



# Facilities Development Plan for Saint Croix Island International Historic Site



Approved by:

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*03/26/09*

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Cover: Visitors at interpretive shelter overlooking Saint Croix Island



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# **Facilities Development Plan for Saint Croix Island International Historic Site**

**March 2009**

**U. S. Department of the Interior • National Park Service  
Calais, Maine**

**An Implementing Document of the  
1998 Saint Croix Island International Historic Site *General Management Plan***

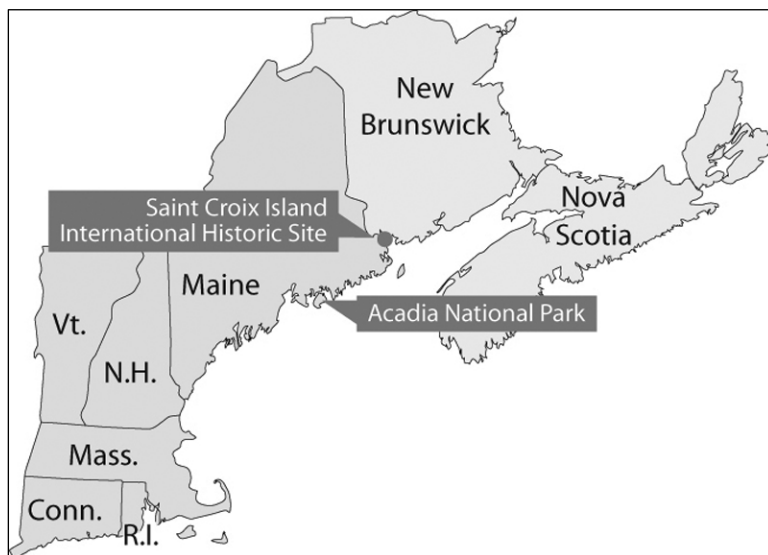
## Summary

This Facilities Development Plan (FDP) directs facility development for visitor services and park administration on the mainland shore parcel of Saint Croix Island International Historic Site (SACR) at Red Beach for the next 15 to 20 years. In keeping with the SACR general management plan, no additional facilities will be developed on Saint Croix Island. The plan for facilities development is largely the NPS preferred alternative from the *Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect for the Draft Facilities Development Plan* (EA) with some modifications based on public comment.

This FDP directs the National Park Service (NPS) to construct a ranger station and a maintenance facility at Red Beach to improve visitor services, conserve resources, and make park operations more efficient. The historic McGlashan-Nickerson house will be leased for a use compatible to the site. If a suitable lessee is not found, the building will be stabilized and alternate NPS uses will be sought. Alternately, the building will be stabilized and closed, pending a future lease or use.

