

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

RECORD OF DECISION

THE JAMESTOWN PROJECT DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Jamestown Unit, Colonial National Historical Park  
and  
Jamestown National Historic Site

Virginia

The Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS) has prepared this Record of Decision (ROD) for the *Jamestown Project Final Development Concept Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (DCP/EIS)* for the Jamestown Unit of Colonial National Historical Park (Colonial NHP) and the Jamestown National Historic Site (collectively referred to as Historic *Jamestowne*). This ROD includes a statement of the decision made, a description of the project background, a detailed description of the alternative to be implemented, the basis for the decision, synopses of other alternatives considered, an overview of public and agency involvement in the decision-making process, findings on impairment of park resources and values, a description of the environmentally preferred alternative, and a listing of measures to minimize and/or mitigate environmental harm. In addition, the following materials are appended to this ROD:

- Appendix A
  - Table 1: Mitigation and Compliance
  - Table 2: List of Required Permits and Approvals for Project Completion
- Appendix B
  - Programmatic Agreement between the NPS, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), and the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for implementation of the *Jamestown Development Concept Plan*
- Appendix C
  - NPS Statement of Findings (SOF) on Floodplains and Wetlands
- Appendix D
  - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Biological Opinion relating to the bald eagle and sensitive joint-vetch

## DECISION (SELECTED ACTION)

The NPS will implement Alternative B as described in the *Jamestown Project Final Development Concept Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* issued in April 2003. Alternative B includes strategies for an updated interpretive experience; the improvement or replacement of facilities (including the current Visitor Center, collections storage, and parking); the addition of comfort/hospitality services and new interpretive venues; and enhanced and multimodal transportation options (including water taxis/tours, hike/bike trails, and shuttle services). Details of Alternative B are provided below under “Description of Alternative B.”

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

Historic *Jamestowne* includes both the Jamestown Unit of Colonial National Historical Park, approximately 1,800 acres owned by the United States of America and managed by the NPS, and the Jamestown National Historic Site, 22.5 acres owned and managed by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities or APVA. For both organizations, the purpose and primary significance of Jamestown is to preserve, interpret, and promote the history of the first permanent English colony in North America. In 1993, each organization prepared their own management plans for Jamestown. In 1996, in preparation for the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, the NPS and APVA explored and developed the initial concepts for the coordinated management of Jamestown. This *Joint Management Plan* laid the groundwork and began the planning process for the *Jamestown Project Development Concept Plan*. The document also created a unified mission statement for the integrated management of Jamestown: “...the APVA and NPS as partners will build upon our strong tradition as stewards of Jamestown’s cultural and natural resources. We are committed to reaching the broadest possible audience through preservation, research, scholarship, and education. We are committed to providing a high quality interpretive experience for each visitor to Jamestown.”<sup>1</sup>

Working from the initial concepts of the *Joint Management Plan*, the NPS and APVA established goals and objectives that were used as a framework for evaluating and developing alternative design concept plans for Jamestown. The goals and objectives were developed in accordance with fundamental NPS and APVA guidelines, including: the *General Management Plan for Colonial National Historical Park*<sup>2</sup>; *An Agenda for Institutional Development*<sup>3</sup>; *Jamestown Rediscovery™ Archeological Project*<sup>4</sup>; *Jamestown Archeological Assessment*; *Long Range Interpretive Plan, Jamestown*<sup>5</sup>; *Management Policies 2001*<sup>6</sup>; the *National Park Service Strategic Plan*<sup>7</sup>; *Strategic Plan for Colonial National Historical Park Fiscal Year 2001-2005*<sup>8</sup>; and the *Resource Management Plan for Colonial National Historical Park*<sup>9</sup>. Public input and an understanding of the resources and values at Jamestown were also considered.

Prior to formalization of the *Jamestown Project DCP/EIS*, the NPS and APVA developed a *Draft Master Plan*<sup>10</sup> to identify needed improvements to facilities and programs at Jamestown and to begin discussions of how to remedy these issues and implement the goals of the joint management plan. Lack of site recognition and

<sup>1</sup> NPS, U.S. Department of the Interior. February 1996. *Joint Management Plan for Jamestown: Initial Concepts*. Prepared for the APVA and Colonial NHP. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Philadelphia Support Office.

<sup>2</sup> NPS, U.S. Department of the Interior. 1993. Denver: Denver Service Center.

<sup>3</sup> APVA. 1991.

<sup>4</sup> APVA. 1993.

<sup>5</sup> Colonial NHP, NPS, U.S. Department of the Interior. July 21, 2000.

<sup>6</sup> NPS, U.S. Department of the Interior. 2000. Washington, D.C.

<sup>7</sup> NPS, U.S. Department of the Interior. 2001. Washington, D.C.

<sup>8</sup> Colonial NHP, NPS, U.S. Department of the Interior. April 12, 2000.

<sup>9</sup> Colonial NHP, NPS, U.S. Department of the Interior. Revised April 20, 1999.

