WASO on April 24, 2003.

There were several concerns expressed about the impact the closure of East Fifth Street would have on adjacent agencies' operations, emergency access, on-street parking, and the potential shift of traffic to other nearby streets. In response, this action was dropped from the Final GMP/EIS.

A second change relates to the temporary parking lot at the Fort. The action presented in the draft GMP was to remove this parking lot completely and to construct a new parking area within the south or east barracks. Comments from public meetings stated the importance of keeping this lot for use by persons with disabilities and the elderly, who may have trouble walking a longer distance to the Fort. In response, the action in the final plan calls for removing the existing temporary parking lot, but providing several permanent ADA parking spaces and a drop-off and loading area for other passengers.

MEASURES TO MINIMIZE HARM

The National Park Service has identified the known practicable mitigation measures to avoid or minimize the environmental effects of the Selected Plan. No significant adverse environmental impacts are foreseen to result from implementing the actions proposed. The Proposed Action is expected to have minor to moderate effects (direct, indirect, and cumulative). All practical means to avoid or minimize all foreseeable environmental effects have been included in the action selected. Development projects and vegetation management projects will be preceded by sufficient archeological surveys and/or environmental analyses, including consideration of threatened and endangered species, and consideration of cultural landscape resources implications, as well as impact on recreational use and enjoyment of park resources.

Major beneficial effects will accrue in the area of natural and cultural resource protection and visitor use. Minor short-term adverse impacts will result to soils and vegetation from the limited proposed development projects, and appropriate site-specific environmental compliance will be completed when these projects are advanced. Mitigation measures highlighted and addressed in the EIS are adopted as a key element of the decision, so as to minimize potential adverse impacts of the selected action.

All future reconstruction at Fort Vancouver will continue to adhere strictly to the historical and archaeological research requirements of NPS Management Policies. The park will continue to work with qualified professionals, as well as build its own professional capabilities, to support these requirements. Guidelines will be developed to identify, justify, and prioritize future reconstructions, based on research, educational, and interpretive goals.

If the NPS were to receive excess lands and facilities from the Army Reserve within the authorized boundary of Fort Vancouver NHS, the NPS will be able to administer and restore the historic scene of the former HBC and early U.S. Army periods. Lands within the authorized boundary, including the HBC cemetery area, have already been determined to be historically significant. This action will allow visitors the opportunity to more fully understand these historic periods. Administering additional lands will require additional NPS funding. This will be partially offset by entering into a long-term lease agreement with the City of Vancouver where much of the property will be available to private or public sector entities for adaptive reuse.

The National Park Service is known for its expertise in visitor interpretation and resource management. In agreement with the recommendations from the *Vancouver National Historic Reserve Cooperative Management Plan*, the NPS will take a lead role in telling the stories and educating the public about this special place. Visitors will benefit from the increased emphasis on education and interpretation along with additional funding sources that the NPS could provide. Additionally, since the NPS has been assigned a leadership position by the Reserve Partners regarding preservation and conservation of cultural resources throughout the Reserve, the NPS is able to apply its varied preservation expertise to the protection of these historic resources. This includes the protection of archaeological resources, historic buildings, and cultural landscapes.

As an urban park, the national historic site is somewhat limited in the number of wildlife species that utilize it. However, for a small park, Fort Vancouver contains many species as noted in "The Affected Environment" chapter. Construction activities may cause some disturbance to animal species, including birds, but this will be limited and short-term, especially in the Fort since reconstruction will take place primarily within the fort palisade. Animals would probably avoid the site during the period of construction, but most would probably return once construction was completed. Activities should not have any appreciable affect on future populations of animals in the vicinity.

Restoring a portion of the original prairie, approximately 13 acres south of the Fort, will attract wildlife, including birds and possibly amphibians, associated with these plant types. Though the remnant prairie will be too small to work as a functioning ecosystem, it may attract small mammals and reptiles, which can hide in the taller grasses. Other species, such as birds, may be attracted to the taller grasses to feed on the plants or nest there or to search for small mammals. It may have a positive impact on the federally listed bald eagle by potentially increasing the small mammal and bird populations that bald eagles feed on. Attracting additional birds may become a safety issue for the adjacent airport. Birds can be a hazard to aircraft. Ingestion of birds into engines has been known to cause flight failure and may endanger pilots. The NPS will work cooperatively with the USDA Wildlife Services on wildlife issues regarding aviation safety issues.

The native prairie grasses will be managed and maintained by burning or mowing. Mowing may be required on a periodic basis (about once a year), but may be more conducive to an urban environment. It may require the purchase of special mowing equipment and result in some minor air pollution from machine operations. If burning is used, the burning will occur on a regular basis every one to three years until established. During the prescribed burn activities, air quality may be affected. There will be an increase in particulates that disperse quickly. However, particulate emissions will meet or be below the state standards. Burning may be more cost effective than mowing once the grasses are initially established.