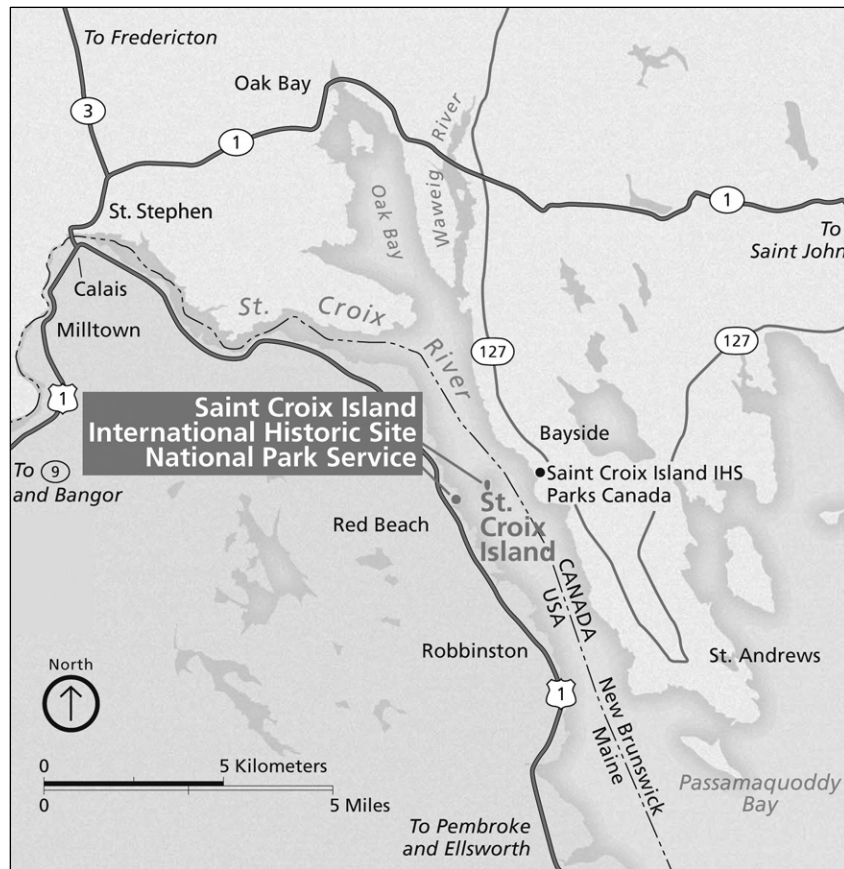
## Introduction

Saint Croix Island International Historic Site, located in the far northeast corner of the United States in the Red Beach community of Calais, Maine, was proclaimed as a national monument in 1949 and redesignated as an international historic site in 1984 (Figure 1). It commemorates the 1604 site of the first French effort to colonize the territory called *l'Acadie* (Acadia) and the location of one of the earliest European settlements in North America. Acadia National Park, 120 miles distant, is the administrative headquarters for SACR.



**Figure 1** Saint Croix Island International Historic Site – Regional Context

Saint Croix Island, approximately 6.5 acres, is located in the Saint Croix River, immediately adjacent to the United States-Canada border. The National Park Service currently manages Saint Croix Island, and 29.5 acres on the mainland, with 8.9 additional acres authorized but currently in private ownership. The mainland sections include an upland parcel west of U.S. 1, and a shore parcel east of U.S. 1, referred to in this FDP as Red Beach, where current administrative and visitor facilities are located (Figure 2).



**Figure 2** Saint Croix Island International Historic Site – Island and Mainland Sections

Archeological evidence suggests that the area around Saint Croix Island had already been inhabited for several thousand years before European settlement by Native American groups known collectively as the Wabanaki people. Today, the Wabanaki are represented by the following federally recognized tribes in Maine: Passamaquoddy Tribe with reservations at Indian Township and Pleasant Point; Penobscot Indian Nation; Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians; and Aroostook Band of Micmacs. The Passamaquoddy were living in the immediate vicinity of the island at the time of European contact. Tribal members continue to have an enduring connection to Saint Croix Island to the present day.

A memorandum of understanding between the United States and Canada recognizes the international significance of Saint Croix Island and commits both nations to joint planning and commemoration. In 1997, Parks Canada established the Canadian Saint Croix Island

International Historic Site, where a self-guiding interpretive trail overlooks Saint Croix Island, at Bayside, New Brunswick.

The *Île-Sainte-Croix • Saint Croix Island International Historic Site General Management Plan* (GMP), completed in 1998, defined long-term (10–15 years) development and interpretive goals for the site (NPS 1998). This FDP has been developed in accordance with guidance from the GMP.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this FDP is to guide NPS managers regarding the appropriate facilities at SACR. New and existing facilities will enhance future visitor experiences and maximize operational effectiveness and efficiency in support of the park's mission. Guidance in this FDP is consistent with the recommendations of the GMP and was developed considering additional information and subsequent changes to the site that have occurred since the GMP was published, including the acquisition of two mainland parcels. This FDP is an implementation document of the GMP.

This FDP outlines the best approach for implementing the GMP's recommendations for providing administrative and visitor facilities at Red Beach, specifically a ranger station with restrooms and other amenities, employee housing, and expanded maintenance facilities. It also addresses the use of the historic McGlashan-Nickerson house, acquired by the National Park Service in 2000, after the GMP was published.

The Lane-Robb house was also acquired after the GMP was published. However, unlike the McGlashan-Nickerson house, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) has determined that the Lane-Robb house is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In 2008, park managers decided to remove the Lane-Robb house from the site because it is in poor condition and would also not be suitable for future NPS use because of where it is located on the site in relation to other facilities, its layout, and its inaccessibility for use by people with disabilities.

