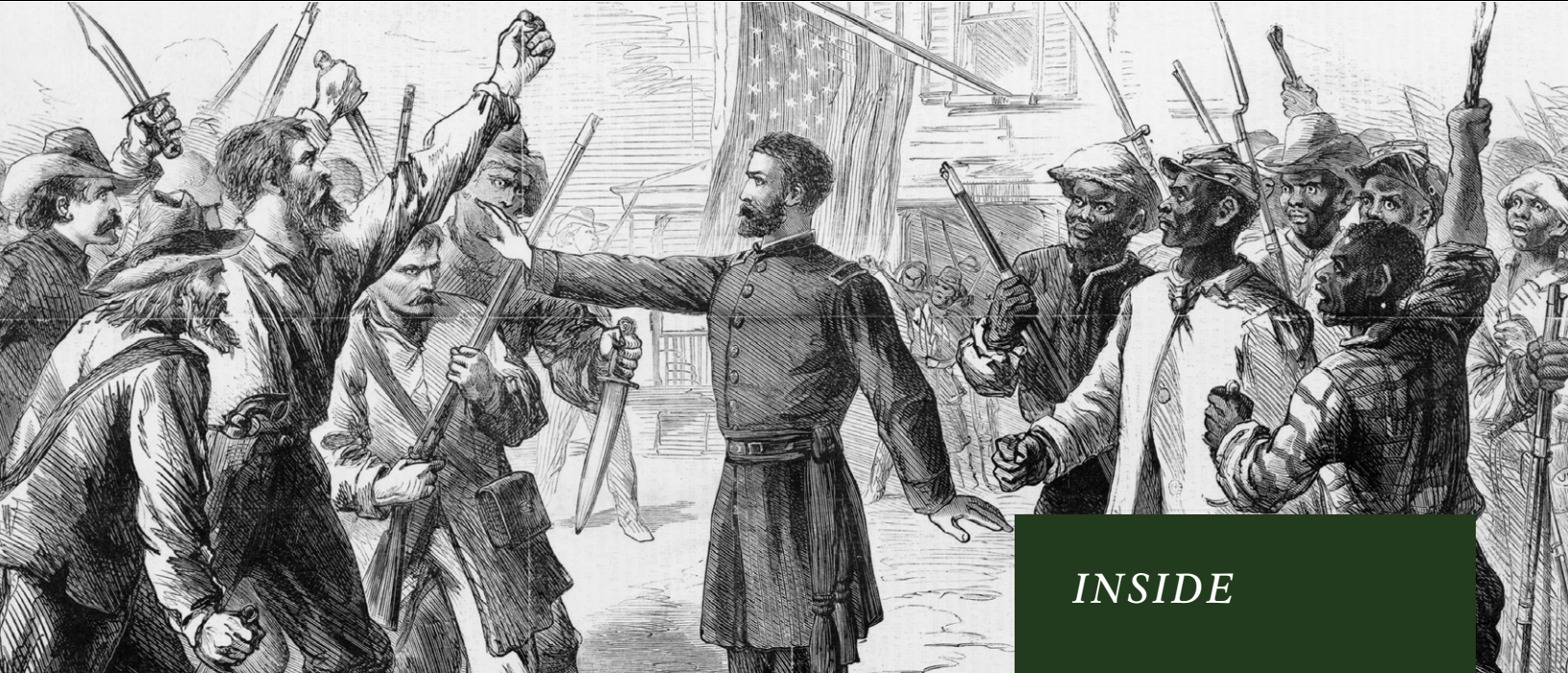


Reconstruction Era

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Historical Park
South Carolina



GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN NEWSLETTER

You're Invited!

The National Park Service (NPS) is requesting input on preliminary concepts for the general management plan for Reconstruction Era National Historical Park (NHP). As a new unit of the national park system, the national historical park needs to develop a comprehensive general management plan, a broad document that identifies the park's long-term goals and guides visitor experience, management, park facilities development, and park operations for the next 20 years and beyond. Please help inform the management of this outstanding resource by participating in the planning process and attending a public meeting. This newsletter provides background on the planning process and shares information about when the public meetings will occur and how to provide your comments. Thank you for being involved in this process!

Project Overview

Reconstruction Era National Historical Park was designated a national monument on January 12, 2017, to recognize the role Beaufort County, South Carolina, played in shaping the historic period of Reconstruction. In March 2019, the John D. Dingell Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (Public Law 116-9) redesignated the park from a national monument to a national historical park, expanded the park boundary, and created the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network, to be administered by the park. The nationwide Reconstruction Era National Historic Network includes sites and programs affiliated with the

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Reconstruction era, but which the National Park Service does not necessarily manage. The act also authorized the National Park Service to expand the boundary of the park within the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District and on Saint Helena Island and to accept administrative jurisdiction from the US Navy at Camp Saxton, described more fully later.

The current park boundary includes approximately 65 acres of land in three locations within Beaufort County. Of that, the federal government only owns and/or directly manages approximately 20 acres—some of that through preservation easements. Key places include the following:

- Portions of the Penn Center National Historical Landmark District on St. Helena Island, including a historic preservation easement around Brick Baptist Church and its associated cemetery (approximately 1 acre); Darrah Hall and an associated

easement (approximately 4 acres); and land abutting Capers Creek west of Darrah Hall (approximately 3 acres).

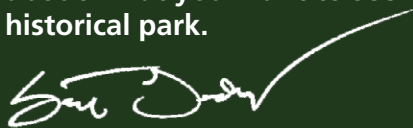
- A portion of historic Camp Saxton (approximately 12 acres) on Naval Support Facility Beaufort, which is under the administrative jurisdiction of the US Navy. Adjacent nonfederal lands at Fort Frederick Heritage Cultural Preserve are managed collaboratively with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Beaufort County.
- The Old Beaufort Firehouse (approximately 0.10 acre), within the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District in downtown Beaufort.