Enhancing the natural condition along the Columbia River shoreline and planting native vegetation in accordance with NPS management policies (Management of Altered Plant Communities 4.4.2.5) (National Park Service 2001: p.36) could also provide a habitat for native plant species. The NPS staff will plant native understory species such as willows, salal, sedges, and grasses. Removing the existing concrete fill material (approximately 530 linear feet) at the water's edge will clear the shoreline of debris. The NPS staff will check to see if fish or other animals are using the fill area as habitat. In this case, suitable natural habitat, such as root wads, could be substituted. Coordination and compliance will be required to implement these actions. Concrete removal along the shoreline will be monitored for affects on archaeological resources and erosion control.

Delineation of portions of the historic pond with vegetation could, in time, provide an urban habitat for animals, especially birds. This will provide a more accurate historic setting at both the Waterfront and in the Village. Any archaeological artifacts in or beneath the pond surface will need to be protected through lining or capping below any introduced plants. In addition, the nature and condition of the archeological resources will be assessed. Attracting additional birds may become a safety issue for the adjacent airport. The NPS will work cooperatively with the USDA Wildlife Services regarding vegetation along the Columbia River and at the historic pond.

The native Garry oak groves, also known as Oregon white oaks (*Quercus garryana*), found within both the national historic site and the Vancouver Barracks area of the Reserve are on the Priority Habitats and Species List and the Species of Concern List with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. The oaks are important statewide but are a declining plant species. It is the only native oak in Washington and British Columbia. This existing remnant stands appear old and are historically important as well. Protecting the remaining oak groves will be beneficial to wildlife that feed on the acorns and use the trees for shelter and nesting.

Encouraging the Reserve to use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices will be beneficial. Though not prohibiting pesticides, the IPM program uses an integrated approach to pest management using mechanical, physical, cultural, biological, and chemical means to manage pests.

There will be no adverse impacts to wetlands along the Columbia River. Removing the concrete fill and Himalayan blackberry along the shoreline could cause some minor immediate disturbance prior to planting with native species, but over the long-term, removing the foreign material will have a positive impact. The bank will be assessed for erosion before removing the fill. The NPS staff will check to see if fish or other animals are using the fill area as habitat. In this case, suitable natural habitat, such as root wads, could be substituted. Establishing native trees along the shoreline will have a positive impact, adding to the plant overstory in the riparian wetland area.

Wetland plants will be established in portions of the historic pond at both the Waterfront and Village. In

time, other associated wetland plants and animals may naturally locate to this area. Before recreating the pond, the nature and condition of the archaeological resources will be addressed.

There will be no adverse impacts to threatened and endangered species since consultation disclosed no threatened or endangered species within the park. Since the bald eagle and the bull trout may occur in the vicinity of the park, NHS staff will continue to monitor for the presence of threatened and endangered species.

The objectives of Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management, are to avoid, to the extent possible, the long and short-term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains (100-year floodplain or 500-year for critical actions). The waterfront area of Fort Vancouver NHS along the Columbia River is presently for "day-use only" city park. The proposed development in the Selected Plan along the Fort Vancouver Waterfront will be in the 100-year floodplain.

In the Selected Plan, structures within the floodplain will not be fully reconstructed. The Salmon Store will be constructed as an interpretive shed silhouetting the exterior dimensions and constructing a roof. Restrooms will be attached to the Salmon Store. This building will be most susceptible to damage in a flood event. Other delineated structures at the Waterfront may not sustain much damage during occasional flooding, as waters would pass around and through the building's outlined forms. However, they could be destroyed by debris carried by fast flowing water.

According to Vancouver's City Engineer (Swanson, phone conversation: 2001) the last major flood event occurred in February 1996 (the flooding event before that was in the 1940s). Though the Bonneville Dam has been successful in controlling floodwaters, snow melted by warming temperatures and heavy rains caused widespread flooding. During this time floodwaters inundated the entire 100-year floodplain. Little debris was deposited at the waterfront area of Fort Vancouver. It is speculated that the trees lining the shore helped to limit debris deposits and protected the shoreline from erosion and undercutting. The action to restore shoreline vegetation in the Selected Plan will help during flood events.

To reduce possible fiscal loss, it is suggested that the delineated structures be made of wood or other natural material, so that they might be replaced, if necessary. If possible, the NPS staff could construct some structures to be removed in advance of potential flooding.

The NPS Floodplain Management Guideline states that certain federal actions are exempt from additional compliance. The proposed construction in the Selected Plan along the waterfront is exempt because the proposed structures are historic sites whose location is critical to their significance, and because the restrooms and the parking lots will be for day-use only.

As a Reserve Partner, the NPS will provide all partners, including the City of Vancouver officials including those who are responsible for managing Pearson Field along with FAA and other appropriate officials, with advance knowledge of any major construction activity that will occur in proximity to airport operations. The *1995 Pearson Air Museum Plan* is incorporated into the final *Fort Vancouver General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement*. This includes continued cooperation with the City of Vancouver to facilitate appropriate conditions for continued general aviation use at Pearson Field. The NPS is committed to continued and growing partnerships with the City of Vancouver.

