

US Department of the Interior

National Park Service

RECORD OF DECISION

Final Environmental Impact Statement\ General Management Plan

San Juan Island National Historical Park

San Juan County, Washington

INTRODUCTION

The Department of the Interior, National Park Service, has prepared this Record of Decision (ROD) for the *Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* for San Juan Island National Historical Park (NHP), Washington. This ROD includes a statement of the decision made, synopses of other alternatives considered, the basis for the decision, a description of the environmentally preferred alternative, a discussion of impairment of resources or values, a listing of measures to minimize environmental harm, and an overview of public involvement in the decision-making process.

DECISION (SELECTED ACTION)

The National Park Service (NPS) will implement the preferred alternative (Alternative C) as described in the *Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* issued in October 2008 (there are no substantive changes from the preferred alternative as presented in the draft GMP/EIS). The selected action broadens the scope of resource management and interpretation programs to emphasize the connections and interrelationships between the park's natural and cultural resources. New facilities, trails and programs will provide opportunities for visitors to understand the importance of the park's natural resources in defining the cultural landscapes and influencing the settlement and historic events of San Juan Island.

At English Camp, the Crook house would be retained, stabilized, and used as an exterior exhibit while the hospital would be rehabilitated and opened to the public for interpretation.

The 1979 double-wide trailer that serves as the temporary visitor center at American Camp would be removed and replaced with a permanent, enlarged visitor center at the existing site, allowing for improved exhibits and staff space. A collections study room for natural and cultural resource items, including a portion of the military-era collections would be relocated to the park.

Additional buildings would be open to the public for interpretation as well as research and academic study. The existing road to the redoubt would be removed and converted to a trail and the prairie would be restored to native plant species.

Historic buildings from the encampment period still existing on the island would be repatriated back to their original locations within the camps. Off-island interpretation would be enhanced through partnerships.

The selected plan calls for boundary adjustments at both Camps to include important natural and cultural resources and sites related to the purpose of the park. The legislative authority for any such initiative is provided in the park's enabling legislation allowing for land adjustments, contingent upon determinations by the Secretary of the Interior that such actions are necessary and funding is available.

Future construction projects, such as development of a permanent, enlarged visitor center, adaptive re-use of historic structures, and all other projects envisioned under the selected plan will entail additional site-specific design and environmental analysis. All such project development will also include opportunities for public review and involvement.

OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Two other alternatives for managing San Juan Island NHP were evaluated in the draft and final EIS. Alternative A, the "no-action" alternative, is the baseline for evaluating and comparing the changes and impacts of the two "action" alternatives. The No Action Alternative would assume a continuation of existing management and trends at San Juan Island NHP. The primary emphasis in this alternative would continue to be placed on the protection and preservation of cultural resources. Since 1966, the park has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is a National Historic Landmark. The management of cultural landscapes around the immediate encampment areas at American Camp and English Camp would continue to emphasize cultural landscape management while respecting the natural environment and natural processes. No new construction would be authorized.

Alternative B increases visitor opportunities and outreach at both English Camp and American Camp, as well as in the town of Friday Harbor through additional visitor facilities, recreational opportunities, programs, and services. Natural and cultural resources interpretation would be enhanced through more extensive facilities and programs.

At English Camp, the road system would be reconfigured as a one-way loop road by connecting a road segment approximately one-fifth mile long from the entrance road to the administrative road. The road would follow the existing historic road alignment where possible. The Crook house would be rehabilitated as a visitor contact facility on the ground floor and for administrative use on the second floor.

At American Camp, the 1979 double-wide trailer that serves as the temporary visitor center at American Camp would be removed, the site restored to natural conditions, and a new enlarged visitor center would be constructed north of the redoubt. The new visitor center would include space for a collections study room for natural and cultural resource items, including a portion of the military-era collections. The existing road to the redoubt off Pickett's Lane would be removed and converted to a trail. The cultural landscapes would be enhanced to aid visitor understanding and interpretation through a variety of techniques. The prairie would be restored to native plant species.