The collection of historic sites in Beaufort County, South Carolina, along with other nationally significant sites outside national historical park boundaries, provide a unique opportunity for

From the Superintendent

Dear Friends,

On January 12, 2023, Reconstruction Era National Historical Park celebrated six years since its creation as a national monument. The park has seen tremendous growth during that time, in large part because of strong community partnerships and engagement. The National Park Service has expanded operations and established a ranger presence at the Beaufort visitor center, Darrah Hall in the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District, and the Pinckney-Porters Chapel near Camp Saxton. Park staff and volunteers have made over 40,000 visitor contacts. More than 45,000 school children have learned about the park through online ranger programs, and 89 sites have been added to the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network. We are excited to embark with our partners, stakeholders, and the public on general management planning to guide the park for the next 20 years and beyond. Please take a few moments to review this material and let us know your thoughts about what you want to see in your national historical park.



Scott Teodorski,
Superintendent



visitors to understand the complex history and explore the places associated with the Reconstruction era.

The National Park Service and key partners kicked off this comprehensive planning effort in 2022. The National Park Service has limited land ownership within the park boundary, and partnerships are critical to sharing the story of the Reconstruction era. Consultation and coordination among partner organizations and key stakeholders has been vitally important to the planning process, and successful implementation of the park's general management plan will depend on continued coordinated efforts. The following key stakeholders for park planning and operations have helped to develop the preliminary options presented in this newsletter:

- Penn Center Board of Trustees and Advisory Board
- Brick Baptist Church
- US Navy at Naval Support Facility Beaufort
- South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
- Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor
- City of Beaufort
- Town of Port Royal
- Beaufort County
- Greater Beaufort-Port Royal Convention and Visitor's Bureau

General management planning is required for every unit of the national park system. This general management plan will ensure that the national historical park has a defined direction for resource protection and visitor use and ensure management actions over time are focused in that direction. The plan will consider previous planning work, public input received during this planning process, and planning priorities consistent with the national historical park's purpose.

This newsletter presents preliminary management concepts that will form the basis of the general management plan. Please consider sharing your feedback with us on these preliminary options and answering the questions below. We value your input and thank you for your time.

Preliminary Management Concepts for Reconstruction Era National Historical Park

Reconstruction Era National Historical Park is a collection of sites with a rich history and a wide network of managing partners. The general management plan will guide the National Park Service and partner organizations in cooperatively providing a cohesive visitor experience within the park boundary that meets this management vision:

Reconstruction Era National Historical Park and its partners provide leadership in fostering an understanding and appreciation of the period from 1861 to 1900, when America struggled to extend the promise of life, liberty, and equal protection of the law to millions of newly freed African Americans. The park provides the opportunity to contemplate and debate the successes and failures of the second founding of America.

To achieve this overall vision, the park has worked with partners to establish preliminary "management concepts" that lay a framework for WHAT should be achieved (desired conditions) in the park and HOW it can be accomplished (management strategies). The planning team crafted preliminary management concepts that apply parkwide, as well as to each of the three current operational areas within it (the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District, the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District, and Camp Saxton). You can learn more about these areas in the sections below.



As you review the preliminary management concepts in this newsletter, please think about how you would like the National Park Service to manage the park. Consider sharing your feedback on the following questions:

- What kinds of activities do you currently enjoy at the park? What types of park activities and experiences do you want to see in the future?
- What is your vision for future park management, and how should we preserve important resources?
- What local community organizations or initiatives are you aware of that the park could partner with to advance stewardship and preserve resources?
- How would you prefer to access the different locations that make up the park?
- What specific steps could the National Park Service take to improve your experience or the resources at the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District, in the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District, or at Camp Saxton? What opportunities would you like to see available in each location?
- What do you like or dislike about the preliminary management options described in this newsletter?

Preliminary Parkwide Management Concept

Preliminary Parkwide Desired Conditions

The following sections identify preliminary desired conditions, or aspirations, for what the National Park Service hopes to achieve by implementing the general management plan. Partner organizations assisted with developing these desired conditions, as the National Park Service does not have direct management authority over the entirety of the park's legislated boundary. Much of the park's future success is dependent on partnerships to implement its future management goals.

Partnerships

- Park partnerships ensure the preservation and public appreciation of Reconstruction era resources within the park and beyond its boundaries.
- Partnerships define roles and interpretive focus for managers and ensure consistent public messaging, access, and appreciation of Reconstruction era history and Beaufort County resources.
- Partnerships offer expertise from a wide range of lived experiences to inform long-term management and interpretation of resources.

Visitor Use and Experience

- All visitors can experience the park's fundamental resources and values regardless of physical abilities.
- Multimodal and sustainable transportation options connect visitors of all abilities to and between sites in a safe manner.
- Trails, infrastructure, and wayfinding provide physical and interpretive connections for visitors within park boundaries and between associated resources outside of boundaries.
- A site's ownership does not diminish the ability to experience and understand its history and, to the extent feasible, opportunities for public access.
- Access to the water allows for recreation and reflection.

Resource Protection

- To the extent feasible, the National Park Service, local governments, adjacent property owners, and park partners coordinate the development of surrounding park property to ensure the protection of cultural, historic, and natural landscapes. The National Park Service protects cultural resources related to the Reconstruction era and provides information on NPS resource preservation standards to managers outside the park boundary when requested.
- Park facilities and staff operations respond to increasing climate risks. Facilities are designed to reduce impacts from flooding or storm surge.
- There is sufficient understanding of the history, significance, and conditions of properties that are within the park boundary, but not managed by the National Park Service, to consider property acquisitions that could tell a more complete story of Reconstruction or support park operations and administration.
- To the extent possible, the National Park Service would establish maintenance and administrative operations in buildings and at sites that are not historic.

Facilities, Administration, and Operations

- Staff represents a wide variety of lived experiences.
- Park facilities are developed and maintained in an environmentally responsible and cost-effective manner that meets visitor and staff needs and promotes long-term fiscal and operational sustainability.

Preliminary Parkwide Management Strategies

The following tables detail preliminary parkwide management strategies to achieve desired conditions for partnerships, visitor use and experience, resources, and facilities administration and operations. These strategies would be executed in coordination with partner organizations.