<sup>10</sup> APVA and Colonial NHP. October 6, 1999.

education, limited visitor engagement and understanding, and inadequate operations and facilities were noted as the main reasons that Jamestown is not being fully recognized, understood, presented, or explored. Based on Jamestown's importance to United States history and its infinite opportunities for research and discovery, the overall purpose of the Jamestown Project is for the APVA and NPS to jointly research, protect, and present to the public the resources at Jamestown. Supporting that purpose, the project objectives are to:

- Improve the Quality of the Visitor Experience,
- Protect the Jamestown Collection and Associated Archival Materials,
- Enhance Research and Educational Opportunities, and
- Strengthen the APVA/NPS Partnership.

These are discussed in detail in "Chapter 1: Introduction: Purpose and Need" (Section 1.6) of the *Jamestown Project DCP/EIS*.

In addition, the DCP/EIS was developed in concert with the *Jamestown Island Interpretive Plan*<sup>11</sup>, a document further defining the interpretive goals and objectives based on the fundamental NPS and APVA guidelines. The plan presents specific ideas to support the interpretive approach, engagement with the site, the concept of "Discovery," the proposed themes, and the notion of making choices. Most importantly, these ideas include:

- The approach to the Island and a clear sense of arrival,
- Interpretive anchors at the east and west ends of the site,
- Some collections displayed close to the historic core area to show their relationship to the Townsite landscape and 1607 James Fort site,
- Experimental archaeology sites and focused interpretive points, and
- Site overlooks.

These were considered essential elements of the interpretive approach, and they formed the basis for the physical expressions of that approach, as developed by the DCP/EIS.

## **DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE B**

Alternative B includes the following main components that support the project purpose, goals, and objectives while enhancing Jamestown's cultural and natural values and minimizing environmental impacts.

The **Intermodal Transportation Terminal** is a new, 2,000 square-foot facility at Neck of Land that will provide orientation to the Jamestown area visitor experience (both Historic *Jamestowne* and Jamestown Settlement), destination/transport options, ticketing, and interpretation. Parking (implemented in phases) for up to 250 cars and 15 buses will be included. The facility will be unstaffed December through March but will remain open to visitors year-round.

The replacement **Visitor Center and educational facility**, an approximately 19,000 square-foot facility located in the Island parking lot, will provide an entry experience to the Island's historic resources, including the Townsite and the Jamestown Rediscovery™ Center, eliminating confusion and providing for the immediate needs of visitors. The new facility will provide restrooms, ticketing, orientation, staff offices, food and drink, and an interpretive overview of the entire site. It will also provide adequate space for educational needs, which has always been lacking at Jamestown.

<sup>11</sup> Haley Sharpe Design. 2001.

The **Jamestown Rediscovery™ Center** expansion (by approximately 8,000 square feet) will offer research facilities and state-of-the-art storage and protection for the APVA and NPS portions of the Jamestown collection. This facility will bring together, in a safe structure and location, one of the most important collections of 17<sup>th</sup> century artifacts in the United States.

The new **Observation Building** will be a hub of interpretation for the site through views, exhibits, and the use of virtual reality. This facility will be located at the site of the existing Visitor Center but will be much smaller in scale (5,000 square feet versus 29,000 square feet) and will not overpower the historic Townsite. The basis of the experience at the Observation Building is to allow visitors to view the objects, landscape, and personal stories or historical events all at a single moment in time.

The creation of **interpretive anchors** at the east and west ends of the Townsite will provide new exhibits and interpretation of archives, collections, and experiences of the historic site. The **Ludwell exhibit facility (Archaearium)** will anchor the western end of the Townsite. This 7,500 square-foot facility will provide an interpretive experience specifically examining the process of archaeological investigation at Jamestown and giving strong emphasis to key interpretive themes. Artifacts and objects will be displayed here to illustrate the themes while archaeologists, craftspeople, and students/interns may be seen demonstrating 17<sup>th</sup> century building techniques and current archaeological processes. Restrooms, shelter, and a conditioned environment are provided for visitors, and the change of pace and texture to the visit will provide a reinvigoration of interest and concentration for visitors. The **Outdoor Program area** will anchor the eastern end of the Townsite and provides an opportunity for visitors to see special programs dealing with a variety of themes, including the American Indian and African American stories. Restrooms, drinks, and seating and shade will also be offered at this site.

The **Dale House** interior will be modified for provision of light fare food and drink service. The Dale House site will also provide seating, shade and beautiful vistas to the James River.

**New transportation options** in Alternative B include waterborne transportation from Neck of Land to the Island and to Powhatan Creek Overlook, with boat docks constructed at all three sites. Water transport offers a new opportunity to tell interpretive stories that are currently not being told. Modal transfer opportunities are provided at Neck of Land, Jamestown Island, and the Powhatan Creek Overlook. The Neck of Land facility will have parking for buses (and bus turnarounds), a boat dock, and the trailhead for the pedestrian/bicycle path. The pedestrian/bicycle path will begin on Neck of Land at the Intermodal Transportation Terminal and will follow the pre-1957 road trace over Neck of Land. The asphalt still remains on most of this road and will be used for the pedestrian/bicycle path until reaching the tree line-marsh interface where it will traverse the marsh as an elevated boardwalk until reaching the Back River. A new pedestrian/bicycle bridge will connect the marsh boardwalk to Jamestown Island. These new transportation alternatives will also offer **new interpretive opportunities**, which will enhance the visitor experience. In particular, the hike/bike trail, the interpretive boat tour, and the Neck of Land facility will include interpretive opportunities that tell the stories of the American Indians and African Americans that have not been adequately told. These areas will provide venues for natural resource interpretation as well.