The reconstruction of buildings and trails in the Village will be linked to the Waterfront by a pedestrian overpass/land bridge. This will increase visitor access that potentially would be unsupervised. However, NPS staff is committed to interpreting the park's resources in such a way as to protect the integrity of the historic resources. With the addition of reconstructed buildings in the Village, the park will mitigate safety and security concerns by providing more staff during park hours. This will allow for supervised activities at those structures and areas that are more sensitive to damage (for example, the reconstructed "Kanaka Billy's" house). Areas open for unstructured, self-guided tours will be limited to those areas where the structures are delineated and not fully reconstructed. These structures (open-walled or delineation of foundation corners only) are less likely to be damaged. As now planned the Discovery Historic Loop Trail will be lighted in the evening within the Village area after park hours. In addition, the city and NPS staff plan to address safety issues during development of the proposed pedestrian overpass/land bridge and associated paths. Lighting impacts on the historic setting will be mitigated by low-impact lighting and shielded light fixtures.

Two existing Mission 66 buildings comprising the maintenance building and an employee residence will be removed to make way for an expanded visitor center parking lot. To mitigate this, various adaptive reuse options for the structures will be considered off-site. If after evaluation for the National Register these structures are determined eligible, they may not be removed in which case the visitor center parking lot will not be expanded and other parking and shuttle options will be explored.

FINDINGS ON IMPAIRMENT OF PARK RESOURCES AND VALUES

The NPS may not allow impairment of park resources and values unless directly and specifically provided for by legislation or proclamation establishing the park. Impairment that is prohibited by the NPS Organic Act and the General Authorities Act is an impact that, in the professional judgment of the responsible NPS manager, would harm the integrity of park resources or values, including opportunities that otherwise would be present for the enjoyment of those resources or values. In determining whether impairment would occur, park managers examine the duration, severity and magnitude of the impact; the resources and values affected; and direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the action.

According to NPS policy, "An impact would be more likely to constitute an impairment to the extent that it affects a resource or value whose conservation is: a) Necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of the park; b) Key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park; or c) Identified as a goal in the park's general management plan or other relevant NPS planning documents."

This policy does not prohibit all impacts to park resources and values. The NPS has discretion to allow impacts to park resources and values when necessary and appropriate to fulfill the purposes of a park, so long as the impacts do not constitute an impairment. Moreover, an impact is less likely to constitute an impairment if it is an unavoidable result, which cannot be further mitigated, of an action necessary to preserve or restore the integrity of park resources or values.

After analyzing the environmental impacts described in the Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement and considering the public comments received, the NPS has determined that implementation of the preferred alternative will not constitute an impairment to Fort Vancouver National Historic Site's resources and values. The actions in the preferred alternative are intended to protect and enhance the national historic site's natural and cultural resources, and provide for high-quality visitor experiences. Overall, the alternative (with mitigation measures) will have a beneficial effect, reducing impacts on biological and cultural resources throughout the national recreation area compared to the no-action alternative.

There are no major adverse impacts to the national historic site's resources. There would be short-term, localized impacts, such as noise, dust, and minimal visitor use and wildlife disruption due to construction activities. While the proposed action will have some adverse effects on park resources, these impacts will be site-specific, minor to moderate, and short-term. None of the impacts of this alternative will adversely affect resources or values to a degree that will prevent the NPS from fulfilling the purposes of the national historic site, or threaten the natural integrity of the site.

CONCLUSION

The proposed plan strives to balance protection of cultural and natural resources with visitor uses and opportunities. The planning process and final plan are reflections of both public and partnership involvement. The above considerations warrant selecting Alternative B, the Selected Plan, as described and assessed in the final environmental impact statement, to guide management and operation of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site for the next 15 years.

Approved: Petrusia A. Neubacher Date: June 2, 2004
Jonathan B. Jarvis
Regional Director, Pacific West Region

Appendix C: Acronyms



Acronyms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AIRFA	American Indian Religious Freedom Act
ANCS+	Automated National Catalog System
ARPA	Archaeological Resources Protection Act
Association	McLoughlin Memorial Association
A/V	Audio-visual
AWA	Association for Washington Archaeology
CCC	Civilian Conservation Corps
CCSO	Columbia Cascades Support Office, NPS, Seattle, WA
CIP	Comprehensive Interpretive Plan
CMP	Reserve Cooperative Management Plan
DCP	Development Concept Plan
EWU	Eastern Washington University
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
Fort Vancouver NHS	Fort Vancouver National Historic Site
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
GMP	General Management Plan
HAZMAT	Hazardous materials storage
HBC	Hudson's Bay Company
In-situ	In its original location
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
MMP	Museum Management Program
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
NHS	National Historic Site
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NPS	National Park Service
NRA	National Recreational Area
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
NWIA	Northwest Interpretive Association
OAS	Oregon Archaeological Society
OSU	Oregon State University
Reserve	Vancouver National Historic Reserve
RV	Recreational vehicles
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Society
WDFW	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

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