Table 1. Preliminary Strategies for Partnerships

Strategy	Description
Partnership agreements	<p>Reconstruction Era National Historical Park and managers of associated Reconstruction era resources in Beaufort County would formalize and revisit partnership agreements on a recurring basis. These agreements formalize processes and collaboration in areas of resource protection, coordinated interpretive strategies, access (staff and visitors), research, work planning, and technical and financial assistance (as appropriate). Agreements would be established with the following partners (minimally, but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Penn Center and Brick Baptist Church• Beaufort County• The Town of Port Royal, Naval Support Facility Beaufort, and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources• The City of Beaufort• The Second Founding of America <p>The area-specific tables beginning on page 10 capture additional information on partnership opportunities and obligations at individual park sites.</p>

Table 2. Preliminary Strategies for Visitor Use and Experience

Strategy	Description
Accessibility (Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards)	The National Park Service would ensure compliance with Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards at sites throughout the park and identify access needs for visitors with vision, hearing, mobility, cognitive, and other impairments. The National Park Service would provide technical assistance to its partners, as appropriate, in meeting these standards.
Access and multimodal transportation	<p>Accessible routes would be provided between primary access points and major sites at all park locations.</p> <p>The National Park Service would collaborate with partners to develop a multimodal access route and provide safe access between park sites. Separated multimodal paths, shared roadway markings, or a combination of solutions could accomplish this strategy. The National Park Service would consult with partners to develop specific design solutions at each park location.</p> <p>The National Park Service would support and participate in a partner-led feasibility study to explore shuttle connectivity between visitor destinations in the county, including access to all park sites and other properties connected to the Reconstruction era.</p>
Wayfinding signage	<p>The National Park Service would implement recommendations of the master sign plan, when completed, and would evaluate opportunities for additional signage to support multimodal connectivity.</p> <p>The park would develop regional maps indicating car, bike, and potential shuttle routes.</p>
Water access	<p>The National Park Service would promote and develop recreational water access points at sites throughout the park and at associated partner destinations.</p> <p>The park would explore concession or commercial opportunities for water-based recreation and tours focused on Reconstruction-era history.</p>
Interpretation	The National Park Service would implement recommendations of the Reconstruction Era National Historical Park Long-Range Interpretive Plan (currently in development) and coordinate with site partners to ensure consistent interpretation and application of partner style guides in interpretive media across all areas in the park.
Wider Reconstruction-era interpretation	The National Park Service would work with partners, residents, and stakeholders to develop and pursue collaborative interpretive opportunities, a potential NPS presence, and multimodal visitor access to important Reconstruction-era properties on St. Helena Island and in and around the Town of Port Royal.
Technical support	When feasible and requested, the National Park Service would provide historic preservation technical support and advice to community partners who own or manage Reconstruction-era properties.

Table 3. Preliminary Strategies for Resources

Strategy	Description
Preservation of Reconstruction-era resources in Beaufort County	<p>The National Park Service would enter into agreements with partners to ensure protection and encourage the interpretation of Reconstruction-era resources throughout Beaufort County.</p> <p>The area-specific tables below capture strategies to support resource protection at individual park sites.</p>
Preservation and protection of park collections and archives	<p>Reconstruction Era National Historical Park would use museum storage space at Charles Pinckney National Historic Site and the Southeast Archeological Center to maintain and curate mandated museum collections and archives (archeological materials and federal records). As such, the park does not anticipate needing full-time curatorial support or local facilities and would continue to obtain that support elsewhere.</p> <p>The park would not compete with partner organizations on collections acquisitions, which would be documented in the park's the scope of collections statement (under development). The park would maintain acquisitions of nonmandated collections at Charles Pinckney National Historic Site or place them on display. The park's scope of collections statement could be modified in the future (every five years) to adjust to emerging needs.</p>

Table 4. Preliminary Strategies for Facilities, Administration, and Operations

Strategy	Description
Office space	<p>The National Park Service would consolidate primary office space for park staff (approximately 15 personnel) in a centrally located facility in Beaufort. The National Park Service would consider leases, partnerships, or acquisitions for facility selection.</p> <p>The National Park Service would establish minimal satellite workstations and administrative spaces at key park sites, as described in the tables below.</p>
Maintenance facility needs	<p>The National Park Service would establish a maintenance facility of approximately 40 feet by 75 feet in a central location on a nonhistoric landscape that would accommodate office and workspace for maintenance employees and park storage needs, including equipment to support maintenance activities at all park sites. The National Park Service would consider leases, partnerships, or acquisitions for site selection.</p>
Staff housing	<p>The park would consider opportunities to meet housing needs for temporary staff (e.g., volunteers, interns, and seasonal staff) through partnerships with local colleges or organizations (e.g., Penn Center, University of South Carolina Beaufort, YMCA).</p>
Diversity, equity, and inclusion	<p>The National Park Service would weave equity and inclusion into interpretation and themes throughout the park, including involving and engaging park partners, local businesses, contractors, and residents and potential concession and contracting opportunities.</p> <p>The park would use nontraditional hiring authorities to increase diversity of staff and would prioritize outreach efforts to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other programs in association with hiring recruitment, research opportunities, internships, and fellowships.</p> <p>Through relationships with African American history and cultural museums, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, relevant historians, and academics and through relationships with the Reconstruction-era Network members, the park would establish itself as a centralized source on Reconstruction-era interpretive and educational material.</p>

Preliminary Area-Specific Management Concepts

OLD BEAUFORT FIREHOUSE (BEAUFORT NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT)

Preliminary Desired Conditions

The National Park Service has developed preliminary desired conditions for the Old Beaufort Firehouse that consider its historic integrity and function as the anchor for the park's contact with visitors in the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District. The desired conditions are relevant to the firehouse and the wider national historic landmark.

Visitor Use and Experience

- The firehouse provides downtown Beaufort visitors the opportunity to understand the role of Reconstruction-era stories and legacies within Beaufort County, the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District, and throughout the nation.
- Reconstruction-related sites in the national historic landmark district have visitor orientation spaces for tours and self-discovery, and clear wayfinding and pedestrian connectivity exists between them.
- When possible, through acquisition or partnerships, visitors can experience not only exterior views but the interior spaces of buildings in and near the national historic landmark that are important to the Reconstruction era.

