



Preliminary Alternatives

Dear Friends,

As you may know, the National Park Service (NPS) is engaged in an effort to develop an updated General Management Plan for Canaveral National Seashore that will set the direction for management of the national seashore for the next 15 to 20 years. We have begun a very exciting phase in the planning process — the development of alternatives. Alternatives are concepts that represent a range of opportunities for how the national seashore might look and be managed for resources and visitor experiences in the future.

In Newsletter #2 we summarized your comments regarding your vision for the protection and management of the national seashore. Along with recommendations from NPS staff, we have incorporated many of your ideas into the preliminary alternatives, which are described in this newsletter along with accompanying maps. There are three alternatives for action and one “no-action” alternative.

On each map, management zones are identified that describe desired conditions for resources and visitor experiences within specific areas of the national seashore. There are different combinations and proportions of management zones for each alternative based on the concept for each alternative.

Please review the alternatives and management zones and let us know what you like or dislike and if we have missed anything. With your comments, the planning team will reevaluate the alternatives, modify them as necessary, and develop a preferred alternative. The preferred alternative may be one of the four alternatives, it may include elements from several of the alternatives, or it may be an entirely new alternative. The modified alternatives and preferred alternative will then be presented and fully analyzed in the Draft General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, which you will have an opportunity to review and comment on.

We have provided a mail-in card for your ideas. You may also send comments over the Internet to: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/CANA>

I value your input regarding the future management of Canaveral National Seashore. Thank you for your time and effort.

Sincerely,

*Carol Clark
Superintendent,
Canaveral National Seashore*



You're Invited...

We hope you can drop in to one of the following open houses anytime between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Tuesday

June 12, 2007

NPS Headquarters
308 Julia Street
Titusville, FL

Wednesday

June 13, 2007

NPS Visitor Information Center
7611 South Atlantic Ave.
New Smyrna Beach, FL
Entrance fee into this area will be waived after 4:30 p.m. on this day.

Thursday

June 14, 2007

NPS Seminole Rest Site
(Main House)
210 River Road (and Palm Ave.)
Oak Hill, FL



Background

Canaveral National Seashore was created through congressional legislation on January 3, 1975, to preserve and protect the natural, scenic, scientific, ecological, archeological, and historical values and resources within the national seashore, and to provide for public outdoor recreational use and enjoyment of those resources.

The national seashore contains outstanding natural resource features, including 24 miles of pristine, undeveloped beach along the Atlantic coast; it is also prime habitat for 14 threatened and endangered species and provides nesting beaches for several thousand protected marine turtles.

Mosquito Lagoon, which encompasses more than two-thirds of the national seashore, is designated an estuary of national significance and outstanding Florida waters. This lagoon is one of the most diverse and productive estuaries in North America. The national seashore also contains cultural resources that reflect human history in the Florida peninsula from 2000 BC to early 20th century Florida settlement.

The Park Service partners with two federal agencies. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration owns approximately two-thirds of the national seashore, and much of that is co-managed with the adjacent Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, which is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) (see map on page 5). Along the Atlantic Ocean, the national seashore's boundary extends 0.5 mile into the ocean. For administrative purposes, the national seashore is divided into the Apollo Beach area, Seminole Rest and Bill's Hill areas, and the Playalinda Beach area. An information center is located in the northern part of the national seashore, and NPS headquarters functions are in a leased structure in Titusville. The Merritt Island refuge maintains a visitor information center in the southern portion of the national seashore.

There are two special mandates that pertain to the national seashore. The 1988 legislation provides for management of the lands known as Stuckeys for the primary purpose of establishing an administrative headquarters and visitor center within Volusia County, Florida. A 1975 agreement with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration transferred land at Bill's Hill to the Park Service for similar purposes and could also provide central access to the national seashore.