Off-island interpretation would be enhanced through partnerships. The park would propose boundary adjustments at both camps to include important natural and cultural resources related to the purpose of the park.

BASIS FOR DECISION

The Organic Act established the NPS in order to “promote and regulate the use of parks...” The Organic Act defined the purpose of the national parks as “to conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.” The Organic Act provides overall guidance for the management of San Juan Island National Historical Park.

In reaching its decision to select Alternative C, the NPS considered the purposes for which San Juan Island NHP was established, and other laws and policies that apply to lands in the park, including the Organic Act, National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the *NPS 2006 Management Policies*. The planning team also sought and carefully considered the public’s comments during the extensive conservation planning process.

All of the alternatives were evaluated with a variety of criteria and considerations to determine which management alternative could provide the greatest advantage to the public and to the NPS. Alternatives were evaluated to determine how well they:

- Support the park’s purpose, significance, and desired future conditions
- Maximize education and interpretation of the park’s interpretive themes
- Maximize protection of cultural and natural resources
- Provide a high quality visitor experience
- Maximize partnership opportunities
- Develop efficient operations
- Attain the public’s vision for the park

Compared to all of the alternatives considered for management of the park, Alternative C best provides for long-term protection of the cultural and natural resources that support the purpose and significance of the park. The selected alternative also best represents broad public sentiments about the future of San Juan Island NHP. Two core components and distinguishing features of the selected action, the restoration of the prairie at American Camp and repatriation of historic structures, will fulfill broad public opinions about the need to expand the scope of resource management to display the interconnectedness of the cultural and natural features of the landscape.

Constructing a permanent, enlarged visitor center at American Camp at the existing disturbed site would minimize environmental impacts. The larger visitor center would allow for some of the collections to be returned to the island for park research and visitor display. The visitor center would incorporate sustainable “green” building design including low shielded outdoor lighting. Unlike Alternative B, the road system at English Camp would remain as it is keeping the primitive character of the road, but with some modest improvements to handle increased two-way traffic.

ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The “environmentally preferred” alternative is the NPS selected action (Alternative C in the *San Juan Island National Historical Park Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement*). The selected action provides management strategies that are environmentally responsible, ensuring that future generations will be able to enjoy its resources

Environmentally preferred is defined as the course of action that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in §101 of the National Environmental Policy Act, which states that “...it is the continuing responsibility of the Federal Government to...

- 1) fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
- 2) assure for all generations safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
- 3) attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk of health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences;
- 4) preserve important historic, cultural and natural aspects of our national heritage and maintaining, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice;
- 5) achieve a balance between population and resource use that will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities; and
- 6) enhance the quality of renewable resources and approaching the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.”

Alternative A (the No Action Alternative) would continue ongoing management of programs and actions. The park would continue to be managed in accordance with approved plans and policies. Cultural resources would continue to be protected and preserved; however, no additional historic structures would be opened to the public. Natural resources would continue to be managed as a critical element of the cultural landscape as well as for public recreational opportunities.

Alternatives B and C both call for expansion of cultural and natural resource management to enhance protection of resources. Additional measures would be employed to enhance the cultural landscape and to restore the orchards and prairie. More historic buildings would be opened to the public, providing new visitor opportunities and personal connections with park resources.

Interpretation of natural resources topics, including fire management, wildlife, and exotic species, would expand in Alternatives B and C. Prairie restoration would also be expanded in both alternatives, allowing the opportunity for additional preservation and interpretation of this rare Northwest resource. The park would also work cooperatively with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the protection of the island marble butterfly and others, such as Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in the management of the intertidal areas.

In both alternatives, there would be expanded recreational opportunities emphasizing non-motorized multi-use trails for bicyclists and hikers. New infrastructure, such as improved roads and parking, and conversion of temporary visitor facilities to permanent structures would also improve public access to park resources.