## **BASIS FOR DECISION**

This section provides the rationale for selecting and implementing Alternative B for the *Jamestown Project Development Concept Plan*. In arriving at this decision, the NPS, APVA, and planning team members evaluated and compared each of the Jamestown Project alternatives with respect to how well they met the stated project purpose and need, improved the existing conditions at Historic Jamestowne, protected resources and values (including the potential for adverse impacts or impairment), and met NPS and APVA management policies.

The selected alternative most completely supports the goals of the Jamestown Project, including conveying the significance of Jamestown; providing meaningful experiences for visitors of all ages, races, and nationalities; presenting the story of peoples from three continents and the environment they encountered here; interpreting the unique cultural and natural resources of the project area; and ensuring that the Island's cultural and natural resources are preserved for future generations. It is the only alternative to effectively solve all the remedial factors in the current visitor experience and to fully realize the goals and objectives of the interpretive approach, as outlined by the *Jamestown Island Interpretive Plan*<sup>12</sup>. Alternative B provides the complete mix of elements that makes the visitor experience uniquely appropriate to the site, and it best fulfills the joint APVA/NPS Jamestown mission.

### **Improve the Quality of the Visitor Experience**

Implementation of Alternative B will increase and expand visitor services and amenities, interpretation and telling of stories that have not been told before at Jamestown, options for transport to Historic *Jamestowne*, and the opportunity for the visitor to be engaged with the entire project site.

The Intermodal Transportation Terminal provides the best start to the interpretive visit. It allows the visitor to gain the best sense of anticipation, excitement, and specialness about the site. This is a very rare opportunity to truly engage visitors with the site before they arrive at it. New interpretation of the natural resources and the American Indian presence at Jamestown will be related to visitors as they either walk or cycle through the marsh or make their way by boat along the Back River. The facility structure itself is envisaged as a small-scale structure (2,000 square feet), low-key and sufficient only to provide the necessary orientation material and support functions to the transportation modal changes. In addition, parking (implemented in phases) for up to 250 cars and 15 buses will be included. This facility will help reduce automobile traffic on Jamestown Island and will help visitors understand their options for going to both Jamestown Settlement and Jamestown Island thus reducing visitor confusion between the two sites. The visitor will arrive by private vehicle, by bike or by public transportation at a welcome point at the Neck of Land area, on the mainland across the Back River from Jamestown Island. Visitors arriving by private vehicle will be encouraged to park at Neck of Land; those on public transportation have the option of alighting here or continuing on to the Island itself. Taken as a whole, this experience forms a transition from the world of marshalling kids into cars, driving and route-finding, gas stations, etc. and into the world of adventure, of human drama, of emotion, and of discovery. The orientation process starts at Neck of Land but must continue throughout the visit to Jamestown.

The replacement Visitor Center and educational facility will provide an entry experience to the Island's historic resources, including the Townsite and the Jamestown Rediscovery™ Center, eliminating confusion and providing for the immediate needs of visitors. The removal of the Visitor Center from the Townsite will lessen the impact this structure currently has on the cultural landscape. Visitors, having arrived on the Island, will make their way to the new Visitor Center through carefully landscaped surroundings that respect the cultural resource of the Colonial Parkway termination and provide opportunities for outdoor interpretive exhibits such as a site model or sculpture. The location of the Visitor Center and educational facility on the Island, in the existing parking lot, is important for several reasons: it provides a sense of arrival; it provides a re-orientation point and necessary visitor facilities such as restrooms; it provides the opportunity to introduce and set the scene for the start of the visit for those arriving onto the Island by car and bus and for the next stage of the visit for those arriving from the Neck of Land node by other means; it provides a base for educational activity and other interpretive programming close to the core historic site but not on top of the site; it removes some of the major visitor facility needs from the core site itself, while not over loading the functions of the building. It also allows

<sup>12</sup> Haley Sharpe Design. 2001.

a spreading of lower-key, smaller-scale visitor facility structures around the site, rather than creating a visually intrusive, monumental structure.

Sitting as it does at the pivotal point of the historic site, the new Observation Building is the ideal place to make connections. Views across the site are possible from this elevated position. Visitors not only view the historic objects as close as practicable to the historic sites where they were found, but they also overlook the site at the same time and are able, through the use of virtual reality, to “see” the site at chosen times in the past. This facility is designed to maximize the understanding of the Island as a cultural resource and as a laboratory of discovery.