Resource Protection

- The National Park Service protects, to the extent feasible, the historic fabric and features of the Old Beaufort Firehouse and its relationship to the broader national historic landmark district while using the space to meet administrative, operational, and interpretive needs.

Preliminary Management Strategies

The preliminary management concept for The Beaufort National Historic Landmark District designates the Old Beaufort Firehouse as the primary initial contact point for visitors to Reconstruction Era National Historical Park. From there, visitors would be exposed to the history of the Reconstruction era and its lasting effects on American society. Visitors would also receive wayfinding to connect them with other parts of the park in Port Royal and on St. Helena Island. The firehouse would also be a starting point to experience more aspects of Reconstruction history in Beaufort, through tours of the wider Beaufort National Historic Landmark District. Tours would be park-guided, self-guided, or commercially led; and the landscape of the district, particularly areas with high concentrations of Reconstruction-era features, would feature enhanced pedestrian amenities and interpretive waysides. Most of the strategies in the following table depend on partners for implementation.



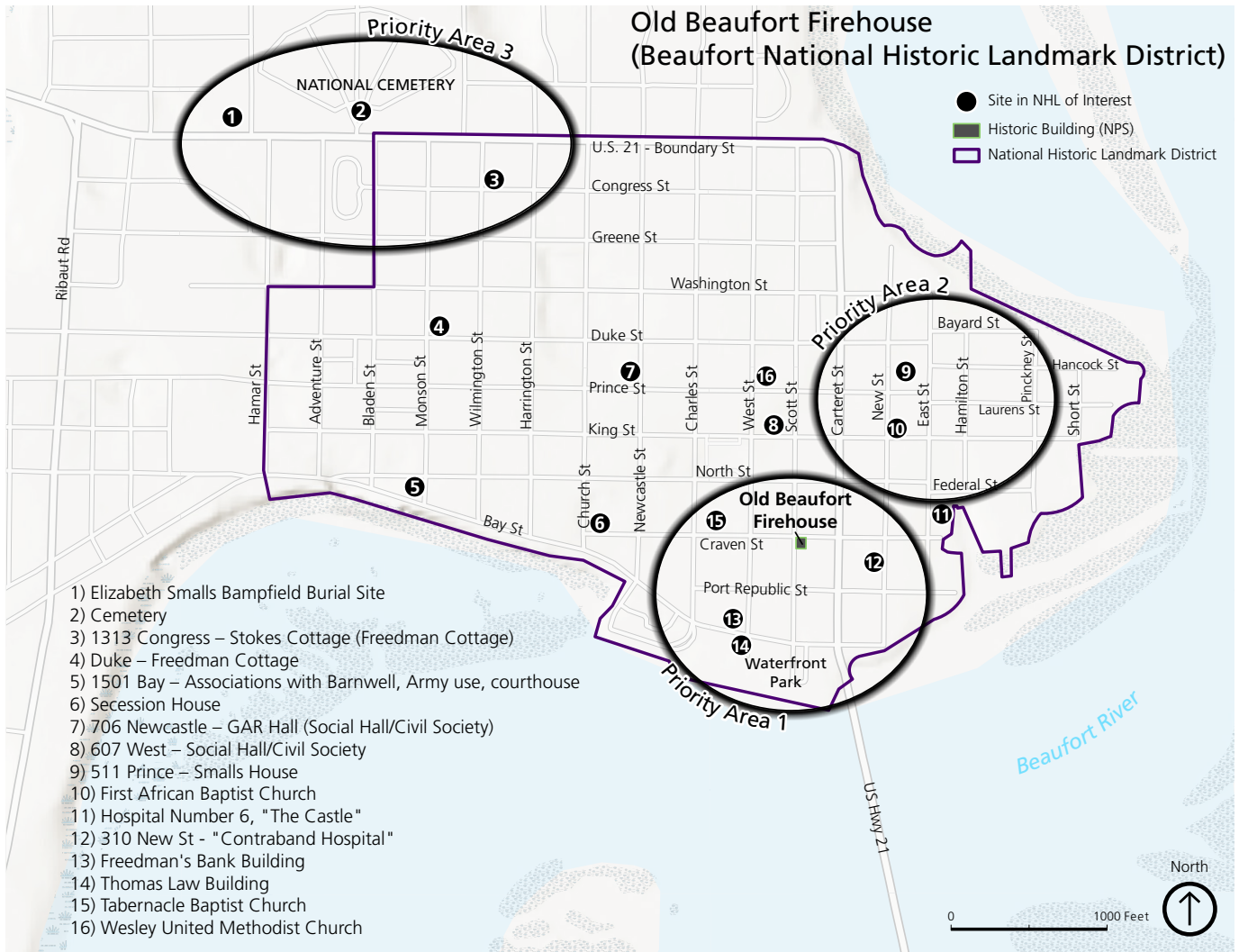


Table 5. Beaufort National Historical Landmark District – Preliminary Management Strategies

Strategy	Description
Resource protection	<p>The National Park Service would develop the Old Beaufort Firehouse to serve as the primary initial visitor contact center at the park while also providing workspace to support staff operations in the national historic landmark district. The firehouse would be accessible to visitors and staff of all abilities.</p> <p>The National Park Service would implement the recommendations of the Old Beaufort Firehouse Historic Structure Report and the park’s cultural landscape report during any construction or remodeling of the building or its grounds.</p>
Parking	<p>Visitors could use on-street parking or public parking lots in the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District. No designated NPS parking would be available. The National Park Service would seek to understand visitation trends as the general management plan is implemented and would continue to share visitation statistics with the City of Beaufort as they are refined.</p> <p>A formalized agreement or lease with a private or public entity would establish accessible parking for park staff. The National Park Service would obtain approximately 15 parking spaces, including permanent spaces for NPS vehicles.</p>
Expanded interpretation	<p>The National Park Service has identified three core areas within the broader Beaufort National Historic Landmark District that contain important resources associated with the Reconstruction era (see the map on page 9). The park would focus expanded interpretive efforts in these areas and would work with the city and partners to establish consistent interpretive waysides, pedestrian amenities (e.g., benches, tour stops, wayfinding), and tour operations related to Reconstruction-era history or resources. The park would also prioritize other specific properties (see the map on page 9) for interpretive opportunities via partnerships.</p> <p>Tours accessing the interpretive areas may be park-led, self-guided, commercial, or otherwise managed by partners. The National Park Service would aid partners and commercial tours by collaborating or providing training and technical assistance. National Park Service-led tours would not compete with commercial tour operations and would account for neighbor/public perspective. The National Park Service would work with the City of Beaufort and commercial tour operators to ensure that tour sizes did not exceed visitor capacities for these areas and properties.</p>
Partnerships	<p>The National Park Service would form formal partnerships with the City of Beaufort, owners of significant Reconstruction era-associated properties, and other relevant stakeholders to provide visitor access to Reconstruction-era sites. These partnerships could include many sites (see the map on page 9) but initially would include the following sites that participate in the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robert Smalls House • First African Baptist Church • Tabernacle Baptist Church • Wesley United Methodist Church • Mather School