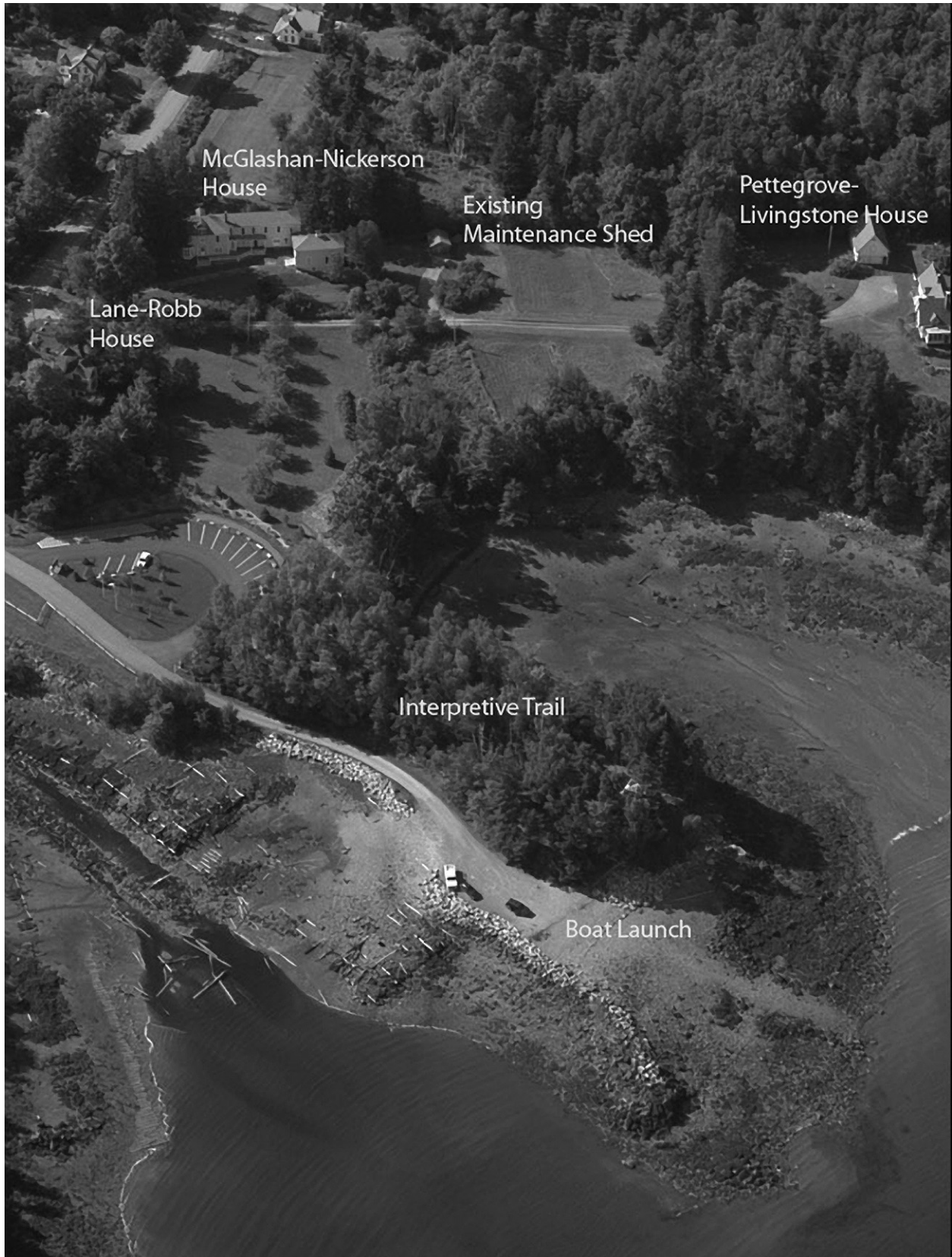
This FDP will not address future use of any adjacent privately owned parcels located within the site's authorized boundary.

## **Need/Existing Conditions**

This plan was developed based on a public planning process and following public review and comments on the *Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect for the Draft Facilities Development Plan* (NPS 2009) that was published in January 2009. Four alternatives for developing facilities were described in the draft plan.

Current administrative and visitor facilities at Red Beach include an interpretive trail and shelter, vault toilet, an unimproved boat launch, and parking for 15 cars and one bus or recreational vehicle. The site also includes the historic McGlashan-Nickerson house and maintenance shed near the house (Figure 3).