Along with the Observation Building, the creation of interpretive anchors at the east and west ends of the Townsite will provide new exhibits and interpretation of archives, collections, and experiences of the historic site. The visitor experience will no longer be focused at the core of the historic Townsite, but visitors will be drawn to explore the entire site. These facilities offer new interpretive opportunities and programs, further enhancing the visitor experience and understanding of the site.

As previously noted, the new alternative modes of transportation will allow for new interpretive opportunities as well. These new transportation options also provide new physical experiences and approaches for visitors to Historic *Jamestowne*. Instead of seeing Jamestown by car or charter bus, visitors can enjoy the outdoor experience and hike, bicycle, or ride on the waterways via the water taxi or interpretive boat tour. Alternative B is the only alternative to offer direct routes to Jamestown Island using all three options.

Finally, the addition of amenities over the entire site will greatly enhance the visitor experience. By having features located at various and distinct parts of the Island, visitors have several choices how to structure their experience and to interact with the exhibits. Most importantly, restrooms and drinks will be included in major facilities and at the Outdoor Program area, allowing visitors to spend more time across the entire site, instead of limiting their visit to the core area.

### **Protect the Jamestown Collection and Associated Archival Material**

The total Jamestown museum collection, owned by both the APVA and NPS, contains more than 1.1 million objects and is continuously growing. At present, the APVA and NPS portions of the Jamestown collection are physically separated on the Island, and the NPS portion is stored in an area that puts the collection at risk of damage or loss from flooding. Alternative B is the only alternative to bring together the Jamestown collection, on the Island, in a state-of-the-art storage and research facility. The expansion of the Jamestown Rediscovery™ Center will bring together, in a safe structure and location, one of the most important collections of 17<sup>th</sup> century artifacts in the United States.

### **Enhance Research and Educational Opportunities**

Alternative B does the best job of facilitating the joint APVA and NPS management and coordination of research and educational opportunities at Historic *Jamestowne*. Storing the NPS and APVA portions of the Jamestown collection in one facility will allow for coordinated conservation, processing, documentation, research, and interpretation of the collection. A research and staff library will be centrally located within the facility and will include materials from each organization. This fosters collaboration between the APVA and NPS and eases the sharing of knowledge and discovery. For outside researchers, having the collection housed together with adequate workspace will allow for simultaneous access to the entire Jamestown collection, thus decreasing travel time and duplication of effort.

Under Alternative B, educational facilities for both the APVA and NPS will be located in the new Visitor Center. This will allow for coordinated programs and site tours. Also, the close proximity of the facility to the

Townsite will be advantageous to educational program directors, interpreters, and park rangers and volunteers providing visitor tours. Designated office and educational space will be provided within the facility.

### **Strengthen the APVA/NPS Partnership**

Alternative B provides the best and most feasible solutions to foster the partnership between the APVA and NPS and to create an environment for active research. The story of Jamestown and its importance to the nation is not the single property of either institution. It is rather the collective obligation of the APVA and NPS to work together to disseminate new research and discoveries through exhibits, programs, and publications. By housing the research under one roof, sharing the responsibility of exhibition and program development, and promoting the 17<sup>th</sup> century story through the interpretive landscape, irrespective of the property line, the true essence and importance of this remarkable American landmark will be served.

## **OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The following discussion provides a general description of the other alternatives considered for the *Jamestown Project DCP/EIS*. Each alternative is described in detail in Volume 1, Chapter 2 of the DCP/EIS.

### **Alternative A**

This alternative assumes continuing current management practices at Jamestown without any substantive changes in facilities, infrastructure, or resource investment. This concept provides a baseline from which to compare other alternatives, to evaluate the magnitude of proposed changes, and to measure the environmental effects of those changes. This no action concept follows the guidance of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), which describes the No Action Alternative as no change from the existing management direction or level of management intensity. In Alternative A, there would be no construction of new facilities and no infrastructure changes, except to accommodate many current approved plans of the NPS and APVA. Also, the NPS portion of the Jamestown collection would remain in the basement of the existing 1956 Visitor Center, at risk of damage and/or loss from flooding and leaks.

Access to Jamestown Island would remain unchanged, with visitors coming on the Colonial Parkway to both the Island and the Settlement. Visitors would also come to Jamestown Island from Route 31 (Jamestown Road) through the Jamestown Settlement property on Route 359 and onto the Colonial Parkway. There would be no pedestrian/bicycle path beyond the use of the Colonial Parkway, as it exists. There would also be no facility to accommodate boat access to the Island. Visitors would continue to go through the staffed gatehouse, stopping there for ticketing and orientation. Visitors would drive to the Island, then park, and walk to the existing Visitor Center.