Alternatives B and C differ the most in the extent of development, and site disturbance of the new visitor center and its location, as well as certain other features, such as the location of the educational camp and the emphasis on cooperative partnerships to increase marine resource protection, to protect endangered species and to address the potential impacts of global climate change.

While Alternatives B and C both call for a permanent visitor center to replace the temporary double-wide trailer at American Camp, Alternative B proposes construction closer to the historic scene, which would improve access for visitors, but which would also create additional impacts by developing a previously undeveloped area. The visitor center in Alternative B would also include a collections study room for some museum collections, whereas in Alternative C the collections study room could be located at either the permanent visitor center or at park headquarters in Friday Harbor. Alternative B also proposes a loop road through English Camp to improve visitor access, including visitor safety, but which would also result in additional impacts to resources. A small maintenance building would also be constructed in this alternative.

Historic structures, such as the Crook house, hospital, officer's quarters, and others would be treated differently in Alternatives B and C. In Alternative B, the Crook house would be preserved both inside and out, with a visitor contact station on the first floor and administrative offices on the second floor. In Alternative C it would become an exterior exhibit with perhaps some flexibility for adaptive use in the future if remedial actions are successful. In Alternative C, two buildings at the park, the officer's quarters and the hospital, would be opened to visitation, instead of being exterior exhibits only as in Alternative B. Alternative C would also include the possible repatriation of historic buildings located elsewhere on the island that have maintained integrity since their removal from the camps.

Both alternatives would improve parking and access to a number of park areas, including Young Hill, Pickett's Lane, Jakle's Lagoon, South Beach, Fourth of July Beach, and the Mount Finlayson trailhead.

Alternative C also enhances visitor access to both American and English camps by replacing the visitor center on the existing site with a larger, permanent structure and improving the existing entrance road to English Camp by adding turnouts that would allow for safer two-way traffic flow. The modified access road (compared to Alternative B) would have fewer impacts while still providing similar long-term benefits to visitors.

Alternative C also includes some key elements for long-term resource protection, including developing a cooperative management plan for Westcott and Garrison bays, seeking to exchange the tidelands with the DNR, establishing a Marine Preserve, and actively participating in the Climate Friendly Parks program.

Alternative C includes the park taking a more active role to support county efforts to implement the concept of an Old Military Road Trail connecting the camps as part of an island-wide trail system which would improve public access and provide new recreation opportunities.

After careful review of potential resource and visitor impacts and assessing proposed mitigation for cultural and natural resource impacts, the environmentally preferred alternative is deemed to be Alternative C. This alternative clearly surpasses Alternative A in realizing the six goals stated above. While Alternative B is similar in many respects to Alternative C, Alternative C overall provides the highest level of protection of cultural and natural resources while allowing for human use and enjoyment of park resources. Taken as a whole, this alternative is environmentally preferred because it would best meet all six goals stated in the National Environmental Policy Act.

FINDINGS ON IMPAIRMENT OF PARK RESOURCES AND VALUES

The NPS may not allow the 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 the opportunities that otherwise would be present for the enjoyment of those resources or values. In determining whether an 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 National Park Service has the 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 and Environmental Impact Statement* and public comments received, the NPS has determined that implementation of the selected action will not constitute an impairment to San Juan Island NHP's resources and values. Provisions in the selected alternative are incorporated to protect and enhance the park's cultural and natural resources, and provide for high-quality visitor experiences. Overall, the selected alternative will have beneficial effects on such resources as cultural landscapes, historic buildings and structures, archeological resources, native prairie, vegetation, and wildlife habitat.

No major long-term adverse impacts to the park's resources or the range of visitor experiences and no irreversible commitments of resources are expected. While the selected action will have some adverse effects on park resources, most of these impacts will be localized, minor to moderate, or short-term impacts. None of the foreseeable environmental consequences of the selected alternative will adversely affect resources or values to a degree that will prevent the NPS from fulfilling the purposes of San Juan Island NHP, threaten the natural integrity of the park, or eliminate current or future opportunities for people to enjoy the park.

