



GREEN EVENT GUIDELINES

for Golden Gate National Recreation Area

The National Park Service and Sustainability in Parks

As stewards of the Nation's most valued public lands and cultural treasures, the National Park Service (NPS) is taking a leading role in sustainability and climate change mitigation to ensure these special lands are preserved for the enjoyment of future generations.

The NPS encourages all visitors to adopt sustainable practices in order to help maintain these beautiful spaces.

Greening the Golden Gate National Recreation Area

Special events in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) can contribute to the park's sustainability goals by following these Green Event Guidelines. Regardless of the size of your event, the attached checklist has recommendations that you can incorporate into your event planning.

Certain events may be required to follow these guidelines more closely for permit approval.

Take Part in the GGNRA Climate Change Action Plan

The urgency to address climate change is stronger than ever, and GGNRA aims to reach the goal of carbon neutral park operations by 2020. Our [Climate Change Action Plan](#) outlines three major actions the park will undertake: 1) Reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions resulting from activities within the park; 2) Plan for and adapt to future impacts of climate change; 3) Increase climate change education and outreach.

GGNRA conducts GHG emissions inventories annually using the Climate Leadership in Parks tool to monitor our progress and develop our action plans. The majority of GGNRA's GHG emissions comes from visitor transportation. Alternative transportation to Special Events can be instrumental in mitigating these emissions. Waste sent to landfills is the second largest GHG contributor in GGNRA, since methane from decomposition is a 20-25x more potent GHG than carbon dioxide. Recycling and composting at Special Events can reduce these GHG emissions. Finally, reducing the use of products and packaging uses less energy for production and transportation and therefore generates less GHGs.

We hope to use our efforts as an example not only for other public events but also for our visitors and surrounding communities.



Green Event Guidelines Checklist

1. Create a Plan for a Zero Waste Event

Creating a **Zero Waste Event** plan will help organize your event. With a ZWE plan, staff and vendors will be able to know what will be expected of them for the event. While a ZWE is not an official document, having a plan in place helps reduce confusion for everyone involved in your event.

A successful plan should consist of:

- A map of all waste bins or water stations
- Information from your Event Greener (if one is needed)
- Ideas on how to monitor waste bins
- A list of those responsible for making sure all the bins are collected



2. Keep Your Event Emissions Low

Keeping with the GGNRA Climate Change Action plan, we encourage all events to think about ways to lower GHG emissions during their activities. The Bay Area offers some of the most robust and widespread public transportation systems in the Nation, making it easy to move around. Work with your attendees to figure out a carpool or Transit plan to reduce the number of cars your event attracts.

- Encourage attendees to carpool or use public transit
- If electricity is needed, look into non-gasoline generators or power sources

Bay Area Public Transit Information

◆ [BART \(All Bay Area\)](#) ◆ [MUNI \(San Francisco\)](#) ◆ [MarinTransit \(Marin County\)](#) ◆ [SamTrans \(San Mateo County\)](#)

3. Help Your Attendees Know Their Responsibility

An important part of having a **Zero Waste Event** is ensuring all waste gets collected and sorted correctly. As some of your attendees might be unfamiliar with what waste goes into which bin, it is important to make sure all waste bins have a proper sign. Use these resources to create signs for a customized with the most common waste for your event.

- Print a sign for each **Compost**, **Recycling** and **Landfill** bins — [Use this tool](#) to create your own Waste Management signs or use [premade Waste Management signs](#)
- Create signs for water stations and other services

Tips for Signs:

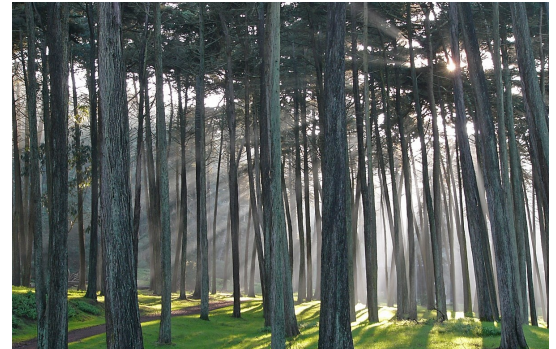
- **Be consistent to eliminate confusion**; same order, colors, and signage
- **Images** are more powerful than words
- Place signage at **eye-level**
- **Adjust signs** to represent your event's common waste items



Green Event Guidelines Checklist, continued

4. Plan Ahead for Green Purchasing

GGNRA is working to increase our diversion rate to 75 percent by eliminating the use of products that are “destined for the dump”, such as single-use plastics and composite materials. The production and disposal of materials result in broad environmental and social impacts associated with obtaining raw materials, manufacturing, and emissions from landfills. There are many green alternatives, such as recycled-content, bio-based, and/or water/energy efficient products which perform just as well or even better.



- When buying, know the difference between “Compostable” and “Biodegradable”
- To reduce the number of plastic bottles thrown away, consider offering water filling stations
- Zip ties create a lot of waste; try to find other ways to fasten signs
- If food is being served, use **Compostable** plates and cutlery
- Encourage green packaging materials when choosing supplies for the event

Green Purchasing Resources:

- ◆ [SF Approved](#) — City of San Francisco guidelines
- ◆ [SF Tool](#) — Federal government guidelines

BE AWARE:

A "Biodegradable" plastic cannot be composted unless it says “**Compostable**” with a logo from the Biodegradable Products Institute.

"Biodegradable" in **NOT** compostable.

5. Post Event Checklist

- Immediately after your event, check your surroundings for any waste and dispose.
- Cardboard should be flattened, stacked and brought to the [Recycle](#) bins
- Make sure hard plastics are sorted apart from soft plastics
- Lock waste bins after the event
- For future event plans, we suggest auditing this event’s waste to see where you can improve your waste diversion
- Contact your waste hauler to pick up your correctly sorted bins
- Think about penalizing participants if they didn't follow your Zero Waste Plan

If your event clean up is not satisfactory, you could be subject to **fines** and **penalties**.



6. Resources to Keep Your Event Green

Here are some local companies to help you maintain or build upon your Zero Waste Plan. Some events might not need all these services, but it is useful to be aware of them. Waste management volunteers are a great way to help event attendees ensure all waste is disposed of in a proper bin.

WASTE HAULERS

San Francisco County

- [Recology](#)

San Mateo County

- [Recology San Mateo](#)

Marin County

- [Mill Valley Refuse Service](#)
- [Marin Sanitary Service](#)
- [The Ratto Group](#)

WASTE MANAGEMENT VOLUNTEERS

- [One Brick](#)
- [Volunteer Match](#)

EVENT GREENERS

San Francisco County

- [SF Conservation Corp](#)
- [SF Clean City Coalition](#)

Marin County

- [Conservation Corps North Bay](#)

Park Wide

- [Waste Busters](#)
- [Clean Vibes](#)
- [Revolutionary Green](#)

WATER STATIONS

- [Aero Pure](#)
- [Event Water Solutions](#)

Thank You for Helping Keep Your Parks Clean

The Golden Gate National Recreation Area was created to preserve some of the most pristine areas in the Bay Area. From Muir Woods to Sweeney Ridge, millions of visitors have come to these public spaces to enjoy the fantastic trail systems, unique sites of historical importance, and amazing picturesque views. This park is a testament to the mission of the National Park Service, creating unforgettable experiences without forgetting how we impact the world around us.

We want to thank you for following these Green Guidelines as all of us work towards protecting this unparalleled piece of American living history.

"....to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." - The Organic Act of 1916