**Figure 3** Saint Croix Island International Historic Site – Existing Conditions, March 2009





Administrative functions and visitor services are currently located in the McGlashan-Nickerson house. The NPS acquired the McGlashan-Nickerson house in 2000, as authorized in the 1949 enabling legislation (*An Act To Authorize the Establishment of the Saint Croix Island National Monument in the State of Maine*, approved June 8, 1949 [63 Stat. 158]). Built around 1883 as a single-family residence, it is a 7,280-square-foot, two-story frame structure. In 1990, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission listed the McGlashan-Nickerson house on the National Register of Historic Places. The house was vacant from 2001 until 2005. The McGlashan-Nickerson house currently provides temporary housing for two summer-season employees.

Maintenance operations are currently provided from an unheated 12-foot by 18-foot utility shed, built in 1974. Two vehicles are driven off-site at the end of each work day because there is no secure on-site parking location. A boat and trailer, tractor, mowing equipment, sculpture covers, and general maintenance supplies are currently stored in several locations when not in use. In winter, when maintenance staff is furloughed, one vehicle and all heavy equipment are transported 120 miles to Acadia National Park for storage and servicing. In spring, the same equipment is transported back to SACR.

As articulated in the EA, current facilities at SACR are inadequate to meet NPS goals for protecting resources and providing high-quality visitor experiences. Facilities are not universally accessible and are insufficient for current levels of visitation (especially groups arriving by bus) and NPS staffing. Site security at SACR is a growing concern because in the last five years there have been at least six incidents of vandalism and theft at the site. Parking is inadequate at the McGlashan-Nickerson house and near the gate when facilities are closed to vehicles but public use is allowed. Furthermore, operation of the McGlashan-Nickerson house as a visitor contact station/administration office and employee housing is not sustainable over the long term because it is in poor repair, is not energy-efficient, requires constant maintenance due to the age and condition of the structure, and has other operational issues as described in the EA.

At the time when the GMP was being developed, planning was underway for a regional heritage center in downtown Calais. The Downeast Heritage Center opened in 2004, with a subsequent name change to the Downeast Heritage Museum in 2006. It provided exhibits, interpretive materials, visitor facilities, and way-finding information for visitors wishing to learn more about the region's cultural heritage and visit SACR. Therefore, the GMP planned for facilities at SACR that would not duplicate these visitor services. However, the Downeast Heritage Museum closed in 2008. In the absence of the Downeast Heritage Museum, there remains the unfulfilled need for improved visitor services at SACR.

## **Goals and Objectives**

Consistent with the GMP, the goals of this FDP are to:

- Preserve park resources – Lands within the site boundary are managed to protect the site's natural and cultural resources, while ensuring adequate facilities for site management and public use.

- Provide for public enjoyment and visitor experience – Visitors safely use the international historic site based on appreciation of its history and significance and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities.
- Ensure organizational effectiveness – Facilities reflect the NPS commitment to environmentally sustainable design and operations in a way that reinforces the cultural and natural resource values of the site.

The GMP recommends that the National Park Service provide a ranger station at Red Beach to support administrative functions and augment visitor services. Specifically, the GMP identifies the following visitor amenities for the ranger station: reception counter, interpretive exhibits, restrooms, water fountain, and an outdoor education area. The GMP also suggests the possibility of providing staff housing in association with the ranger station. New needs for the ranger station, identified by the National Park Service since the GMP was published, include adding an area to provide educational literature for visitors, providing space for a library and other staff resources, and providing sheltered space to greet and orient two groups of up to 20 people in inclement weather.

This FDP addresses the following objectives:

- Protect and determine the appropriate and sustainable use of the historic McGlashan-Nickerson house.
- Protect the character of the surrounding community by using architectural styles that are consistent with those in the neighborhood.
- Provide an accessible, year-round visitor contact facility that can accommodate 20 visitors.
- Provide a year-round facility for maintenance operations and storage.
- Provide a year-round space for administrative operations.
- Provide parking for five employees, either in existing or new spaces.
- Provide three-season, sheltered group assembly space for 40—20 at the ranger station and 20 under the existing interpretive shelter on the trail.
- House two seasonal employees on-site or within reasonable driving distance to the site.
- Provide high-quality visitor experiences and elicit high visitor satisfaction.
- Provide universally accessible restrooms, adaptable to year-round or seasonal use.
- Incorporate sustainability principles and pollution prevention in all actions.
- Enhance security for site resources.
- Protect the site’s character, historic structures, cultural landscapes, and other natural and cultural resources.