### **Alternative C**

This alternative concentrates new facilities at Neck of Land and removes all parking and the Visitor Center from Jamestown Island. The amount of development on Neck of Land would be extensive: the NPS portion of the Jamestown collection, the Intermodal Transportation Terminal, and the Visitor Center would be located on Neck of Land. Included with the facilities would be parking spaces for 300 cars and 20 buses. Alternative C would encourage vehicles to stay off the Island except for staff and operations. In addition, a small ticketing facility would be located in the existing Visitor Center parking lot. Neck of Land would function as a major gateway to both the region and the Jamestown Project so visitors could immediately understand their options for going to Jamestown Settlement and to Jamestown Island. The APVA portion of the Jamestown collection would remain in the existing Jamestown Rediscovery™ Center on Jamestown Island. Exhibits and lab functions would move into this facility from the existing Dale House.

### **Alternative D**

This alternative differs from Alternatives B, C, and E because no development is proposed on Neck of Land and no alternative modes of transportation would be used except buses from Colonial Williamsburg that would go straight to the Island and hiking and biking on the existing Parkway. Alternative D also differs from the other alternatives in the scale, design, and location of the Visitor Center/educational facility. In this alternative, the Visitor Center, NPS collections and research, educational facilities, and the Observation Building would be accommodated in one large, three-story building on the site of the existing Visitor Center. Collections would be relocated from the basement to the third floor in order to place them above the 500-year flood zone. The enlarged building would serve visitors with orientation, food, restrooms, retail, exhibits, educational classrooms, and views and interpretation of the historic site. The facility would serve researchers by giving access to the collections and research opportunities in very close proximity to the sources of the artifacts and ongoing archaeology. Enlargement of the existing 1956 Visitor Center would cause additional visual intrusion onto the historical site. The APVA and NPS portions of the Jamestown collection would remain separated. Parking would remain in its current location on the Island, retaining the existing 333 spaces for cars and 25 for buses. There would be no boat transport to Jamestown Island, and pedestrians and cyclists would have to use the existing pavement of the Colonial Parkway because no separate trails would be constructed.

### **Alternative E**

In this alternative, the NPS portion of the Jamestown collection would be relocated from the Jamestown Project area to a remote location in the Williamsburg/James City County area. This would keep the Jamestown collection separated, and NPS artifacts would be removed from their place of discovery. In this alternative the proposed replacement Visitor Center would be in the existing Island parking lot. Alternative E also has an Intermodal Transportation Terminal at Neck of Land, but the parking would accommodate fewer cars than in Alternative B. This facility at Neck of Land would give visitors basic choices from the Colonial Parkway, including information about alternative modes of transportation to the Island. The pedestrian/bicycle path in this alternative would begin on Neck of Land at the Intermodal Transportation Terminal and proceed west over the marsh. Once off the upland area, the path would turn into a boardwalk and cross the Powhatan Creek on a new pedestrian/bicycle bridge. Pedestrians and cyclists could then get on the Colonial Parkway, go to the Glasshouse or Jamestown Settlement, or continue on to Jamestown Island.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

On September 29, 2000, the NPS published in the *Federal Register* Volume 65, Number 190 a Notice of Intent to prepare a Development Concept Plan/Environmental Impact Statement for the Jamestown Project. The *Final Development Concept Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* has been developed pursuant to Sections 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (Public Law 91-190) and the CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1508.22). Public involvement included a visioning process; intensive charrettes; formal scoping; briefings for NPS and APVA staff, as well as government officials; a formal public comment process; public meetings and outreach; and meetings with affected federal, state, and local governments and agencies, tribal groups, and interested organizations and individuals. These activities are briefly summarized below, and a detailed discussion is presented in Volume 2, Chapter 5 of the DCP/EIS.

### **Visioning Process and Scoping**

In 1997 and 1998, as part of the ICON Architecture, Inc. study, a visioning process was initiated to identify major stakeholders and develop a common "vision" for Jamestown. Out of this process, a framework/outline for interpretive approaches and the visitor experience were established. The charrette brought together a distinguished group of nationally recognized scholars, planners, architects, cultural resource specialists, and

educators to review the vision and offer recommendations and constructive analyses. Input from the design charrette was described and visualized in the *Draft Master Plan for Jamestown*<sup>13</sup>.

The Jamestown Project planning process began with a series of scoping meetings. Individuals and groups were informed in advance of the meetings and invited to participate. This project has engaged interested individuals and organizations outside as well as inside the APVA and NPS. The scoping meetings included: media representatives; business and tourism representatives; Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation staff and board members; representatives of the African-American community; Colonial Williamsburg Foundation staff and board members; educators; representatives of the Virginia Indian community; representatives of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage; representatives of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources; representatives of the Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department; the Executive Director of the James River Association; the Vice President in charge of special projects for Colonial Williamsburg; local government officials; representatives of area attractions; historians and researchers; adjacent and local homeowners; historic preservationists; transportation stakeholders; and local church representatives.

### **Consultation with American Indian Tribes**

Potentially relevant to the development of the Jamestown Project are the laws and regulations that deal with American Indian relationships and discovery of human remains. American Indian archaeological resources (including two Clovis points) have been located at the Jamestown Project site, and several Virginia tribes, including the Mattaponi, Pamunkey, and Chickahominy, have historical connections to the site. No tribes now use the site or surrounding areas for traditional purposes. In addition, none of the tribes with historical ties to the Jamestown Project site are federally recognized.

