

THE
FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Minute Man National Historical Park

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: MIMA

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

Minute Man NHP preserves the birthplace of the American Revolution and inspires visitors to learn about the causes, events and ongoing impact of the war and its principles of liberty and democracy. It is a place that "unites us all as Americans" and is a global beacon of liberty and democracy.

Our vision for the Centennial and beyond includes the following:

- The Patriot Learning Center provides every American, but particularly children & families of diverse Boston area communities, access to knowledge of the beginning of the revolution through place based & technology supported learning experiences. It also explores the meaning of liberty & freedom in the 21st Century & the responsibilities of citizenship
- 24 rehabilitated historic structures have vibrant public uses: ex. Barrett's Farm, destination of the British on the eve of battle, is interpreted; Jacob Whittemore House anchors the Patriot Learning Center; Noah Brooks Tavern is a tavern again, etc
- State Route 2A w/in the park is a National Scenic ByWay & provides safe access to sites along its historic route
- Varied income streams (concessions, leasing, partnerships) provide a margin of excellence for resource protection & visitor service
- Rehabilitated historic landscapes & battlefield features provide a clear picture of the events of April 19, 1775 & the lives of colonial farmers/soldiers
- Sustainable agriculture is firmly established & supports landscape maintenance
- The south side of the Battle Road Unit provides new options for public use
- Visitation increases as resources develop & programs & partnerships expand
- A staffed Volunteer Program supports park operations
- Park trails connect to regional, multi organizational networks including Walden Pond/Walden Woods, other federal, state & town trails/conservation areas
- Visitor Centers & parking areas adequately support demand for programs/activities & provide safe/universal access
- Natural sounds (meadowlarks, sheep & cattle) dominate the visitor experience; intrusive sounds (planes/vehicles) are minimized: a contemplative environment appropriate to a commemorative & historical setting prevails
- The park & neighboring towns work with a vision of shared stewardship of historic & natural resources within & beyond park boundaries
- Relationships w/diverse communities, environmental & historical organizations, schools, farmers, historians, & others are expanded and new partnerships are created to pursue mutual goals & create public value

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Nancy A. Nelson, Superintendent

Site: MIMA

STEWARDSHIP

Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

By 2016, more of the park's cultural landscape will be revealed, improving visitor experience and sense of place. More historic structures in the Battle Road Unit will be rehabilitated for public use. The historic Battle Road is often coincident with State Rte 2A as it runs through the park. To ensure visitor safety, access and enjoyment, the park will work in partnership with others to change the character of State Rte 2A from a busy commuter route (20,000 daily commuters) to that of a 'park road' with a commemorative character. State Scenic Byway designation has been obtained through grass roots efforts and National Scenic Byway designation will follow. The Battle Road/Rte 2A will be a model for preserving a historic road while also fulfilling its modern transportation function. It will be clear to visitors and commuters that they are traversing a unique road, which was the battlefield along which 'farmer soldiers' pursued British troops back to Boston on April 19, 1775. We also will add Barrett's Farm to the park, thus protecting a site that is key to the park's story.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: MIMA

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Rehabilitate high-priority historic buildings to good condition, and help communities to preserve their history through programs like Preserve America.

Anticipated expansion of the park boundary and an appropriation to acquire Barrett's Farm would assist the community in protecting one of its most important historical, nationally significant assets. Barrett's Farm and the town of Concord's adjacent properties will be permanently protected. A local non profit purchased the property to save it from destruction and is committed to funding its rehabilitation but cannot hold the property in the long run. Grants from the Town, Save America's Treasures and private parties have been obtained to date. This is a Centennial Project.

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Improve high-priority assets to acceptable condition, as measured by the Facility Condition Index.

In developing The Patriot Learning Center (Centennial project), the Jacob Whittemore House (witness to the battle of April 19,1775) and the Hargrove Barn will be returned to good condition. Up to 24 historic structures will be returned to 'good' condition as a result of: 2011 LIC project; NPS 1Year funds; involvement of new partners/concessioners/lessees; and the work of permanent and seasonal staff and volunteers. The historic battlefield of April 19, 1775 and its associated landscapes will be returned to 'good' condition through sustainable agricultural initiatives, expanded volunteer efforts, private funding, ongoing work of park staff and future Centennial project funding.

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Site: MIMA

STEWARDSHIP

Assure that no compelling chapter in the American heritage experience remains untold and that strategically important landscapes are acquired, as authorized by Congress.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Acquisition of the Col. James Barrett Farm is a Centennial Initiative project which will ensure the permanent protection of a property of utmost importance to the story of April 19, 1775. British troops descended on Concord to destroy arms and munitions hidden at Barrett's Farm. A local non profit recently purchased the property to save it from imminent destruction but cannot hold or make it available for public use over the long run. Congressional authorization for a park boundary expansion would allow acquisition of this property and could come early this fall. Major funds have been raised to support rehabilitation of this nationally significant house and farmland. The Patriot Learning Center will serve diverse students and families (currently underserved) and connect them to the park's compelling stories that are an essential part of every American's identity.