## **Guiding Laws and Policies**

### **National Park Service Organic Act**

All activities at SACR are governed by the 1916 Organic Act that created the National Park Service and established its mission:

“...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.” (16 USC 1)

In 1949, a presidential proclamation established Saint Croix Island National Monument. *An Act To Authorize the Establishment of the Saint Croix Island National Monument in the State of Maine*, approved June 8, 1949 [63 Stat. 158].

### **The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties**

*The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (NPS 1995) provides professional standards on the preservation and protection of all cultural resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The standards describe four distinct, but interrelated, approaches to the treatment of historic properties—preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction.

### **NPS Management Policies**

Once laws are enacted, authority for interpreting and implementing them is delegated to appropriate levels of government. In carrying out this function, the National Park Service, like other federal agencies, develops policy to interpret the ambiguities of the law and to fill in the details left unaddressed by Congress in statutes. *National Park Service Management Policies 2006* (NPS 2006) provides guidance on managing units within the National Park System, including SACR.

Other laws specific to SACR can be found in the park’s *General Management Plan* (NPS 1998).

## **Planning Direction**

### **Île Sainte-Croix • Saint Croix Island International Historic Site: General Management Plan (NPS 1998)**

The purpose of the GMP is to clearly define the site’s mission, mission goals, and management direction. It provides a foundation to guide and coordinate all subsequent management decision-making. This FDP is based on NPS legislation and the GMP. The GMP predicts that use levels will likely increase due to improved facilities and increased services. The GMP recommends adding a ranger station at Red Beach, possibly including housing. The goals of this FDP are consistent with the GMP.

### **Long-Range Interpretive Plan (NPS 1998)**

The *Long-Range Interpretive Plan* provides the details necessary to put the recommendations of the GMP into action. It focuses on how the mission goals relative to interpretation and education established in the GMP will be achieved over time. The *Long-Range Interpretive Plan* provided a comprehensive blueprint for the 2003 interpretive trail development, and it guides all interpretative and educational decisions that occur within this FDP, such as providing a visitor contact facility and high-quality visitor experience and satisfaction.

## **Cultural Landscapes Inventory for Saint Croix Island International Historic Site (NPS 2000, revised 2004)**

This inventory documents and evaluates the historic development and existing conditions of the park's landscape. The inventory provides general guidelines to guide development while ensuring the historic significance and integrity of the site is not lost over time.

### **The Plan**

The historic McGlashan-Nickerson house will be preserved, as will the orchard and yard surrounding the house. The privately owned, historic Pettegrove-Livingstone house and its cultural landscape will be protected from visual intrusions.

The National Park Service will construct a new maintenance facility at the site of the Lane-Robb house on St. Croix Drive (Figure 4). A new ranger station will be constructed along the parking circle. Either or both buildings may be used to provide on-site quarters for up to two seasonal employees. New buildings will be architecturally compatible with those on St. Croix Drive and will be no taller than two stories. All new buildings will be energy efficient and incorporate principles of sustainable design and construction. The first floor of all public buildings will be universally accessible.

No additional parking will be developed along the parking circle, and the vault toilet and interpretive trail will be retained. No transmission towers will be permitted because the site's small size prevents siting a tower where it would not have an adverse impact on the surrounding cultural landscapes of the historic McGlashan-Nickerson and Pettegrove-Livingstone houses. Emergency response for police and structural fire protection will continue to be provided by the city of Calais.