Stakeholder meetings were held specifically for the American Indian community; in addition, APVA and NPS representatives met twice with the United Indians of Virginia, a consortium of seven tribes, for presentation of and consultation on the alternatives. On January 20, 2001, there was a presentation and discussion of the Jamestown Project with the board of the United Indians of Virginia at Tsena Commocko Church in New Kent County, Virginia. The second meeting was held on March 31, 2001, again with the board of the United Indians of Virginia. During this meeting at the Chickahominy Tribal Center in Charles City, Virginia, project representatives presented preliminary alternatives. On May 15, 2001, the NPS Jamestown Project Director presented the preliminary alternatives to the Council of Virginia Indians, an official entity established by the Commonwealth of Virginia, at the council's monthly meeting. Project representatives met again with the United Indians of Virginia in November 2001 and March 2002.

To date, comments received from these consultations have been related to interpretation and how the stories and histories of Jamestown have been and will be told. Currently, interpretation of the American Indian story is fairly limited at Jamestown. Representatives are excited about Alternative B and the telling of the American Indian story at Neck of Land and on the proposed tour boat. No direct comments have been related to the proposed facilities themselves.

### **Consultation with the African-American Community**

Because Jamestown is recognized as the first landing place for Africans coming to an English colony in North America (1619), efforts have been made specifically to gather perspectives from the African-American community about Jamestown and its history, including experiences of free and enslaved Africans and African-Americans. In addition to the stakeholder meeting held to gather perspectives from the African-American

<sup>13</sup> APVA and Colonial NHP. October 6, 1999.

community, various discussions have been held to gather their input, particularly on the interpretive themes and how they can best be reflected in the proposed facilities. These discussions included a meeting with the NPS Jamestown Project Director on April 23, 2001, and a round table discussion at Hampton University on May 16, 2001.

Comments received at the stakeholder meetings, public meetings, and round table discussions have focused mainly on how the African and African-American story is told at Jamestown. As with the American Indian representatives, comments related to proposed facilities have been limited. Although the Jamestown Project does not focus on how stories will be told, these comments have been carefully considered by the interpretive planners and will be addressed during future phases of the project related to interpretive and exhibit planning.

### **Public Meetings**

Early in the process, the planning team held a series of public meetings to inform people of the project and gain public input. A total of six public meetings were held. The first two meetings were held in October 2000 at Jamestown Island to introduce the concept of enhancing research and educational opportunities, improving the visitor experience, and protecting the collections at Jamestown. Those attending the public meeting were asked for their reaction to making changes on the Island in general and for their views regarding potential alternative concepts. Comments reinforced views expressed during the scoping process. Most of the interest and concern centered on interpretation: what stories would be told and how. Points that were emphasized pertaining to the physical changes included maintaining the tranquil nature and aesthetics of the Island; the need to reduce visitor confusion between Historic *Jamestowne*, the original site, and Jamestown Settlement, the living history museum; and the need for the NPS and APVA to work together with the Jamestown Settlement for joint programs and tickets. Providing a gateway to orient visitors to all of Jamestown (both the Island and the Settlement) was requested.

The second series of public meetings were held in May 2001. Five preliminary alternatives (including the No Action Alternative) were presented, and those in attendance were asked to comment on the elements of each. Comments and concerns included keeping new Neck of Land facilities seasonal; considering the impact of the Neck of Land facilities on the residents of Neck-O-Land Road and on the water quality of the area; the addition of docks and boat traffic within the narrow passage of Back River; keeping the APVA and NPS collections together on the Island; and limiting vehicular traffic on the Island to maintain the tranquility and sacredness of the historic site.

On July 29, 2002, the Notice of Availability for the *Jamestown Project Draft Development Concept Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* was published in the *Federal Register* Volume 67, Number 145. The document was available for public review for 60 days. Copies of the document were available at local libraries and at both the Yorktown and Jamestown Visitor Centers. Documents were also sent to interested individuals, agencies and organizations. Approximately 30 days into this review, public meetings were held on September 12, 2002, to solicit comments and inform the public of the Preferred Alternative, Alternative B. Press releases and public notices were used to announce the availability of the document as well as the public meeting times.

Approximately 18 federal, state, and local agencies and organizations provided comments on the document. Letters and emails were received from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; U.S. Coast Guard; Federal Highway Administration; Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation; Virginia Department of Environmental Quality; Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; Virginia Department of Health; Virginia Department of Transportation; Virginia Marine Resources Commission; Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy; Virginia Department of Forestry; Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department; Virginia Department of Historic Resources; Virginia Tourism Corporation; James City County; James River Association; and the

Williamsburg Area Bicyclists. In addition, approximately 76 individuals provided formal comments: 48 of which were part of a campaign to allow non-motorized personal watercraft access at Jamestown.

In general, the majority of the comments received were in support of the Preferred Alternative (Alternative B). Agency comments offered guidance on implementing the Preferred Alternative and ways to successfully mitigate and minimize potential impacts to resources. Several individuals gave testimony at the public meeting that they supported the No Action Alternative because they were concerned with the effect of proposed actions on existing boat traffic and water skiing within Back River.