Information Gathering and Analysis

During initial public scoping you shared your thoughts, ideas, and concerns, and suggested future visions for the national seashore. NPS staff and the planning team have benefited from your insights and understanding of the national seashore. We have also consulted with our two partnering agencies, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We continue to communicate throughout the planning process with representatives from other federal agencies; American Indian tribes; and county, state, and local governments. In addition to these information-gathering efforts, we have incorporated information from other plans that might influence the *General Management Plan*, such as the recently prepared "Alternative Transportation Report."

All of the above information has been analyzed and used to develop the management zones and preliminary alternatives presented in this newsletter for your review and comment.



Major Issues

Based on public and partner comment and NPS concerns, the following questions were identified as major issues for the plan to address:

- What are the appropriate types of visitor activities and levels of access to natural and cultural sites?
- What opportunities exist to provide education and orientation so visitors recognize that they are in a national seashore and they understand the resources?
- What strategies should the national seashore use to minimize impacts on resources?
- What types and levels of facilities are needed to remain consistent with the national seashore's legislation, where are the most appropriate areas to locate functions and facilities, and what is the appropriate use of land at Bill's Hill and newly developed areas such as Seminole Rest?

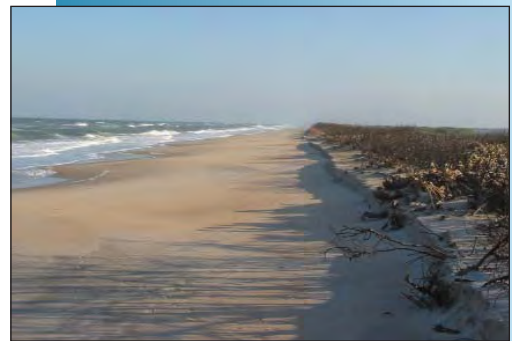


Development of Preliminary Alternatives and Management Zones

Both the National Environmental Policy Act and the NPS planning process require development and evaluation of a range of alternatives to compare the advantages of one course of action over another. The alternatives provide guidance for protecting resources, meeting the needs of our visitors, and addressing the concerns of neighbors and partners. Consistent with the national seashore's legislated purpose, your input, and consultation with other government agencies, the planning team developed three "action" alternatives that will provide the foundation for decision making in the national seashore and form the core of the *General Management Plan*. The fourth alternative is the "no-action" alternative that describes how the national seashore is managed now, providing a basis for comparing the other alternatives.

The alternatives are conceptual in nature. Additional feasibility studies and more detailed planning and environmental documentation will be required before development proposed in any alternative would be built. It is also important to remember that implementation of any alternative depends on the availability of funds and could occur in phases. The *General Management Plan* will guide year-to-year management of the national seashore, but full implementation of the plan could take many years.

For each alternative there is a concept statement or "vision statement," which is an overarching philosophy that directs and shapes the desired resource conditions, visitor experiences, and facilities. Management zones describe general desired conditions in specific areas of the national seashore that address natural resources, cultural resources, visitor experiences, as well as levels of management, visitor access, and development. The management zone matrix provides a summary of visitor activities and facilities appropriate for each zone. For each alternative, management zones are shown on the alternative maps in different locations and configurations based on the alternative's concept.



Preliminary Alternatives

Alternative A

— Continue Current Management (No Action)

Concept

There would be no change in the current management direction for the foreseeable future. The National Park Service would continue to manage Canaveral National Seashore under the overall operational direction provided in its enabling legislation and interagency/cooperative agreements with its two federal land management agency partners. One agreement is between the Department of the Interior and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, which owns approximately two-thirds of the seashore. The other agreement is between the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. The latter agreement defines the general boundaries of jointly-managed areas in and around Mosquito Lagoon and delineates responsibilities of the two agencies for cooperative administration and management of the area. Actions under this alternative related to visitor experience, resource protection, and NPS operations and facilities follow.