MEASURES TO MINIMIZE ENVIRONMENTAL HARM

The NPS has investigated all practical measures to avoid or minimize environmental impacts that could result from the selected action. Measures to avoid or minimize environmental harm have been identified and incorporated into the selected action as described in the *Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement*. Key measures to minimize environmental harm include:

Management of Cultural Resources

- The protection of San Juan Island National Historical Park's cultural resources is essential for understanding the past, present, and future relationship of people with the park environment and the expressions of our cultural heritage. The park would pursue strategies to protect its cultural resources that would allow the integrity of the park's cultural resources to be preserved unimpaired. They would also ensure that the park is recognized and valued as an outstanding example of resource stewardship, conservation education and research, and public use.

Cultural Landscapes and Historic Buildings and Structures

- All project work relating to cultural landscapes and historic buildings/structures would be conducted in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. Typical mitigation measures include measures to avoid adverse impacts, such as rehabilitation and adaptive reuse for historic buildings/structures, designing new development to be compatible with surrounding historic properties, and screening new development from surrounding historic resources and cultural landscapes to minimize impacts.
- When a building's original use can not be accommodated, adaptive use is the best strategy to ensure that buildings remain in good condition. When not being adaptively used, the next best approach for preserving these structures is regular preservation maintenance, which ensures that roofs and walls as well as supporting structural elements are maintained in a sound, weather-resistant condition. An example of adaptive use is using historic structures to house park operations.

Archaeological Resources

- Archaeological surveys would precede any ground-disturbing activity in a proposed project location. Proposals for project locations are based upon existing knowledge of distribution of archeological resources and known archeological resources would be avoided to the greatest extent possible. If National Register eligible or listed archaeological resources could not be avoided, an appropriate mitigation strategy would be developed in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer and associated American Indian tribes, as appropriate.

Museum Collections

- Mitigation measures related to museum collections consist of conservation of a collection through proper storage, handling, and exhibit of objects as specified in the NPS Museum Handbook and NPS Director's Order – 24, Museum Collections Management.

Traditionally Associated Peoples

- The NPS would continue to consult with culturally associated Native American tribes on a government-to-government basis to identify ethnographic resources and develop appropriate strategies to mitigate impacts on these resources. Such strategies could include continuing to provide access to traditional use or spiritual areas and screening new development from traditional use areas to minimize impacts on ethnographic resources.
- Consultation with Native Americans linked by ties of kinship, culture, or history to park lands would address the inadvertent discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony, and all provisions outlined in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 USC 3001) of 1990 would be followed.

Management of Natural Resources

Air Quality

- The NPS would implement a dust abatement program. Standard dust abatement measures could include the following elements: using water or other soil stabilizers, covering haul trucks, employing low speed limits on unpaved roads, minimizing vegetation clearing, and revegetating with native species.
- NPS vehicle emissions would be minimized by using the best available technology whenever possible.
- The NPS would encourage the public and commercial tour companies to employ methods that reduce emissions, including reducing idling of vehicles.
- Sustainable designs that reduce energy demands would be employed, thus reducing pollutant production.
- NPS would develop and implement an equipment emissions mitigation plan to reduce diesel particulate, carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, and NOx associated with construction activities in the park. The equipment emissions mitigation plan would require that all construction related engines are tuned to the engine manufacturer's specifications in accordance with an appropriate time frame; do not idle for more than five minutes (unless it is necessary for the particular operation); are not tampered with in order to increase engine horsepower; and include particulate traps, oxidation catalysts and other suitable control devices on all construction equipment used at the project site.

Soundscapes / Natural Quiet

- The NPS would implement standard noise abatement measures during park operations, including: scheduling to minimize impacts in noise-sensitive areas, using the best available noise control techniques wherever feasible, using hydraulically or electrically powered impact tools when feasible, and locating stationary noise sources as far from sensitive areas as possible.
- The NPS would locate and design facilities to minimize objectionable noise.
- Idling of motors would be minimized when power tools, equipment, and vehicles are not in use.
- The NPS would muffle above ambient noise whenever possible to reduce noise impacts.