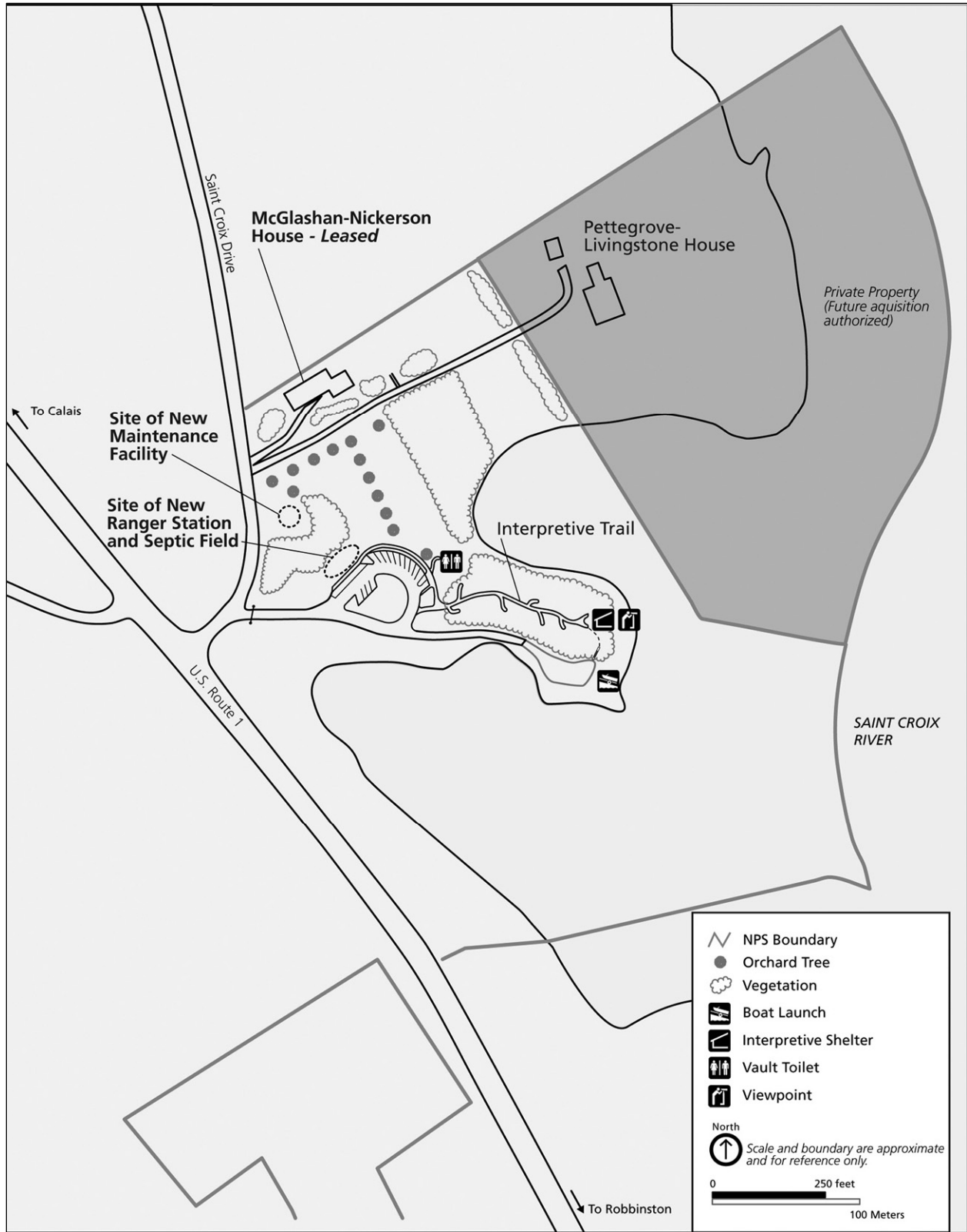
This plan is expected to last 10 to 15 years. It will be implemented in phases, as funding and partnership opportunities become available.

### **Protect McGlashan-Nickerson House**

The National Park Service will seek partners to protect the building. Options include a lease where the lessee would be responsible for historic preservation and maintenance in exchange for a long-term lease, or a cooperative agreement with another public entity where they would use and maintain the building. The primary intent will be to preserve the building's historically significant features. Use of the building will be consistent with its historical significance. For example, use as a private residence will be favored over commercial uses because it was historically used as a private residence. Any proposed changes of use or treatment of the building will be contingent on approval by the National Park Service and the State Historic Preservation Office. Use of the building will also be compatible to the site. Leasing the McGlashan-Nickerson house will take place after other facilities are constructed, and NPS operations have moved to the new facilities.

If we are not successful in finding a partner, we will continue to seek funding and explore other opportunities to stabilize and preserve the building.

