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Subject: New Golden Gate National Recreation Area General Management Plan
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To our City and County of San Francisco Partners:

Below is a press release we issued today announcing that Golden Gate National Recreation Area has a new General Management Plan. The vision in the plan continues the park's 42-year trajectory of welcoming millions of visitors for recreation and protecting park resources for future generations. This general plan does not prescribe specific uses, but instead offers a framework for future decisions. These future decisions will be made through efforts like the Dog Management Plan, which has been in development for over a decade with the input of thousands of interested stakeholders.

Please contact me if you have any questions about our new General Management Plan or anything else related to Golden Gate National Recreation Area

Howard Levitt

Golden Gate National Recreation Area News Release

For Immediate Release

Release date: February 9, 2015

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New General Management Plan Signed for Golden Gate National Recreation Area, including Alcatraz Island and Muir Woods

SAN FRANCISCO-- The National Park Service is pleased to announce that Regional Director Christine Lehnertz has signed the Record of Decision for the General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (GMP) for Golden Gate National Recreation Area, including Alcatraz Island, and Muir Woods National Monument. This action authorizes Golden Gate National Recreation Area to implement the new GMP. The plan replaces the 1980 general management plan which effectively guided the park for more than three decades.

“Golden Gate National Recreation Area is one of the most heavily visited sites in the National Park System – for good reason,” said Regional Director Lehnertz. “What people have loved about the park will be enhanced even more through the vision in the park’s outstanding new

GMP,” she added.

The GMP is the culmination of several years of effort involving the thoughtful input and participation of thousands of individuals, dozens of public agencies, and numerous outside organizations and stakeholder groups. A general management plan is a key document for any unit of the National Park System, because within the plan can be found the general framework that will direct and sustain more detailed planning, and guide management decisions over the next 20 years. The vision in this plan reinforces the importance of the park’s recreational, historical, and natural resources. It carries on and refines the vision established in the park’s early years, and provides a general framework for enhancing visitor opportunity and experience and protecting park resources for the future.

“Golden Gate was created with the notion that a person living in an urban area doesn’t have to travel hundreds of miles for a National Park experience,” said Superintendent Frank Dean. “From world class recreational pursuits of almost every description, to breathtaking scenery, to magnificent natural areas, to exceptional historic resources – a person can find it all in this park. The new GMP gives us a framework to make this great park even greater. We’re grateful for all of the input by the public over the 10 years of planning that led to the creation of this inspiring plan.”

The GMP does not address specific management issues, such as dog management or equestrian operations. Those uses have specific planning processes with public involvement and documentation.

The new GMP identifies the preferred alternatives - Connecting People with the Parks for parkland in San Mateo, San Francisco, and Marin counties; and, Focusing on National Treasures for Muir Woods and Alcatraz Island - as reshaped by public comments on the Draft and Final GMP/EIS. The plan includes a summary of comments and the NPS responses to them.

The Record of Decision signed by Regional Director Lehnertz, documenting the decision rationale, and the Final GMP are available on the park website. Click on <http://www.nps.gov/goga/parkmgmt/index.htm> to see both documents.

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Background:

GMP Highlights

The GMP is more than a list of projects. It’s about how the park will welcome visitors and preserve resources. Listed below are some of the tangible projects included in the GMP.

In Marin County

Stinson Beach: renovate visitor facilities to adapt to rising sea levels; and continue discussions with the community about parking and transit.

Muir Woods: reorganize parking and pedestrian paths; formalize continued operation of the shuttle; reduce congestion and parking along Muir Woods Road; explore the potential for thematic trails to interpret the conservation history as well as the magnificent primeval forest.

*Similar to Alcatraz Island, employ a system of **Indicators and Standards** to manage impacts of visitors on resources and the experience.*

Marin Headlands: develop a visitor facility combining information and food service at Rodeo Beach as a kind of “*Warming Hut*”; continue to restore the fortifications; continue to support park partners operations at Rodeo Beach.

Capehart area: remove the cluster of houses on the north side of Bunker Road to restore and improve the park-like qualities of that important entry to the Headlands. Remove additional structure to construct a centralized maintenance facility.

Slide Ranch: enhance the environmental and farm education center. (*We received numerous comments against removing the operation which was proposed in Alternative #2. This was a valid idea to have considered; however, it is not in the preferred alternative.*)

In the City and County of San Francisco (including Alcatraz Island)

San Francisco Bay Trail: enhance connections for visitors between Aquatic Park and Fort Mason Center.

Fort Mason: restore the landscape and gardens at the General’s Residence/Officers Club; cooperate with MUNI on transportation improvements like the Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit and extension of the historic streetcar (*F-Line*) to Fort Mason Center.

Alcatraz Island: highlight interpretation and preservation so visitors can be immersed in island history—additional rehabilitation of the Main Prison (*hospital and chapel*) and Bldg. 64 which could include new exhibits for the post office and store, and dorm-like overnight accommodations for volunteers; reopen the parade ground that overlooks San Francisco. Ongoing commitment to protect nesting water bird colonies.

As at Muir Woods, employ a system of Indicators and Standards to manage impacts of visitors on resources and the experience.

Ocean Beach: collaborate with the City of San Francisco, California State Coastal Conservancy, and others to create and implement a long-range master plan for corridor—looking beyond the park’s narrow property boundary. Continue to manage for ecological and recreational values.

Museum collections: work to improve storage and research facilities in historic buildings in the Presidio, possibly in one of the former cavalry stables

In San Mateo County—which was not part of the 1980 GMP

San Mateo Coast: emphasize collaboration among many agencies to manage the vast landscape mosaic for ecological and recreational values. Improve signs and other information to help people find and enjoy park sites. Manage parklands as Parks to the People.

San Mateo County Historical Association: cooperate on interpretation of related sites including the SF Bay Discovery Site on Sweeney Ridge (*250th anniversary in 2019*), the Sanchez Adobe, and Woodside Store.

Rancho Corral de Tierra: retain equestrian uses, restores habitat, and create a sustainable system of trails and trailheads.

Location TBD: explore a multi-agency visitor center. *(Several sites have been suggested, including one near Montara Lighthouse and others in Pacifica.)*

Tidal lands/offshore: expand the park boundary to allow these areas to be acquired in order to enhance our ability to cooperate with other agencies in resource conservation and management.

SF PUC Peninsula Watershed: cooperate with the PUC on scenic and recreational topics including trails that connect to the park and natural resource management.



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