Visitor Experience

- Access to a variety of appropriate recreational opportunities via automobiles and boats would be available.
- High-density use at some facilities and beach areas would continue.
- Orientation facilities would remain limited to the Apollo Beach visitor information center.
- The Bill's Hill area would continue to be closed for visitation and would be managed for resource protection.
- Klondike Beach would continue to be accessible on foot and bicycle. Backcountry permits for use at this area would still be required.
- Horseback riding would continue at the Apollo Beach area.
- Sales of sundries and equipment rental would continue to support various visitor activities at Apollo Beach.

Resource Protection

- Current and ongoing resource management programs would continue as NPS staffing and funding permit.
- Existing agreements and partnerships with educational institutions would continue for inventorying and monitoring resources.
- Beaches would remain relatively pristine and undeveloped, with emphasis on preserving a healthy dune system, using boardwalks for public access across the dunes, and restoring impacted areas.

Visitor Facilities and NPS Operations

- Some seashore functions would remain in inefficient facilities.
- The visitor information center at Apollo Beach would remain in a double-wide trailer.
- Headquarters would stay in a leased structure in Titusville.
- The northern portion of the seashore would continue to be supported by the Apollo Beach maintenance area and the ranger station. The southern portion would be supported by the Playalinda Beach maintenance area on USFWS land at Wilson Corner and the Playalinda Beach entrance station and ranger station complex.
- Chemical toilets in comfort stations would be maintained.

Alternative B

Concept

Canaveral National Seashore would be managed to preserve and enhance the natural and historic landscape features associated with the national seashore's eastern Florida coastal barrier island system. Emphasis would be placed on retaining the national seashore's relatively undeveloped character and providing uncrowded experiences by dispersing visitor through a shuttle service or canoe, kayak, and bicycle trails. Actions under this alternative related to visitor experience, resource protection, and NPS operations and facilities follow.

Visitor Experience

- Visitors would depart from points of concentrated use into the natural surroundings of a rustic, undeveloped environment where few human intrusions were evident.
- Opportunities would be explored to partner with local transportation service providers to extend bus service into the Apollo Beach area.
- A commercial service arrangement could be developed to provide for limited, peak-season, weekend shuttle service into the Apollo Beach area.
- Primary orientation facilities would be in an efficient sustainable structure in the Apollo Beach area.
- Bill's Hill would be open to visitors, and dispersed backcountry recreational and educational opportunities would be provided.
- There would be access to trailheads for hiking, horseback riding, and interpretive trails, and a connection to a proposed USFWS canoe/kayak trail.
- There would be increased orientation, interpretation, and educational opportunities at Seminole Rest and Eldora State House.

Resource Protection

- Resource management efforts would focus on protecting, preserving, and rehabilitating or restoring natural and cultural features.
- The 10-acre Stuckey site would be acquired and restored to natural conditions.
- Shallow water areas might be limited to pole/troll or nonmotorized travel to protect fragile sea grass, fish spawning areas, and oyster beds.
- A no-motor area would be established in the Shipyard Island area of the lagoon.
- A slow-speed zone for boats would be established near the Eldora State House for wildlife viewing and shoreline protection.
- In selected areas, such as Seminole Rest and the Eldora Hammock area, key cultural landscape features would be rehabilitated to reflect historic conditions associated with their periods of significance.

Visitor Facilities and NPS Operations

- A new more efficient visitor information structure would be built at Apollo Beach.
- Readily identifiable visitor contact facilities (for orientation and educational purposes) would be conveniently located and facilitate quick access to beach and lagoon areas.
- Headquarters functions would be consolidated into one expanded USFWS/NPS facility.
- Maintenance operations in the south would be located in the USFWS maintenance area.
- Comfort stations at Apollo and Playlinda Beaches would be replaced with an updated sustainable system.

Alternative C

Concept

Under alternative C, Canaveral National Seashore would be managed as a place where visitors would explore and experience a wide range of opportunities that would be designed to provide an in-depth understanding of the natural and cultural history of eastern coastal Florida. When visitors enter the national seashore, they would be presented with choices for alternative modes of access to land- and water-based natural and cultural features, appropriate recreational opportunities, and educational pursuits. Actions under this alternative related to visitor experience, resource protection, and NPS operations and facilities follow.