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Site: MIMA

STEWARDSHIP

Encourage children to be future conservationists.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The Patriot Learning Center (a Centennial Initiative) along with the park's expanding sustainable agricultural program and partnerships will provide myriad opportunities to convey the central NPS message of environmental and historical stewardship and conservation to thousands of additional school children...from underserved communities in the Greater Boston area. The Patriot Learning Center will inspire students to honor our American heritage and value our historic places. Partnerships with The Farm School of Athol and the Farm Based Education Association will focus on conservation and stewardship of the land within the context of sustainable agriculture (supported, in part, by future CI funds). The park is also reprioritizing and expanding its educational offerings beginning in 2008 in partnership with The Minute Man National Park Association> Park programs will carry the message of stewardship an conservation and individual responsibility to thousands of additional school children every year.

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Site: MIMA

ENVIRONMENT

Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.

Reduce the environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality.

Expansion of sustainable agricultural activities will reduce the use of mowers and other landscape maintenance equipment over scores of acres of park land. Reduction of formally maintained lawn areas will further reduce environmental impacts and improve the historic scene.

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Site: MIMA

ENVIRONMENT

Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

Establish programs to showcase exemplary environmental practices and increase visitor awareness of how the practices apply to their daily lives, as measured by surveys.

Programs explaining the environmental benefits of eating locally and sustainably will be the natural outgrowth of an expanding sustainable agricultural program. The Farm School of Athol has an educational mission with this focus as does the Farm Based Education Association. This area boasts many environmental and farm based education organizations and the potential for future, ongoing collaboration is high. Workshops and more targeted classroom experiences will be developed. Our program for sustainable agriculture and cultural landscape preservation will draw on these partners as well as local farmers under cooperative leases. The battlefield landscape has been active farmland from the 1600s through to the present day. Partnership agriculture brings the landscape of the "embattled farmers" to life and preserves an important ethnographic resource. Visitors are powerfully drawn to farm animals and have a deeper connection to the historic landscape when it is active and continues to serve its farming traditions.

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Site: MIMA

ENVIRONMENT

Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The park will increase its potential to bring partners, communities and visitors together by actively soliciting feedback from newsletters, the GMP effort now underway, park programs, workshops, annual and other periodic meetings. The park is located within three towns and has the ability to expand its 'unifying' role vis a vis natural and cultural resource stewardship. The park will assume shared management responsibility with the Commonwealth for a key section of state land within park boundary and will strengthen collaborative management efforts vis a vis trails, wetlands, road and field management and new developments adjacent to the park and within the communities.

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Site: MIMA

RECREATION

Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

Rehabilitate over 2,000 miles of trails within or connected to national parks, including trails accessible to those with disabilities.

The award winning Battle Road Interpretive Trail (now 10 years old) will be rehabilitated to maintain safety and to regain its universal accessibility status. The park is working with a local bikeway organization to connect the park's Battle Road Trail with a major urban bike way...the Minute Man Bikeway. While the park's trail is slower, not for roller blade or segways, this connection has long been sought. Local funding will enable this connection. This will increase use and make the rehabilitation of the park's Battle Road Trail more important.

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Site: MIMA

RECREATION

Expand partnerships with schools and boys and girls associations to show how national park experiences can improve children's lives.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The establishment of the Patriot Learning Center will greatly expand our partnerships with schools in the greater Boston area and promote active citizenship among school children of diverse backgrounds (including children of new citizens from around the world.) The park's story of the farmer/soldiers defending their rights and liberties is an essential part of the American identity and inspires students to forge stronger connections to their American heritage. Children will be empowered and become more effective citizens by knowledge of their history and the ideals of freedom and democracy and of how they can impact the democratic institutions of our country on a daily basis.

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Site: MIMA

RECREATION

Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

Increase visitation by 25 percent at lesser-known parks through a national tourism effort aimed at helping people to discover the breadth of parks and experiences.

With 1.2 million annual visitors, and growing, MIMA is not a lesser known park. However, there are populations to whom we are not known yet. The creation of the Patriot Learning Center will do more than greatly expand the numbers of students we serve; we will include materials for the students to take home that will help us to connect to the diverse populations in the greater Boston metropolitan area that may not currently be park visitors. Our partnerships with the Farm School, the Farm-Based Education Association, and community farmers will expand the breadth of the park's programs and bring the historic agricultural landscape alive to enhance our visitors' park experience and attract more families from diverse communities.

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Increase the number of visitors that attend ranger-facilitated programs such as campfire talks, hikes, and school programs.

