

available to public inspection all submissions from organizations or businesses and from persons identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations and businesses; and, anonymous comments may not be considered.

A public scoping Newsletter, providing a preliminary synopsis of the project status, will be distributed in early March. In addition, two public scoping meetings are scheduled to be held on April 4 (in Sausalito) and April 5 (in San Francisco); both will occur from 4–7:30 pm. For details on meeting location, to request being added to the project mailing list, or for other current information updates, please contact the GGNRA Negotiated Rulemaking Information Line at (415) 561–4728.

As a delegated EIS, the official responsible for approval of the Record of Decision is the NPS Regional Director, Pacific West Region; subsequently the official who will be responsible for implementation is the Superintendent, Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Dated: February 23, 2006.

Jonathan B. Jarvis,

Regional Director, Pacific West Region.

[FR Doc. E6–4544 Filed 3–28–06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4312–FN–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Final Environmental Impact Statement/ Fire Management Plan; Golden Gate National Recreation Area; Marin, San Francisco and San Mateo Counties, CA; Notice of Approval of Record of Decision

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Pub. L. 91–190, as amended) and the implementing regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR part 1505.2), the Department of the Interior, National Park Service has prepared, and the Regional Director, Pacific West Region has approved the Record of Decision for the updated Fire Management Plan for Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The formal no-action waiting period was officially initiated December 23, 2005, with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's **Federal Register** notification of the filing of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Decision: As soon as practicable the park will begin to implement as its updated Fire Management Plan the "Hazard Reduction and Resource

Enhancement through Multiple Treatments" alternative (also identified and analyzed as the *Preferred Alternative C* in the Draft and Final EIS). The selected plan update allows for the greatest number of acres to be treated annually while minimizing potential adverse resource effects of fire management activities. Alternative C utilizes prescribed burning and mechanical treatment strategies deemed to be appropriate for reducing fuel loads near developed areas. Expanded research will examine the role of these strategies in enhancing natural resource conditions, and will also be used to adaptively guide the fire management program and maximize the benefits to park cultural and natural resources. As documented in the EIS, this plan was also deemed to be the "environmentally preferred" alternative.

This course of action and two alternatives were initially identified and analyzed in the Draft EIS (distributed in March 2005); minor modifications were made based on public and agency review. The Final EIS was released in December 2005. The full spectrum of foreseeable environmental consequences was assessed, and appropriate mitigation measures identified. Beginning with early scoping, through the preparation of the Draft and Final EIS, numerous public meetings and agency consultations were conducted, and newsletter updates were regularly provided. Approximately one dozen written responses to the Draft EIS were received and duly considered. Key consultations which aided in preparing the Draft and Final EIS involved (but were not limited to) the California State Historic Preservation Office, California Coastal Commission, local air quality management districts, adjoining land managing agencies, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Marine Fisheries Service. Area residents, county and city officials, and interested organizations were contacted extensively during initial scoping and throughout the fire planning process.

Copies: Interested parties desiring to review the Record of Decision may obtain a complete copy by contacting the Superintendent, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Bldg. 201, Ft. Mason, San Francisco, CA 94123 or via telephone request at (415) 331–6374.

Dated: February 24, 2006.

Jonathan B. Jarvis,

Regional Director, Pacific West Region.

[FR Doc. E6–4545 Filed 3–28–06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

General Management Plan for Golden Gate National Recreation Area; Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties, CA; Notice of Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service is initiating the scoping process for preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement on the General Management Plan (GMP) for Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), including Muir Woods National Monument and Fort Point National Historical Monument, in the San Francisco Bay area of California. The GMP will provide a well-grounded, clearly defined direction for resource protection and visitor management throughout the area managed by GGNRA, including Muir Woods National Monument and Fort Point National Historic Site, and lands acquired since approval of the 1980 GMP.

Consistent with NPS Planning Program Standards and the Secretary of the Interior's "Four C's" (Consultation through Consultation, Cooperation, and Communication) the GMP will: (1) Describe the purposes, significance, and primary interpretive themes of the park; (2) identify the fundamental resources and values of the park, its other important resources and values, and describe the condition of these resources; (3) describe desired conditions for cultural and natural resources and visitor experiences throughout the park and for each management unit in the park; (4) develop management zoning to support these desired conditions; (5) develop alternative applications of these management zones to the park landscape (i.e., zoning alternatives); (6) address carrying capacity; (7) analyze potential boundary modifications; (8) ensure that the GMP recommendations are developed in consultation with interested stakeholders and the public and adopted by the NPS leadership after an adequate analysis of the benefits, environmental impacts, and economic costs of alternative courses of action; and (9) identify and prioritize subsequent detailed studies, plans and actions that may be needed to implement the GMP.

In addition, the GMP will: (1) Articulate park management

philosophy; (2) provide the foundation for managing park partnerships (which are critical to the successful future operation of GGNRA) and for coordinating and collaborating with adjacent public land managers; (3) provide a framework for continued public and partner stewardship of the park's resources; and (4) strive to foster an engaged constituency that will remain active in supporting the park in the future.