DARRAH HALL AND BRICK BAPTIST CHURCH (PENN CENTER NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT)

Preliminary Desired Conditions

Three independent entities manage the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District: the Penn Center, Brick Baptist Church, and the National Park Service. The National Park Service recognizes the importance of working collaboratively with these entities to preserve resources and tell the important stories associated with the Reconstruction era that occurred within the national historic landmark district. Preliminary desired conditions for the Penn Center National Historic Landmark were developed in consideration that while the National Park Service directly manages Darrah Hall and has a preservation interest in the landscape and exterior conditions of Brick Baptist Church, the preservation and appreciation of the wider Penn Center National Historic Landmark District is invaluable to preserving the significance of the national park. The National Park Service developed these preliminary desired conditions with the Penn Center board of directors and the Brick Church congregation and are relevant to the federal properties within the Penn Center grounds and the wider national historic landmark district.

Visitor Use and Experience

- Visitors to the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District can experience the entire district in an unbroken manner, regardless of ownership and management. The district's primary point of visitor contact would be at the welcome center and museum; from there, visitors could self-navigate to their desired experiences.
- Consistent wayfinding and interpretive signage exists throughout the entire national historic landmark, allowing self-guided experiences.
- Darrah Hall continues to serve as an important place for the community to gather for events.
- Darrah Hall and other visitor contact points in the national historic landmark district convey the national stories of the Reconstruction era, complimenting existing and future

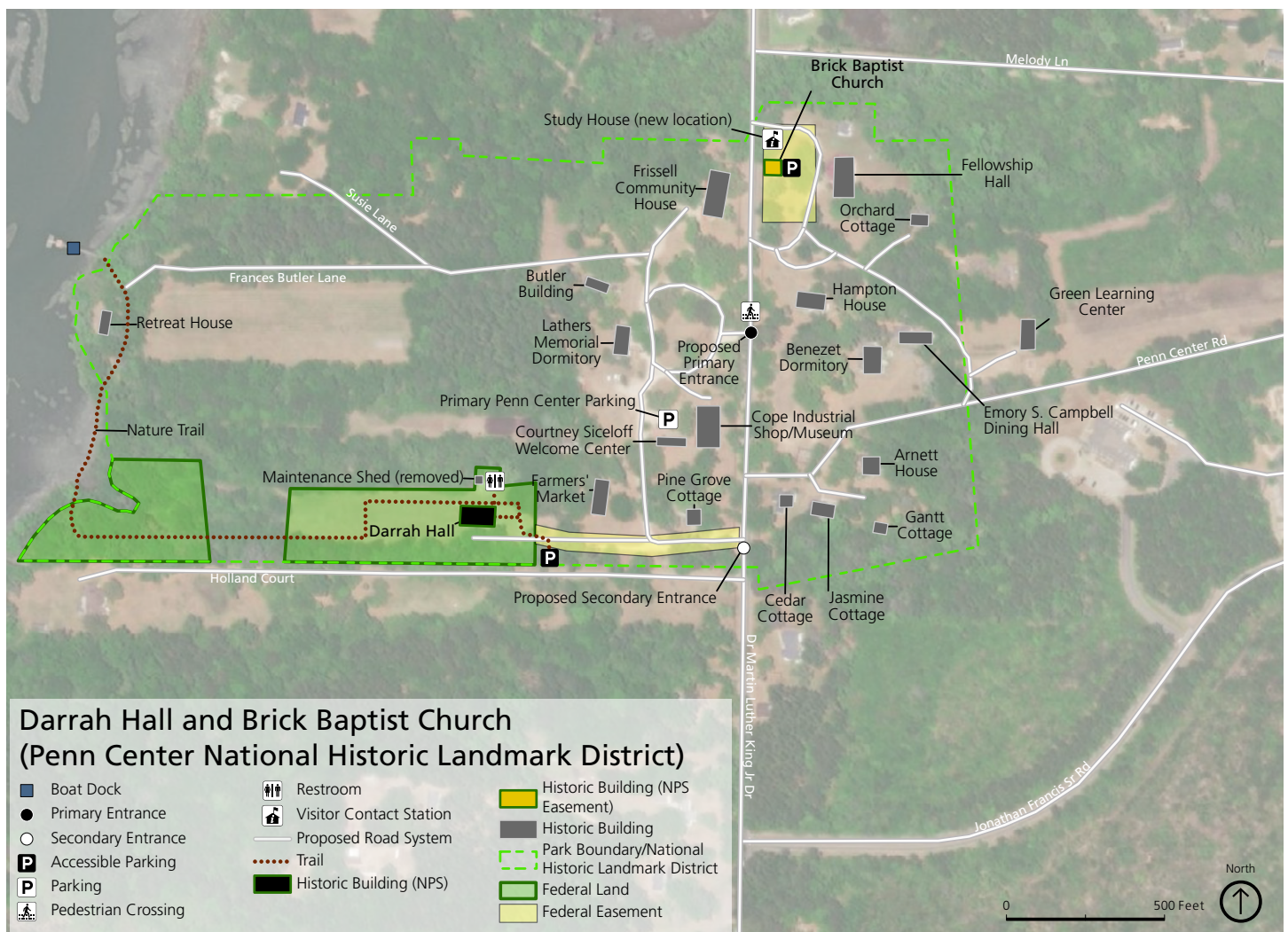


interpretation of the Penn Center and its significant and ongoing importance in the county's history.