Currently the park has no facilities for school programs; programs are only conducted outdoors, greatly curtailing the numbers we can serve during the winter months. The creation of the Patriot Learning Center will increase the number of visitors attending school programs and improve the quality and length of the programs. The park's friends group, the Minute Man National Park Association, has launched an aggressive plan for expanding membership and public awareness of the park and its resources and programs...this will increase the number of people engaged in Ranger led programs. The park is redirecting funding from other lapsed position to hire a Chief of Interpretation; will receive additional funds in '08 to hire seasonal interpreters and will redirect other funding toward the Interpretive program. This will greatly increase the park's capacity to provide ranger facilitated programs which are extremely popular (hundreds of people) when they are offered.

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Site: MIMA

EDUCATION

Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The Patriot Learning Center will provide a venue for teachers and classes to pursue curriculum-based educational opportunities in the authentic Rev War context of MIMA and in collaboration with park educational staff. Park staff will work with teachers throughout the Boston area to serve diverse populations of youth. In addition, state of the art, on line and other state of the art learning materials (pod casts) will be developed as part of this program. Over time, the PLC is will touch all the children in the neighboring communities which share a common history with the park as well as with specific 'partner' schools within the Boston area which are distinguished by diversity or by innovative approaches to learning and citizenship. The park is in the process of establishing an Educator's Advisory Council which will help ensure excellence in current and future programs. The Minute Man National Park Association is pursuing on line and other technology based learning strategies.

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Site: MIMA

EDUCATION

Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

The Patriot Learning Center will include development of web-based interactive materials to enhance students' experience with pre- and post-site activities, as well as provide for distance learning to expand public appreciation of national parks and their importance to preserving and understanding our American heritage. The park and its friends group is actively exploring ways to translate the park's stories to technologies favored by young people: podcasts, interactive communication opportunities, student internet video productions, etc..

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Site: MIMA

EDUCATION

Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.

Enroll an additional two million children in the Junior Ranger program.

We currently enroll 600 children per year in the Junior Ranger program through a self-guide booklet that gives children a park experience full of interactive activities. In 2008, Centennial Initiative funding is slated to double the number of seasonal Interpretive Rangers at the park. We will introduce Ranger-led programs that will enroll greater numbers of Junior Rangers.

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Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Increase farm-based family activities
Through partnerships with the Farm School and the Farm-Based Education Association, we will increase family programming on our themes of historic agriculture and colonial land use. Meaningful hands-on park experiences will bring generations together and provide a deeper connection to the park's cultural landscapes. The Patriot Learning Center will have, in addition to school children, a focus on families and adults. It will provide a range of special programs for adults focused not only on the issues and challenges of liberty and democracy in the 21st century but on colonial architecture and lifeways. The Whittemore House which will be the centerpiece of the Patriot Learning Center will preserve the history of the evolution of the house from the mid 1700's through modern times.

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Site: MIMA

EDUCATION

Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.

By 2016, we will increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of MIMA by: continuing to reveal the historic landscape; recognizing Route 2A as the historic "Battle Road" and as a Scenic Byway and increasing its safety for visitors; rehabilitating historic structures which will provide diverse opportunities for visitor use and enjoyment; making farm animals and wildlife prominent features of the visitor experience, with sustainable agricultural uses which recall historic farming traditions; completing the Patriot Learning Center which will serve many and diverse students and visitors; and keeping the park well maintained with adequate program opportunities for visitors.

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Site: MIMA

PROFESSIONALISM

Promote a safety and health culture for all employees and visitors.

Reduce the number of employee lost-time incidents and serious visitor injuries by 20 percent.

The park holds regular employee meetings to train staff in safe practices, and rewards suggestions to mitigate potential hazards. The park has an active "Park Watch" program involving neighbors and visitors to improve safety.

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Site: MIMA

PROFESSIONALISM

Model what it means to work in partnership.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The park's success in developing the Battle Road Unit provides a partnership model. Success is possible due to the ongoing engagement of adjacent towns, the historical preservation community, Mass Highway Department and many others. The park's Centennial projects reflect an ongoing partnership spirit: "Acquisition and rehabilitation of Barrett's Farm" to permanently protect the Colonel Barrett House & Farm by building on successful partnerships with Save Our Heritage & the Town of Concord; "The Patriot Learning Center" to serve students, adults & families, will be developed in partnership with the Minute Man National Park Association and grounded by intensive teacher workshops & institutes); the "Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture and Cultural Landscape Preservation" - extends partnerships with the Farm School, the Farm-Based Education Association & farmers; "Reclaiming the Road to Revolution" - would rehabilitate and preserve the Battle Road in cooperation with partners: the Battle Road Scenic Byway Committee, the towns of Arlington, Lexington, Lincoln & Concord where the Scenic Byway is located, Massachusetts Highway Department, and YCC & other youth programs

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Site: MIMA

PROFESSIONALISM

Make national parks the first choice in philanthropic giving among those concerned about environmental, cultural, and recreational values.

Improve communications and marketing capacity to increase public understanding of our mission, opportunities, and benefits.

The Minute Man National Park Association has expanded its Board and hired a membership with the goal of increasing public awareness of the park, its mission, opportunities and benefits.

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