Visitor Experience

- Interpretation, educational programs, and guided tours would be expanded over current levels throughout the national seashore.
- Educational information would be available in a centralized facility in the Bill's Hill area as well as at Apollo Beach and a number of satellite sites throughout the national seashore using historic structures, new facilities, or wayside exhibits.
- A marsh trail with educational programs would be developed at Seminole Rest. There would be limited shuttle/interpretive boat tours between the site and Apollo Beach.
- Recreational opportunities would be expanded throughout the seashore by establishing bike paths and canoe/kayak trails that connect to those of other agencies.
- At Bill's Hill there would be access to various opportunities for recreation, including hiking, horseback riding, and interpretive trails.
- Primitive backcountry foot trails would be established, and some would connect to sites of interpretive interest in the Joint Management Area. NPS staff would coordinate with the refuge to conduct limited tours.
- Establishing a water-based shuttle service in the Lagoon would be explored.
- Recreational rental equipment would be available, making it more convenient to access the seashore through various nonmotorized modes including canoes and kayaks at the Bill's Hill location.

Resource Protection

- Resource management would continue to emphasize protection, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of sensitive resources.
- Resource management personnel would work with NPS interpretive rangers to highlight appropriate themes for the national seashore's educational program, including resource sensitivity.
- A slow-speed zone for boats would be established near the Eldora State House for wildlife viewing opportunities and shoreline protection.

Visitor Facilities and NPS Operations

- The information center at Apollo Beach would be removed and replaced with a larger, permanent, more functionally efficient structure. An outdoor educational area would be created, and the current ranger station would be replaced. Sundries, equipment rental, and showers would be available for visitors.
- A new centrally located complex at either Bill's Hill or the Stuckey site would provide space for visitor services, administrative headquarters, and all maintenance functions. The number and type of functions in this facility could increase and be phased in as visitation increases in future years.
- There would be a covered education pavilion at Turtle Mound and interpretive trails at Eldora Hammock.
- Water and sewer lines would be connected to all comfort stations in the Apollo Beach area, and showers would be added. Restrooms in the Playalinda Beach parking areas would be replaced with an updated, sustainable system.

Alternative D

Concept

Under alternative D, Canaveral National Seashore would be managed to focus on enhancing the existing lands, resources, and facilities. The national seashore would be managed to promote outdoor recreational and educational opportunities consistent with preservation of the national seashore's natural and cultural resources. Limited facility development would provide more efficient NPS administration and operations and enhanced visitor amenities. Coordination with land-managing partners would be increased to provide additional educational opportunities and programs for visitors and enhanced monitoring of Mosquito Lagoon resources. Actions under this alternative related to visitor experience, resource protection, and NPS operations and facilities follow.

Visitor Experience

- Visitor contact and orientation services would occur in both the north and south portions of the national seashore.
- Expanded facilities at Apollo Beach would provide room for interpretive staff and media such as films, interactive exhibits, displays, and educational merchandise.
- A small visitor contact point would be established in the Playalinda Beach ranger station to provide information and perhaps the sale of educational materials.
- Enhanced opportunities for recreational activities, such as canoeing, kayaking, and hiking, would be provided throughout the national seashore.
- The Stuckey property would be acquired, and a trailhead and parking area would be established on the site. This access to the Bill's Hill area along with interpretive trails into the site would enhance visitor's recreational opportunities.
- Orientation, interpretation, and educational opportunities would be expanded at Eldora State House and Seminole Rest. An interpretive marsh trail would be added at Seminole Rest.
- A small equipment rental operation for canoes and kayaks would encourage nonmotorized access into the national seashore, and sundries would be available for sale at Apollo Beach and the Bill's Hill area.