Night Skies (Lightscapes)

- Existing outdoor lighting in the park would be replaced with fixtures (directed inward and downward) that do not contribute to night sky light pollution.
- The NPS would use energy-efficient, low-impact lighting, such as diffused light bulbs, and techniques such as down-lighting, to prevent light spill and preserve the natural lightscape.

Hydrologic Systems including Wetlands

- As noted in the Final EIS (p. 126), each of the intermittent lakes, streams and creeks draining into Westcott and Garrison Bays are not within the boundaries of San Juan Island NHP. There are no intermittent lakes or streams elsewhere in the park. Consequently there are no §303(d) listed features within the park boundary. As a precautionary measure, any project undertaken adjacent to or near such features would be timed to occur during the dry season, usually late summer, and the NPS will employ appropriate best management practices.
- The NPS will develop sediment control and prevention plans for projects that could affect water quality, implement erosion control measures to minimize discharge to nearby water bodies, and regularly inspect construction equipment for leaks of petroleum and other noxious materials to prevent water pollution.
- Runoff control systems will be integrated into designs of parking areas and other developments near water features to minimize water pollution; low impact development (LID) techniques will be used for stormwater management.
- Prior to undertaking projects necessary to implement the GMP, the NPS will delineate wetlands and appurtenant sensitive areas, and perform project activities in a manner conducive to avoiding or minimizing water quality impacts caused by equipment and erosion or siltation.
- In planning individual projects, the NPS will undertake watershed analysis prior to design approval, and proposed activities will be evaluated based on occurrence of surface water, ponds, seeps, springs, and wetlands.

Soils

- New facilities would be built on soils suitable for development. Minimize soil erosion by limiting the time that soil is left exposed and by applying other erosion control measures, such as erosion matting, silt fencing, and sedimentation basins in construction areas to reduce erosion, surface scouring, and discharge to water bodies. Once work is completed, revegetate construction areas with appropriate native plants in a timely period.

Vegetation

- The NPS would monitor areas used by visitors for signs of native vegetation disturbance. Public education, revegetation of disturbed areas with native plants, erosion control measures, and barriers would be used to control potential impacts on plants from erosion or creation of social trails.
- The NPS would develop revegetation plans for disturbed areas and require the use of genetically appropriate native species. Revegetation plans should specify species to be used, seed/plant source, seed/plant mixes, site-specific restoration conditions, soil preparation, erosion control, ongoing maintenance and monitoring requirements, etc. Salvaged vegetation should be used to the extent possible.
- The NPS would implement a noxious weed control program. Standard measures could include the following elements: use only weed-free materials for road and trail construction, repair, and maintenance; ensure equipment arrives on site free of mud or seed-bearing material; certify all seeds and straw material as weed-free; identify areas of noxious weeds pre-project; treat noxious weeds or noxious weed topsoil before construction (such as topsoil segregation, storage, herbicide treatment); when depositing ditch spoils along the roads, limit the movement of material to as close as possible to the excavation site; scrupulously and regularly clean areas that serve as introduction points for invasive plants (campgrounds, staging areas, and maintenance areas); revegetate with genetically appropriate native species; inspect rock and gravel sources to ensure these areas are free of noxious weed species; and monitor locations of ground-disturbing operations for at least three years following the completion of projects.

Wildlife and Fish

- Techniques would be employed to reduce impacts on fish and wildlife, including visitor education programs, restrictions on visitor and park activities, and law enforcement patrols.
- The NPS will implement a wildlife protection program. Standard measures would include project scheduling (season and/or time of day), project monitoring, erosion and sediment control, fencing or other means to protect sensitive resources adjacent to project areas, disposing of all food-related items or rubbish, salvaging topsoil, and revegetating.
- The NPS will consult with National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration Fisheries Service for projects within essential fish habitat.