- The Penn Center maintains its independent identity, and visitors understand the link between the democratic aspirations of Reconstruction to those of the modern civil rights movement.
- Visitors can safely access Brick Baptist Church and its landscape and experience its unique history and as an integrated component of the wider Penn Center landscape.
- Opportunities exist for self-directed discovery on the Brick Baptist Church landscape.
- An NPS presence exists at Brick Baptist Church to provide interpretive experiences. Guided access to the interior of the church is available, to the extent possible while respecting the needs of the modern congregation.

Resource Protection

- The archeological and cultural landscape, including Darrah Hall's and Brick Baptist Church's association with the greater Penn Center, is documented, understood, and protected.
- The Penn Center remains an independent and strong partner, and a collaborative and collective approach exists for managing the national historic landmark.
- The National Park Service and partners treat all historic structures and the cultural landscape in a way that is historically accurate and consistent across the entirety of the Penn Center.
- Protection and access to the natural environment and integrity of cultural landscapes are a priority. The National Park Service would follow best practices for national historic landmark viewshed protection whenever possible.
- The importance of water to the history of the site is recognized, and appropriate opportunities exist for recreational and contemplative water access.
- The cemetery, grounds, and other components of the landscape at Brick Baptist Church are maintained or restored to enhance the cultural and natural resources associated with the site.
- The exterior and interior appearance of Brick Baptist Church aligns with its historic appearance and configuration, as appropriate, and respects the needs of the current congregation.



Preliminary Management Strategies

The National Park Service's commitment to a partnership with the Penn Center and Brick Baptist Church recognizes and supports their independent management authorities and outlines collaborative opportunities to protect the historic integrity and significance of the national historic landmark district.

With that in mind, the preliminary strategy for the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District envisions opportunities for a seamless visitor experience across the entire national historic landmark. National Park Service operations would focus on Reconstruction-era stories and resources associated with the Penn Center and Brick Church and compliment the overall interpretation and use of the district. Wayfinding to and within the district

would be clear and consistent, directing visitors to a primary centralized entrance where they would begin their visit at the Courtney Sicehoff Welcome Center. There, visitors would be introduced to the complete history of the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District and its resources. Visitors could then navigate the district and seek further exposure to Reconstruction history at Darrah Hall and Brick Baptist Church. National Park Service programming, interpretation, and management of Darrah Hall and Brick Baptist Church would be complementary to visitor opportunities and the overall protection and commercial operations of the wider Penn Center National Historic Landmark. The following table presents individual strategies, many of which depend on partners for implementation.

Table 6. Penn Center National Historic Landmark District – Preliminary Management Strategies

Strategy	Description
Collaboration on joint operations and interpretation	<p>The National Park Service would work with partners within the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District (Penn Center staff and board of directors and the Brick Baptist Church congregation) to establish a collaborative management framework for operations and development within the district. Collaboration would include consulting on development projects, coordinating on management activities, communicating on interpretive strategies, and collaborating on other issues concerning joint operations throughout the campus. Partners would establish a process to formalize communication.</p> <p>To ensure a coordinated visitor experience, partners would establish a committee focused on visitor services and communication. The committee would focus on the following initial objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring a coordinated approach to interpretation and programming within the national historic landmark district (e.g., themes, tours, waysides). • Coordinating day-to-day operations and activities across the Penn Center campus, including use of NPS or Penn Center property and staff, parking, and joint operations. • Coordinating and communicating on special events and potential commercial use (NPS) and building rental (Penn Center). The National Park Service would allow special use in a way and manner as to not conflict with Penn Center visitation, operations, or special programming. The Penn Center would establish clear communications with the National Park Service on planned events and operations that could affect park operations. • Developing communication strategies to indicate and inform fee-based and non-fee-based areas and opportunities to the public.
Public access to Brick Church	<p>In collaboration with the church congregation, the park would establish hours for public visitation to the church interior. Park staff or congregation members would guide public access to the interior.</p>

Table 6. Penn Center National Historic Landmark District – Preliminary Management Strategies (continued)

Strategy	Description
Use of the Study House at Brick Church	The soon-to-be-restored Study House on the Brick Church landscape would serve as a visitor contact station and interpretive space that NPS employees would staff when the church is open to visitation or during special events. The Study House would also serve as a location for two to three satellite workstations for NPS staff and for minimal storage of administrative and interpretive materials.
Resource protection	The park would implement recommendations from the Darrah Hall Historic Structure Report and the park's cultural landscape report during any construction or remodeling of Darrah Hall and the immediate landscape. The National Park Service would provide technical expertise and support, as needed, for development projects on the Penn Center or Brick Church grounds.
Use of Darrah Hall	<p>Visitor services within the building would include guided tours and self-guided appreciation of exhibits. The building would be made available for special events and community programs in direct consultation with the Penn Center (see collaboration on joint management and interpretation on page 13).</p> <p>The park would relocate its administrative operations in Darrah Hall and on the surrounding cultural landscape to nonhistoric settings, including removing the modern maintenance shed and relocating workspace and storage to the Study House at Brick Church.</p>
Connectivity and trails	<p>The National Park Service and partners would implement the recommendations of the master sign plan to ensure safe and logical visitor routes between important features of the national historic landmark district.</p> <p>A path/trail leading from Darrah Hall to Capers Creek along the south side of the creek and ending at the Penn Center dock would be formalized. The park would establish waysides along the trail to interpret natural and historic features consistent with guidance in the long-range interpretive plan.</p> <p>The National Park Service and partners would coordinate with the county on needed pedestrian access, traffic calming, and safety improvements along Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, which passes through the center of the district.</p>
Parking and access to Darrah Hall and Brick Church	<p>Visitor parking at the Penn Center would be consolidated at the primary lot near the Courtney Siceloff Welcome Center. Pedestrian paths and unpaved roadways (as laid out in the master sign plan) would connect Darrah Hall to the main parking and the rest of the Penn campus.</p> <p>The primary Penn Center entrance would be prominently marked (see the map on page 12), and visitors would utilize the primary entrance. The secondary entrance to the east of Darrah Hall would be marked for buses and service vehicles only.</p> <p>The National Park Service would provide approximately 10 parking spaces for staff and visitors with mobility issues to the southeast of Darrah Hall and connected via an accessible path to Darrah Hall, the restroom facilities, and the nature trail. Overflow parking for special events and buses would be unmarked but available in the grassy field west of Darrah Hall.</p> <p>Parking at Brick Church would be marked for congregation use only during specific hours /days but available for Penn Center visitors during periods in which the church is open to visitation.</p>