## **Interagency Consultation**

### ***Consultation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources***

Both the APVA and NPS properties are listed on the *National Register of Historic Places* as National Historic Sites. To ensure that any proposals that could potentially affect properties listed on the *National Register* comply with the provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer, as represented by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR), were invited to participate early in the planning process. On October 24, 2000, the NPS and APVA held an initial scoping meeting with regulatory agencies that included both the ACHP and VDHR. Representatives of the SHPO have participated in core planning efforts, including the presentation of draft alternatives and provided comments on the Draft DCP/EIS.

On August 24, 2001, APVA and NPS representatives met with Ms. Ethel Eaton of the SHPO to discuss compliance issues related to the Jamestown Project. Those issues included the archaeological compliance needs for the APVA property; potential impacts of the addition to the Jamestown Rediscovery™ Center proposed in Alternative B; and the construction proposed near the Ludwell site in all of the alternatives. Ms. Eaton brought examples of programmatic agreements, discussed their content, and outlined what the planning team needed to do. That discussion focused on the need for any construction-related excavation to be very closely supervised by the APVA archaeologists. This supervisory approach applies to NPS lands as well. Prior to any ground-disturbing action by the NPS or APVA, a professional archaeologist will determine the need for any additional archaeological inventory or data recovery.

In another meeting on September 7, 2001, the project team discussed with Ms. Eaton the procedure to be followed for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Since time was of the essence, Ms. Eaton suggested that rather than combine the NEPA and 106 compliance documents, the 106 compliance documentation could be prepared through a programmatic agreement. In early December 2001, Karen Rehm, Chief Historian with Colonial NHP, consulted with Ms. Eaton on the development of a draft programmatic agreement. Based upon this consultation it was decided that a three-way programmatic agreement for the implementation of the Preferred Alternative would be developed between the NPS, SHPO, and ACHP once the SHPO and ACHP had reviewed the DCP/EIS. The APVA would serve as a concurring party. This Programmatic Agreement has been finalized and signed, and a copy is located in Appendix B.

### ***Consultation with Agencies Related to Threatened and Endangered Species***

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.) requires all federal agencies to consult with the FWS to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by the agency does not jeopardize the continue existence of listed species or critical habitat. Communications with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of Natural Heritage (VDNH), the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF), and the FWS indicated that several federal- and state-listed species, as well as species of special concern, have been documented within and adjacent to the Jamestown Project site. According to

studies by the VDNH, Colonial NHP hosts the second-highest number of rare, threatened, and endangered species of all the NPS units in Virginia.

Of special concern, the bald eagle and bald eagle habitat and the sensitive joint-vetch and its habitat were located in the project area during the planning process. The NPS initiated informal consultation with FWS and met with the agency on October 25, 2000; February 22, March 5, June 22, August 27, and October 2, 2001; and September 20, 2002, in order to discuss ways to avoid and/or minimize impacts to these species as well as potential mitigation and compensation measures for unavoidable impacts. During the development of alternatives, changes were made to accommodate recommendations of the FWS, as well as VDNH and VDGIF. Colonial NHP contracted with VDNH to prepare a Biological Assessment. The Assessment was completed in November 2002 and submitted to the FWS, thus initiating formal consultation under the Endangered Species Act. Based on the information provided in the Biological Assessment, the FWS prepared its Biological Opinion in January 2003. The signed Biological Opinion is attached to this ROD (Appendix D).

### **FINDINGS ON IMPAIRMENT OF PARK RESOURCES AND VALUES**

The NPS has determined that implementation of Alternative B will not constitute an impairment to the resources and values at Jamestown. This conclusion is based on a thorough analysis of the environmental impacts described in the *Jamestown Project Final Development Concept Plan/Environmental Impact Statement*, the public comments received, relevant scientific studies, and the professional judgment of the decision-maker guided by the direction in Director's Order 55. While the proposed plan has some adverse impacts, in all cases these adverse impacts are the result of actions taken to preserve and restore other park resources and values. Overall, the plan results in major benefits to park resources and values, opportunities for their enjoyment, and does not result in impairment.

In determining whether an impairment may occur, park managers consider the duration, severity, and magnitude of the impact; the resources and values affected; and direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the action. According to NPS policy, "An impact would be more likely to constitute an impairment to the extent that it affects a resource or value whose conservation is: a) necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of the park; b) key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park; or c) identified as a goal in the park's general management plan or other relevant NPS planning documents" (Director's Order 55 and *NPS Management Policies 2001*).

### **ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

The Environmentally Preferred Alternative is defined by CEQ as "the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in the National Environmental Policy Act Section 101 (b)." Section 101 (b) states that the Environmentally Preferred Alternative should: "...(1) fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations; (2) ensure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings; (3) attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk of health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences; (4) preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage and maintain, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice; (5) achieve a balance between population and resource use that will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities; and (6) enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources." Basically, "this means the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment; it also means the alternative which best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources" (CEQ 1981).