Resource Protection

- Resource management would continue to emphasize protection, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of sensitive resources.
- A no-motor area would be established in the Shipyard Island area of the lagoon.
- Shallow-water areas in the national seashore might be limited to pole/troll or nonmotorized travel to protect fragile sea grass, fish spawning areas, and oyster beds.
- A slow-speed zone for boats would be established near the Eldora State House for wildlife viewing opportunities and shoreline protection.

Visitor Facilities and NPS Operations

- The visitor information facility at Apollo Beach would be removed and replaced with a larger, permanent, and functionally efficient structure. The facility would have additional restrooms to accommodate school and other large groups and would house a variety of media.
- Administration/headquarters functions would be housed in a leased facility outside of national seashore boundaries.
- Playalinda maintenance functions would be combined with those of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in a multi-agency facility.
- Existing facilities that are currently vacant or occupied by other entities would be used by national seashore staff whenever possible.
- Water and sewer service would be extended to the first two parking areas at Apollo Beach and possibly at Eldora Hammock. Comfort stations in the remainder of the national seashore would be replaced with an updated system.

NEXT STEPS

Following NPS and public review, the planning team will revise the preliminary alternatives as needed. Then the team will analyze each alternative for its potential for resource impacts, potential for affecting visitor experiences, and implementation costs. The team will next evaluate the relative advantages of each alternative. Based on this evaluation, the superintendent and other decision-makers will select the alternative that offers the most advantages for the national seashore. This alternative, termed the “preferred alternative,” may be very similar to one of the preliminary alternatives, may combine elements of more than one of the preliminary alternatives, or may introduce entirely new ideas.

Public input is a vital part of the planning process. You will have an opportunity to comment on the preferred alternative once it has been selected and a *Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* has been prepared and distributed for public review.

PLANNING TIME FRAME

Canaveral National Seashore’s general management plan process is expected to take several years to complete. A summary of the process and anticipated time frame is presented below. You will have opportunities to share ideas and comments throughout the process.

Step	Time Frame	Planning Activity	Public Involvement Opportunities
1	Summer 2003	Initiate Project The planning team assembles, begins to identify the project’s scope, customizes the planning process, and establishes contacts with participants.	1) Read newsletter. 2) Send us your ideas and comments. 3) Attend public meetings.
2	Fall 2003 — Winter 2006	Define Planning Context and Foundation The team examines WHY the national seashore was established and affirms purpose, significance, and primary interpretive themes. Team members collect and analyze relevant data and public input.	1) Read newsletter. 2) Send us your ideas and comments.
3	Spring 2007	Publish Alternatives Newsletter Using staff and public input, the team explores WHAT the national seashore’s future could look like and proposes a range of alternatives.	1) Read this newsletter. 3) Send us your ideas and comments. 4) Come to public meetings and share your ideas.
4	Fall 2008	Publish Draft Document <i>A Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement</i> is published. The draft document describes the alternatives and impacts of implementing each alternative. Based on the impacts and public input, a preferred alternative is identified in the document.	1) Read draft document. 2) Send us your ideas and comments. 3) Come to public meetings and share your ideas.
5	Winter 2009 – 2010	Publish Final Document Based on review by the National Park Service, other agencies and organizations, and the public, the team revises the plan and distributes a Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement. The final plan is approved in a published “Record of Decision.”	1) Read the final document, including NPS responses to substantive comments and official letters.
6	Spring 2010 and Beyond	Implement the Approved Plan After the “Record of Decision” is issued, begin implementing the plan as funding permits.	1) Work with national seashore staff to implement plan.



**National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior**

Contact Information:

**Canaveral National Seashore
General Management Plan**

Carol Clark, Superintendent
Canaveral National Seashore
308 Julia Street
Titusville, FL 32796
CANA Superintendent@nps.gov

Phone

321-267-1110 Headquarters

WEB

<http://www.nps.gov/cana/>

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

D-67