**Figure 4** Facilities Development Plan – Site Plan



### **Construct Maintenance Facility**

An approximately 1,000- to 2,200-square-foot, two-story building for maintenance and storage will be constructed at the current site of the Lane-Robb house, with access to the building from St. Croix Drive. The building may contain a small heated work space and an unheated space for storing a small boat, vehicles, grounds and building maintenance equipment, and statue covers. It might also include a space for housing one or two seasonal employees during the summer. A parking and turning apron of approximately 2,500 square feet will be installed next to the building to accommodate maintenance functions and some employee parking. The building will share a septic system with the new ranger station. Trees and other vegetation will be planted to help screen the building from views from the McGlashan-Nickerson house and from St. Croix Drive while protecting, as much as possible, the existing water view in winter from the house directly across the street.

Once the new facility is built, the existing maintenance shed next to the McGlashan-Nickerson house will be removed from the site and the lawn restored.

### **Construct Ranger Station**

A new ranger station that can be either operated year-round for visitor education and park administration or closed in winter will be constructed directly adjacent to the parking circle. The building will have a footprint of approximately 1,000 square feet and will provide between approximately 1,000 and 2,000 square feet of usable space on two floors. It will contain at minimum an information desk, sales area, educational exhibits, staff and public restrooms, a water fountain, offices, staff break room, library space, meeting space, storage, and mechanical room. An education area large enough to protect groups of up to 40 visitors divided into two groups in inclement weather will be provided: 20 under the existing interpretive shelter and 20 in the ranger station.

The recently closed Downeast Heritage Museum contained interpretive exhibits consistent with the interpretive themes in the park's *Long-Range Interpretive Plan*. The National Park Service will attempt to obtain and incorporate appropriate exhibits into the new ranger station, providing that they are made available and the cost is not prohibitive. The National Park Service will consult with the Passamaquoddy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer to incorporate Passamaquoddy materials in the construction of the ranger station such as tribal designs, photos, or other representative elements.

### **Provide Utilities**

An underground septic system will be constructed to serve the ranger station restrooms and maintenance building. It will be located west of the ranger station, set back more than 100 feet from the upper edge of the shoreline of the Saint Croix River.

### **Provide Quarters**

Quarters will be built for two employees on-site—either in the new ranger station or maintenance building, or, less likely, in both. NPS employees will rent the quarters in accordance with NPS policies. Rental income will help pay for maintaining the buildings.

### **Improve Signs**

When construction is completed, a sign plan will be developed and implemented. Obsolete signs will be removed or replaced.

## Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures will be employed to avoid and minimize adverse impacts to the natural and human environment.

All components of this plan will comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, and would be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of the Maine Coastal Program. No ground-disturbing activities will commence until required permits or agency determinations of compliance with regulations have been obtained.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sediment and erosion control will be used to avoid and minimize soil loss and runoff into adjacent waters. These devices and practices may include installing temporary silt fences and sedimentation basins, spraying water to reduce air-borne dust, demarcating the limits of construction, covering soil piles, and keeping stockpiles outside of vegetated areas and away from wetlands and streams. Disturbed soil will be reseeded and stabilized with vegetation immediately. If soils cannot be revegetated immediately after disturbance because of season or growing conditions, they will be mulched with straw or wood chips to prevent soil erosion and invasion by non-native plants.

As much as possible, construction activities will be scheduled to allow continued visitor use of the site during construction. Some construction will be completed during the winter and off season, which will further minimize visitor impacts. Vegetative screens will be planted as necessary to help buildings blend into the landscape.

Excavations for building foundations and other ground-disturbing activities will be done in the presence of a trained archeologist to prevent adverse effects on archeological resources. In the unlikely event that previously undiscovered archeological resources are discovered during construction, all work in the immediate vicinity of the discovery will be halted until the resources are identified and documented and an appropriate mitigation strategy developed, if necessary, in consultation with the State and Tribal Historic Preservation Officers. If human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony are discovered during construction, provisions outlined in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 USC 3001) of 1990 will be followed.

Buildings and associated septic fields will be sited to minimize adverse effects on the orchard, natural vegetation, and adjacent shoreline and water resources.

Buildings will be similar in size, color, and architectural design as the surrounding community. Roof color will be dark to reduce visibility from afar. The areas surrounding new buildings will be planted with evergreen trees and other plants to screen them from view and help them blend into the landscape, while protecting, as much as possible, the existing water view in winter from the house directly across the street from the maintenance building.

## References

National Park Service. 2009. Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect (EA) for the Draft Facilities Development Plan, Saint Croix Island International Historic Site. Calais, Maine.

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