While Alternative D would not maximize the interpretive use of the resource and does not physically allow for meeting the purpose and need of the project to the extent that the other alternatives do because it is consolidated on the original footprint of the existing Visitor Center, it has the fewest physical impacts to cultural and environmental resources. Therefore, Alternative D has been identified as the Environmentally Preferred Alternative. Alternative D would fulfill all of the goals of NEPA set forth by the CEQ by protecting cultural and natural resources for future use (goals 1 and 3) while adding amenities that would promote a safe and aesthetically-pleasing interpretive experience (goals 2, 4, and 6).

Alternative D proposes very little new construction in undisturbed areas; nothing is proposed at Neck of Land, there is no boat tour within Back River, and there are no hike/bike trails or bridges. Therefore, the upland and wetland habitats at Neck of Land remain intact, and the sensitive joint-vetch and bald eagle habitats are avoided. In addition, no modifications to the Colonial Parkway would be required at Neck of Land or within the Island parking lot.

On the other hand, there are various impacts related to Alternative D that the NPS Preferred Alternative, Alternative B, either does not have or may negatively impact the visitor experience. By keeping all of the parking on the Island, bus and vehicular traffic would greatly increase as visitation growth occurs. A bald eagle nest is within close proximity to the Island parking lot, and the increased traffic may have an adverse impact on the eagles. In addition, the reconfigured existing Visitor Center would increase in height by an additional story. Not only would this structure continue to be a physical and visual intrusion within the cultural landscape, but also its volume would increase the minor impact this structure currently has on the 100-year flood zone.

Alternative D was not chosen as the NPS Preferred Alternative because it lacks many elements that would contribute to meeting the purpose and need of the project. There is no collocation of collections for collaboration and research of the entire Jamestown collection. This also weakens the existing partnership. Alternative D does not open up the historical and cultural landscape for viewing due to the large multi-story building in the middle of the historic site. There is nothing in Alternative D that helps orient the visitor to choices within the context of the Jamestown Project. The huge problem of visitor confusion would continue with the implementation of this alternative. Also, there is no opportunity for new interpretive stories of settlers of all nationalities to be told via different approaches to the Island, either by water or on foot or bicycle. This diminishes the capacity of the project to attract and educate a wider, more diverse audience to the site. The visitor in Alternative D is totally dependent on the automobile and will not become engaged with Jamestown until they come to the Visitor Center in the historic Townsite. This alternative also does not encourage alternative modes of transport.

Although Alternative D is identified as the Environmentally Preferred Alternative, the NPS Preferred Alternative, Alternative B, is environmentally supportive. It does fulfill the goals established by CEQ for an Environmentally Preferred Alternative. It would maximize the interpretive use of the resource, while promoting in the most effective way, public recognition of the need to continue to preserve, protect, and cherish the site long into the future (goals 1, 4, and 5). Alternative B maintains a high level of protection to natural and cultural resources while concurrently attaining the widest range of visitor uses of the site without further degradation (goals 2, 3, 4, and 5).

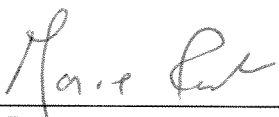
### **MEASURES TO MINIMIZE ENVIRONMENTAL HARM (MITIGATION)**

During preparation of the *Jamestown Project Development Concept Plan*, the APVA and NPS incorporated measures to minimize the adverse effects of construction activity associated with Alternative B. Tables 1 and 2 (Appendix A) provide a list of the mitigative and compliance measures that the APVA and NPS will implement as part of the Jamestown Project. The NPS will have the primary and full responsibility for coordinating the specific elements of each mitigation measure, including those that involve cooperation or approval of other


agencies, including the APVA. The NPS will also be responsible for ensuring that each mitigation measure has been implemented as specified in the *Jamestown Project Final Development Concept Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* and summarized in Tables 1 and 2. A mitigation monitoring plan will be developed prior to the start of construction and will also be implemented prior to construction to obtain appropriate baseline information. In addition, because the project scope will require a phased construction plan spanning several years, the NPS will perform additional environmental analyses to tier off of the DCP/EIS if time and conditions change enough to warrant it.

**CONCLUSION**


The above factors and considerations warrant implementing Alternative B, as identified in the *Jamestown Project Final Development Concept Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* and this Record of Decision. Alternative B provides the most comprehensive and effective method among the alternatives considered for meeting the National Park Service's purposes, goals, and criteria for managing the Jamestown Unit of Colonial NHP and for meeting national environmental policy goals. The selection of Alternative B would not result in the impairment of park resources and values and will allow the NPS to preserve park resources and provide for their enjoyment by future generations.

APPROVED:   
Marie Rust  
Regional Director, Northeast Region

DATE: 5-13-03

RECOMMENDED:   
Alec Gould  
Superintendent, Colonial National Historical Park

DATE: 5/8/03

RECOMMENDED:   
Sandy Rives  
Jamestown 400<sup>th</sup> Project Director

DATE: 5/8/03