CAMP SAXTON

Preliminary Desired Conditions

Camp Saxton is directly managed by the US Navy at Naval Support Facility Beaufort and by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Beaufort County at Fort Frederick Cultural Heritage Preserve. National Park Service interpretive rangers staff the Pinckney-Porters Chapel in Port Royal's Naval Heritage Park, just outside the main gate to Naval Support Facility Beaufort. The Town of Port Royal rebuilt the chapel in late 2020, and through an agreement, Reconstruction Era National Historical Park staff operates the site as a visitor contact station. The National Park Service developed preliminary desired conditions for Camp Saxton in consultation with partners (the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, the US Navy, the Town of Port Royal, and Beaufort County). The National Park Service can only conduct site operations and interpretation at Camp Saxton through partnerships and agreements.

Visitor Use and Experience

- Recreational opportunities, including low-impact, water-based opportunities, expose visitors seeking recreational experiences to the history and cultural significance of the area.
- A clear sense of arrival to Camp Saxton welcomes visitors and helps orient them to the site.
- The park's relationship with the local community, the historic farmers market, and the management of the Pinckney-Porters Chapel is maintained and preserved in a way that fosters a connection between the past and present use of the site.
- Visitor and administrative access to the site is maintained or enhanced while reducing or eliminating impacts to surrounding residents.
- Through strong partnerships, opportunities exist for accessing the US Navy-managed portions of Camp Saxton.
- Visitors have clear wayfinding for self exploration.

Resource Protection

- The extent of the archeological and cultural landscape resources at Camp Saxton and the historic freedman community are defined, understood, protected, and interpreted.
- The cultural landscape and archeological resources of historic Camp Saxton are protected and interpreted regardless of management.
- The natural environment is preserved in a manner that is reminiscent of Camp Saxton's period of historic significance with emblematic elements, such as trees and shoreline, that link visitors to the cultural heritage of the site.
- The National Park Service continues to work with partners to identify opportunities to manage and protect natural and cultural resources that are directly tied to the story of Reconstruction.
- The National Park Service studies and understands the Reconstruction-era resources in the US Navy installation so that if Navy operations change, the park is ready to protect important resources and enhance the visitor experience.
- The National Park Service and its partners understand and, when possible, mitigate future impacts to resources resulting from climate change.



Preliminary Management Strategies

The preliminary management strategies for Camp Saxton maximize and improve visitor opportunities for those seeking to experience the Reconstruction and Civil War history at the site. Visitors to Camp Saxton would begin their experience with interpretive exhibits and contact with a ranger at the Pinckney-Porters Chapel visitor contact station. Visitors would then access Camp Saxton via a guided tour along improved sections of Old Shell Road to Old Fort Road and into Fort Frederick Cultural Heritage Preserve. Visitors could occasionally access the Camp Saxton site from within Naval Support Facility Beaufort during special events. The National Park Service would coordinate resource protection

and further historical and archeological research at Camp Saxton with the US Navy until, and if, the National Park Service is able to acquire jurisdiction over the Camp Saxton site.

The preliminary management strategies for Camp Saxton provide opportunities to enhance and improve operations, interpretation, and visitor experience at the site under its current jurisdiction (without direct NPS management) and include strategies if jurisdiction would shift to the National Park Service in the future. The table below presents strategies that are dependent on the coordination of partners for implementation.



Table 7. Camp Saxton – Preliminary Management Strategies

Strategy	Description
Resource protection	<p>The park would conduct coordinated resource management activities with the US Navy, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and Beaufort County.</p> <p>Partners would establish formal agreements for archeological surveys and inventories of the Camp Saxton site to identify the extent of existing historic resources. The agreement would also identify the future ownership and curation responsibilities of archeological collections that would be created or already exist associated with Camp Saxton.</p> <p>The National Park Service would work with the US Navy to implement recommendations of the park’s cultural landscape report, as feasible.</p> <p>The National Park Service would work with the US Navy, the State of South Carolina, and Beaufort County on an assessment of climate change vulnerability and any adaptation or mitigation actions.</p>
Pinckney-Porters Chapel visitor contact station	<p>The National Park Service would continue the collaborative relationship with the Town of Port Royal to use the Pinckney-Porters Chapel as the primary visitor contact point for Camp Saxton.</p> <p>The National Park Service would staff the chapel on specified days and times, including during farmer's market events at Naval Heritage Park. The chapel would serve as the starting point for guided tours of Camp Saxton and would continue to house exhibits and one satellite workstation for NPS staff.</p>
Interpretation	<p>The National Park Service would provide technical assistance to Beaufort County and the US Navy to support installing interpretive waysides about Camp Saxton and Reconstruction history on county and US Navy property. Waysides would follow long-range interpretive plan recommendations and would be developed in consultation with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources to prevent conflict with interpretive media at Fort Frederick.</p>
Administrative boundary adjustment	<p>Should the US Navy seek to divest of the Naval Support Facility Beaufort property, the National Park Service would seek to accept jurisdiction of the areas identified in the map on page 16. These areas of Camp Saxton are least impacted by modern development. This area of interest could be adjusted if a future archeological survey identifies other significant resources within or adjacent to the US Navy property.</p> <p>The National Park Service would further implement relevant recommendations from the cultural landscape report once the property is under NPS jurisdiction.</p>
Pedestrian connectivity and visitor experience	<p>To improve pedestrian safety to and from Fort Frederick Cultural Heritage Preserve and the Pinckney-Porters Chapel visitor contact station, the park would work with partners to develop a pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Pinckney Blvd and Old Shell Road.</p> <p>The National Park Service would coordinate with the Town of Port Royal to improve pedestrian connectivity in the public right-of-way between the Pinckney-Porters Chapel and Fort Frederick Cultural Heritage Preserve. Improvements could include increased path widths, traffic buffers, surface improvements, and vegetative screening, as feasible.</p> <p>The park would work with partners to install temporary wayfinding and exhibits along the route from Pinckney-Porters Chapel to Camp Saxton/Fort Frederick Cultural Heritage Preserve.</p>