Special Status Species

- Mitigation actions will occur during normal park operations as well as before, during, and after projects to minimize immediate and long-term impacts on rare, threatened, and endangered species. These actions may vary by project area, and additional mitigation measures may be added depending on the action and location. Many of the measures listed for vegetation, wildlife, and water resources would also benefit rare, threatened, and endangered species by helping to preserve habitat.
- Facilities/actions/operations would be located and designed to avoid or minimize the removal of rare, threatened, and endangered species habitat. If avoidance is infeasible, the NPS would minimize and compensate for adverse effects as appropriate and in consultation with the appropriate resource agencies.
- Work will be planned to occur in areas in or near suitable threatened and endangered bird habitat as late as possible in the summer/fall.
- The NPS will conduct work outside of critical periods for the specific species when possible.
- Restoration and/or monitoring plans would be developed and implemented as warranted. Plans should include methods for implementation, performance standards, monitoring criteria, and adaptive management techniques.
- Measures would be implemented to reduce adverse effects of nonnative plants and wildlife on rare, threatened, and endangered species.
- The NPS will conduct surveys and monitoring for rare, threatened, and endangered species as warranted.
- Critical habitat features, such as nest trees, would be protected and preserved whenever possible.
- The NPS will strictly adhere to all elements of the *Conservation Agreement and Strategy for the Island Marble Butterfly*.

Management of Scenic Resources

Mitigation measures are designed to minimize human-made visual intrusions. These include the following:

- Where appropriate, use structures such as boardwalks and fences to route people away from sensitive natural and cultural resources while still permitting access to important viewpoints.
- The NPS would design, locate, and construct facilities to minimize adverse effects on natural and cultural resources and visual intrusion.
- Vegetative screening would be provided, where appropriate, to protect significant views or vistas.

Sustainable Design and Aesthetics

- All construction projects will use sustainable practices and resources whenever practicable by recycling and reusing materials, by minimizing materials, by minimizing energy consumption during the project, and by minimizing energy consumption throughout the lifespan of the project.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The GMP planning team provided a number of opportunities for the public to participate in the San Juan Island NHP general management planning process. Throughout the conservation planning process, the NPS has diligently engaged the public in the development of the general management plan.

A Notice of Intent officially announcing preparation of the DEIS and general management plan process was published in the *Federal Register* on February 5, 2003. The NPS organized an interdisciplinary planning team to identify a broad spectrum of issues to be addressed in updating the GMP (the last GMP was prepared in 1979). The public scoping phase began in March 2003 when the NPS produced and distributed an initial newsletter announcing the start of the planning process and soliciting feedback on issues to be addressed in the plan. The newsletter was directly mailed to the park's 216 person mailing list. In addition, 4,000 copies of the newsletter were inserted into *The Journal of the San Juan Islands* newspaper, which reaches approximately 3,000 island residents and approximately 1,000 residents off-island. An additional 2,500 copies were distributed to area libraries, civic buildings, business, churches, museums, universities, communities, dignitaries and elected officials. The newsletter was also placed on the park's website to reach a wider audience.

Three public workshops were held in April 2003, with two in Friday Harbor, Washington and one in Seattle, Washington. Presentations about the mission of the NPS and purpose and significance of San Juan Island National Historical Park were followed by small group work sessions that allowed people to present and discuss issues, experiences, and ideas for the park. Approximately thirty-nine people attended the San Juan Island workshops, and an additional four participated in the Seattle workshop. Eighteen written responses were also collected during the scoping period.

A second newsletter was produced in November 2003 summarizing the comments received, written and verbal, during the scoping period. The comments covered a broad range of issues, concerns, personal experiences, and recommendations for the park. When compiled, over 224 different comments or ideas were represented. The comments can be broadly organized in the following topics: resource preservation and management; visitor experience and services; park facilities, operations, management and maintenance; and park administration and planning. Though many new actions and ideas were suggested by the public during this comment period, no new issues were identified.