Scoping: Through the scoping process, the National Park Service (NPS) welcomes suggestions from the public regarding resource protection, visitor use, and management of the lands administered by GGNRA. This notice formally initiates the public scoping comment phase for the EIS process for the GMP update. All scoping comments must be postmarked or transmitted not later than 60 days after the publication of this notice—immediately upon confirmation of this date it will be announced on the park's GMP Web site (noted below). All written comments should be submitted to the following address: Brian O'Neill, Superintendent, GGNRA (Attn: GMP Team), Fort Mason, Bldg. 201, San Francisco, CA 94123 (or may be transmitted by electronic mail to goga_gmp@nps.gov or via Facsimile to (415) 561-4710).

A key purpose of the scoping process is to elicit early public comment on the GMP proposal in order to inform the development of the Draft EIS. In addition, the scoping process will help define issues or problems to be addressed in the GMP. The public is encouraged to provide comments and pertinent information on issues and concerns, goals and objectives, alternatives, and potential environmental impacts or mitigation strategies. At this time it is expected that 4 public meetings will be hosted during April 19-27, 2006. Detailed information regarding these meetings will be posted on the GMP Web site (see below). Following a short presentation regarding the project, all attendees will be given the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments to the planning team. The GMP Web site will provide the most up-to-date information regarding the project, including project description, planning process updates, meeting notices, reports and documents, and useful links associated with the project. The URL for the GMP Web site is: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/goga> (once at the site, click on project name and follow the instructions). Informational messages may also be accessed at (415) 561-4965.

It is the practice of the NPS to make all comments, including names and

addresses of respondents who provide that information, available for public review following the conclusion of the NEPA process. Individuals may request that the NPS withhold their name and/or address from public disclosure. If you wish to do this, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Commentators using the Web site can make such a request by checking the box "keep my contact information private".

NPS will honor such requests to the extent allowable by law, but you should be aware that the NPS may still be required to disclose your name and address pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Established in 1972, GGNRA is one of the largest urban national park areas in the world and one of the most highly visited units in the National Park System. GGNRA encompasses approximately 59 miles of bay and ocean shoreline in San Francisco, Marin, and San Mateo Counties, California, consisting of hay and ocean beaches, redwood forests, lagoons, control streams, marshes, military properties, and such well known sites as Alcatraz Island, Marin Headlands, Fort Mason, and two separately designated units of the National Park System—Muir Woods National Monument (established in 1908) and Fort Point National Historic Site (established in 1970). The current GMP for GGNRA was approved in 1980. In 1988, lands administered by GGNRA were included as part of the Man and the Biosphere Program which designated the Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve, a partnership of 13 protected areas within the greater San Francisco Bay area.

The total area within the boundary includes over 79,000 acres of land—approximately 47,000 acres are included in the GMP planning area. Other areas within the authorized boundary include lands and waters that are not administered by GGNR but have joint management concerns (for example, Mount Tamalpais State Park), those Federal lands within GGNRA that are managed by Point Reyes National Seashore (the area north of Bolinas-Fairfax Road), and those non-Federal public lands for which GGNRA holds an easement with certain rights and responsibilities (23,000 acres of City of San Francisco Watershed lands), as well as non-Federal lands for which GGNRA has no jurisdiction or management responsibility (private lands) but monitors development and use.

During the 25 years since the GMP for GGNRA was approved, GGNRA has

been subjected to many boundary, land ownership, and management changes. The park's authorized acreage has expanded from 35,000 to over 79,000 acres, and management responsibilities for some areas have been transferred to other units in the National Park System (i.e., San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, northern district lands, etc.). Other lands have been acquired by the National Park Service, and are now managed by GGNRA (i.e., Presidio, Fort Baker, San Mateo and Marin County lands, etc.). In addition, the park has been assigned new management responsibilities for areas such as easements over the 23,000 acre San Francisco Peninsula Watershed, former military lands, and leased tidelands. An updated GMP is needed to address these new land management responsibilities.

New planning is also needed to address changed conditions and better understanding of park resources and values. Since 1980, significant changes have occurred in public and National Park Service understanding and attitudes toward natural, cultural, and recreational resources that are managed by GGNRA. In 1980, the park was viewed primarily as an urban recreation area, and the emphasis of natural resource management was to preserve open space and natural character for the purpose of enhancing recreational opportunities within an aesthetic setting. Lands and water bodies that are within GGNRA are now highly regarded for their ecological and scientific values. Since 1980, 32 species known to occur in the park have been listed as threatened or endangered under provisions of the Endangered species Act.

Similarly, awareness of the park's cultural resources has expended significantly since 1980. Some structures that were initially proposed for demolition in the 1980 GMP have now been listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). In addition, the NPS better understands and recognizes the importance of the park's cultural landscapes. Cultural landscape inventories have identified 44 potential cultural landscapes within park boundaries that were not addressed in the 1980 GMP, and 11 cultural landscapes are now listed or have been determined eligible for listing in the NRHP.