Table 7. Camp Saxton – Preliminary Management Strategies (continued)

Strategy	Description
Water access	The National Park Service would work with partners to create recreational water access at the site. Any commercial tours or water-based operations that originate in the park would be officially authorized by the National Park Service and/or Beaufort County.
Visitor access to Camp Saxton	Working with the US Navy, the park would establish a process for allowing predictable visitor access to Naval Support Facility Beaufort for interpretive programming at the historic Camp Saxton site. This process would require an agreement with the US Navy and may include access for special events, such as Emancipation Day. Additional access opportunities may be coordinated through the National Park Service by request.

Federal (NPS) Land Acquisition within the Reconstruction Era National Historical Park Legislated Boundary

General management planning offers an opportunity to consider national park boundary adjustments that may be necessary to protect park resources, improve public enjoyment, or to address operational challenges and needs. The legislated boundary of Reconstruction Era National Historical Park is large. The park has the authority to acquire lands adjacent to the park boundary on St. Helena Island (i.e., adjacent to the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District) and any land on St. Helena Island or within the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District with a historic connection to the Reconstruction era. The National Park Service can also accept administrative jurisdiction of any federal land adjacent to the existing boundary at Camp Saxton (i.e., within Naval Support Facility Beaufort).

While the park's legislated boundary may be large, most land within it is not under NPS management. Opportunities exist to formalize criteria for consideration of future acquisitions within the legislated boundary. The park's authorized boundary includes many parcels and historic structures that date to the Reconstruction era. The parcels are both publicly and privately owned, and many of them have some level of existing public access. In nearly all cases, the National Park Service would seek partnerships with current owners to enhance the properties' resource preservation and public appreciation, as opposed to acquisition of property. Federal acquisition of new lands

within the park's authorized boundary would only be considered under specific circumstances and when the properties (1) meet standards of national significance and integrity, (2) would be practical to acquire and manage effectively, and (3) display a uniquely significant connection to the Reconstruction era.

The National Park Service planning team developed a preliminary list of criteria for considering any future land acquisitions. Any property considered would need to display national significance associated with the Reconstruction era and fill gaps in the park's ability to preserve, protect, and interpret the history of the Reconstruction era more broadly. The National Park Service could consider singularly outstanding representative properties associated with one or more of the following topics for future acquisition:

- a site that served as a school for newly freed African American children
- a church that was established, or served a congregation, during Reconstruction
- a property that illustrates the impact of new opportunities for African American property ownership and the accumulation of generational wealth that began during Reconstruction

- a farm or farmland associated with African American land ownership and stewardship post-emancipation
- a property associated with African American vernacular architecture emerging post-emancipation
- a military site associated with African American service during the Civil War
- a site of governance or federal administration during the Reconstruction era and Port Royal Experiment—particularly sites associated with the management of property auctions and personal financial aspects of the Port Royal Experiment
- Undeveloped landscapes and waterfronts illustrating the historic conditions of the Beaufort area during Reconstruction

Has the planning team missed any important aspects of Reconstruction history that should be included in the park’s property acquisition criteria?

The Path Forward

Public engagement is an essential component of the planning process for the new national historical park. The National Park Service will gather input on potential management actions at the park, including at the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District, Beaufort National Historic Landmark District, and Camp Saxton. The National Park Service will then develop a draft general

management plan and share it with the public for additional feedback and comment (likely by the end of 2023). This step will include further consultation with interested stakeholders and other agencies.

Below are important steps in the planning process, along with anticipated time lines for completion.

FEBRUARY 22 – MARCH 22, 2023	Public comment period, with in-person meeting opportunities on March 1 and 2, 2023 (see details on page 20).
APRIL – NOVEMBER 2023	Incorporate public comments, and develop a draft general management plan.
DECEMBER 2023 (ESTIMATED)	Release the draft plan for public review.
SUMMER 2024 (ESTIMATED)	Finalize the general management plan.

HOW TO COMMENT

ON THE WEB (Preferred Method):

https://parkplanning.nps.gov/REER_GMP

BY E-MAIL:

reer_information@nps.gov

BY MAIL:

National Park Service
Denver Service Center
Attn: Reconstruction Era NHP GMP /
Charles Lawson
12795 West Alameda Pkwy
Denver, CO 80228

The 30-day public comment period on the preliminary concepts in the general management plan starts on February 22 and ends on March 22, 2023. The National Park Service will hold three in-person meetings to share information about the plan/planning process, gather input, and answer questions from the public:

Wednesday, March 1 at 5:30 p.m. – Darrah Hall
24 Penn Circle West
St. Helena Island, SC 29920

Thursday, March 2 at 1:00 p.m. – University of South Carolina Beaufort
801 Carteret Street
Sandstone Building, Room 124
Beaufort, SC 29902

Thursday, March 2 at 5:30 p.m. – University of South Carolina Beaufort
801 Carteret Street
Sandstone Building, Room 124
Beaufort, SC 29902

We Want Your Feedback!

NOTE: The National Park Service will not accept comments via fax or any other way than those specified on this page. Please also note that your entire comment—including personal identifying information such as your address, phone number, and e-mail address—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can request in your comment that we withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. The National Park Service will not accept comments submitted by individuals or organizations on behalf of other individuals or organizations.

While we welcome and appreciate all comments, the following suggestions may help you consider responses that will aid our shaping of the future of the national historical park:

- Focus on the questions presented on pages 4 and 19 and on the online commenting form: https://parkplanning.nps.gov/REER_GMP.
- Be as specific as possible in your suggestions.
- Include any questions about the process that remain unanswered for you.