The NPS's Notice of Availability was published in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 2008, announcing release of the draft GMP/EIS for public review. The EPA's notice of filing of the DEIS was published on January 18, 2008, formally initiating the public comment period (which was extended from March 13 until March 24, 2008). On January 14, 2008, 315 copies of the draft GMP/EIS were mailed to agencies, governmental representatives, organizations, and interested individuals. Print copies of the draft GMP/EIS were placed in the Friday Harbor and Anacortes public libraries to enhance the opportunity for public review; the document was also posted on the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment

(PEPC) webpage, and linked to the park's home page, allowing people to access the document and comment electronically.

A total of 2,000 newsletters were printed containing a summary of the draft GMP noting the public meetings and how individuals could obtain a full copy of the draft GMP/EIS. Each newsletter included a postage-paid return form for public comments. Newsletters were distributed to libraries, civic buildings, businesses, churches, museums, universities, communities, nonprofit organizations, and elected officials. The newsletter was also placed on the park's website and on the PEPC website.

Press releases were distributed and four newspapers—the *Journal of the San Juan Islands*, the *Anacortes American*, the *Skagit Valley Herald*, and the *Bellingham Herald*—placed advances in their papers and their online websites announcing the locations, times, and dates for the public workshops. The *San Juan Islander*, an online newspaper, also announced the public workshops.

In February 2008, the GMP planning team held three open houses in Anacortes, Washington and Friday Harbor, Washington. The purpose of the meetings was to provide an opportunity for the public to meet with the NPS planning team to discuss the draft GMP/EIS, clarify information, ask questions, and provide comments. Approximately 95 people attended the meetings and over one hundred comments were recorded during the sessions.

At the close of the public comment period, the NPS received a total of 30 pieces of written correspondence, including letters from agencies, organizations and individuals; "return forms" from the draft summary newsletter; entries to the PEPC website, and emails to the park. Comments were grouped into eleven broad categories, and of those categories, four major areas of emphasis emerged from the comments: alternative, resource preservation, and visitor experience and land protection/boundary. All substantive comments were considered in preparing the FEIS.

The EPA published a summary of their comments in the *Federal Register* on April 18, 2008; concerns were expressed about possible impacts to air and water quality, and additional data on current water and air quality within the park and mitigation for air and water quality impacts was requested. EPA rating for the plan was EC2, Environmental Concerns for Insufficient Information. The FEIS provided additional information to address EPA concerns.

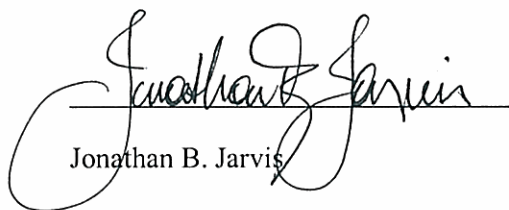
The EPA's notice of filing of the FEIS was published in the *Federal Register* on October 31, 2008, formally initiating the 30-days "no-action" waiting period. The park's Notice of Availability of the Final EIS was published in the *Federal Register* on November 3, 2008, announcing the release of the finalized document to the public. The NPS received a letter from the EPA (December 1, 2008) re-iterating previous concerns about water quality. These concerns are addressed in mitigation measures noted above under hydrologic systems. No other communications about the FEIS were received.

Throughout the conservation planning process, the public's comments and recommendations have provided the guidance for the GMP, represented in the purpose and significance of the park as well the interpretive themes and actions in the proposed alternative.

CONCLUSION

Among the alternatives considered, the selected plan (Alternative C) best protects park resources while also providing high-quality visitor experiences including effective educational and interpretive programs focused on San Juan Island NHP's significance, meets NPS goals for managing the park, and meets environmental policy goals. The selected alternative will not result in the impairment of the park's resources and values. The official primarily responsible for implementing the updated General Management Plan is the Superintendent, San Juan Island National Historical Park.

Approved: 12/5/08

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jonathan B. Jarvis", is written over a horizontal line.

Jonathan B. Jarvis

Regional Director, Pacific West Region