Decision Process: At this time it is anticipated that the DEIS\GMP will be available for public review in 2009. Availability of the Draft EIS document will be formally announced through the publication of a Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**, as well as through local and regional news media, direct

mailing to the project mailing list, and via the Internet at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/goga>. Following consideration of all agency and public comment, a Final EIS will be prepared. As a delegated EIS the official responsible for the final decision on the proposed plan is the Regional Director, Pacific West Region, subsequently the official responsible for implementation of the approved plan is the Superintendent, Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Dated: March 20, 2006

Jonathan B. Jarvis,

Regional Director, Pacific West Region.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Extension of San Francisco Municipal Railway Historic Streetcar Service; Golden Gate National Recreation Area and San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park; County of San Francisco; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement

SUMMARY: In accordance with section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations (40 CFR parts 1500-08), the National Park Service is initiating the conservation planning and environmental impact analysis process for the proposed extension of the northern waterfront Municipal Railway Historic Streetcar Service. Beginning at Fisherman's Wharf, this proposed railway extension would serve visitors to two popular units of the National Park System—San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park and the Fort Mason area of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. This project is being developed in close coordination with San Francisco Municipal Railway and other City and County of San Francisco planning and transportation agencies.

Background: A congressionally-mandated Travel Study completed in 1977 recommended restoring the historic rail link between the Hyde Street Pier and Fort Mason to improve access to various National Park Service (NPS) sites. The rail line was subsequently abandoned (1980), and the area between Hyde Street Pier and the Fort Mason tunnel entrance was designated a National Historic Landmark District in 1987 (which is now encompassed in the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park created in 1988). Also, in the late 1980s

Federal highway funds originally intended for extending Interstate 280 were reallocated to a number of alternative transportation facilities along the Embarcadero including creation of an historic streetcar line along Market Street and the Embarcadero to Fisherman's Wharf. In 2000 this service was extended to Fisherman's Wharf, only .85 miles from the public-serving facilities at Fort Mason Center. The popularity of the historic streetcars, which currently serve more than 20,000 passengers a day, has resulted in public and private interest in extending the service, with the creation of the E-Line to Fort Mason.

The Municipal Railway (MUNI) currently operates historic streetcar service on Market Street and along the San Francisco waterfront (F-Line) to the line's existing terminus at Jones Street and Beach (in the Fisherman's Wharf area). The E-Line extension would begin at the terminus of the F-line and extend west to San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (NHP) and on to Fort Mason. The exact route has yet to be determined but would utilize either existing rail right-of-way routes confined to city streets or pass through NHP's Aquatic Park (at the core of the National Historic Landmark District) in order to reach the Fort Mason tunnel. It is anticipated that under all alternatives the railway line would extend through the tunnel and end in the area of lower Fort Mason.

The NHP is visited by approximately 4 million people annually and is currently served by very popular cable cars (often crowded at peak tourist times) as well as streetcar and bus lines. Fort Mason, home to the Fort Mason Center, houses more than 40 non-profit organizations offering more than 15,000 events a year and attracting upwards of 1.6 million visitors. The Fort Mason area is underserved by mass transit access, and as a result automobile-based visitation causes massive parking problems that affect surrounding neighborhoods. Furthermore, inadequate mass transit access makes it difficult for transit-dependent San Franciscans to enjoy the cultural and educational events offered at Fort Mason Center.

Development of Alternatives: At this time a full range of alternatives has not been confirmed. However, in order to be successful, any project selected would:

- Increase alternative transportation options for visitors to the NHP and Fort Mason;
- Serve a new cohesive recreation and cultural corridor along the northern waterfront;

- Enhance links for the City's lower-income population with all NPS sites and other northern waterfront attractions;

- Improve local and regional transit connectivity and decrease the need for automobile use and parking in historic and environmentally sensitive areas;

- Facilitate efforts to reduce the need for automobile-based trips to the National Historic Landmark District destinations by providing park visitors an attractive, non-polluting mass transit access;

- Avoid or minimize adverse effects on the National Historic Landmark District and related cultural and historic resources and waterfront values.

Scoping: This notice serves to formally open the public scoping comment phase for this planning process. The purpose of the scoping process is to elicit public comment on the proposed extension in order to inform the development of the Draft EIS. The public and interested organizations are encouraged to provide comment on issues and concerns, feasible alternatives, potential environmental effects and appropriate mitigation measures that would reduce project impacts. The public will have an initial opportunity to comment on the proposal by attending a public scoping meeting or providing written comments electronically via the internet or sending letters through the mail. All scoping comments must be postmarked or transmitted not later than 60 days after the publication of this Notice in the **Federal Register**—as soon as this ending date is confirmed, it will be announced on the project Web site (noted below).

The NPS anticipates hosting a public meeting in late March 2006 (complete information regarding this meeting will be posted on the project Web site). Following a short presentation regarding the project, the public will be given the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments to the planning team. The project Web site will provide the most up-to-date information regarding the project, including project description, planning process updates, meeting notices, reports and documents, and useful links associated with the project (the Web site is: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/goga>; once at the site, click on project name and follow Web site instructions). Written comments should be mailed to the following address: Superintendent—GGNRA, Attn: Rick Foster, MUNI Railway Extension Project Manager, Fort Mason, Bldg. 201, San Francisco, CA 94123. In addition to the project Web site, project updates or requests to be included on the Draft EIS mailing list