



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Fire Island National Seashore
120 Laurel Street
Patchogue, New York 11772-3562

IN REPLY REFER TO:

September 12, 2007

Dear Friends and Stakeholders:

I am pleased to submit for your information and comment the Summary Report prepared for the Stakeholders' Foundation Workshop for the general management plan that took place this summer in Ronkonkama, New York. The report provides an overview of the workshop's purpose, a summary of the key note presentations, and an account of the group's discussions.

As park planners and managers, we found the discussion to be invaluable. The openness and candor with which all participants approached the various discussion topics contributed a great deal to the workshop's positive outcome. We thank you for taking time away from your busy schedules to share your thoughts and perspectives with us.

In the Summary Report, you will notice that the Purpose; Significance; and Fundamental Resources and Values statements have not changed. The report simply presents them as they were presented to you and records your reaction to them. Since the Stakeholders' Foundation Workshop, the planning team has been revising the Foundation for Planning statements in light of your comments. By late fall, we expect to complete our work on these draft statements and make them available for broader public review.

We hope that you find the Summary Report to be an accurate and useful account of our Stakeholders' Foundation Workshop. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or comments. I can be reached at (631) 687-4751.

Sincerely,

Michael Reynolds
Superintendent

Summary Report



Stakeholders' Foundation Workshop: June 25-26, 2007

draft **09.10.2007**

prepared by **SHAPINS ASSOCIATES**

Fire Island National Seashore
General Management Plan



I. Workshop Overview

This document is a summary of a Stakeholders' Foundation Workshop conducted by the National Park Service (NPS) as part of the Fire Island National Seashore (FIIS) General Management Plan (GMP) in June 2007. This workshop was planned as an opportunity for the GMP planning team to solicit input from a variety of citizens representing a range of communities and interest groups. Approximately 40 people attended the two-day event. These included community leaders, property and business owners, elected officials, municipal employees, and representatives from friends groups and environmental organizations. NPS personnel included FIIS Superintendent Mike Reynolds and other key park staff, as well as park planners from the Conservation Study Institute and NPS Northeast Region. Shapins Associates, a landscape architecture and planning firm, helped organize the workshop, participated as facilitators, and prepared maps and other materials. A complete list of participants is included as an appendix to this report.

Purpose of Workshop (from Agenda)

- Develop a shared understanding for the roles and responsibilities that people and organizations play in maintaining the unique values of Fire Island National Seashore
- Identify the challenges that make it difficult to effectively assume these roles and responsibilities.
- Explore opportunities for addressing these issues so that the National Park Service and its partners can better work together in the future to accomplish their shared goals
- Identify the essential messages that people should absorb about Fire Island, and that will be used as a basis for developing Interpretive Themes

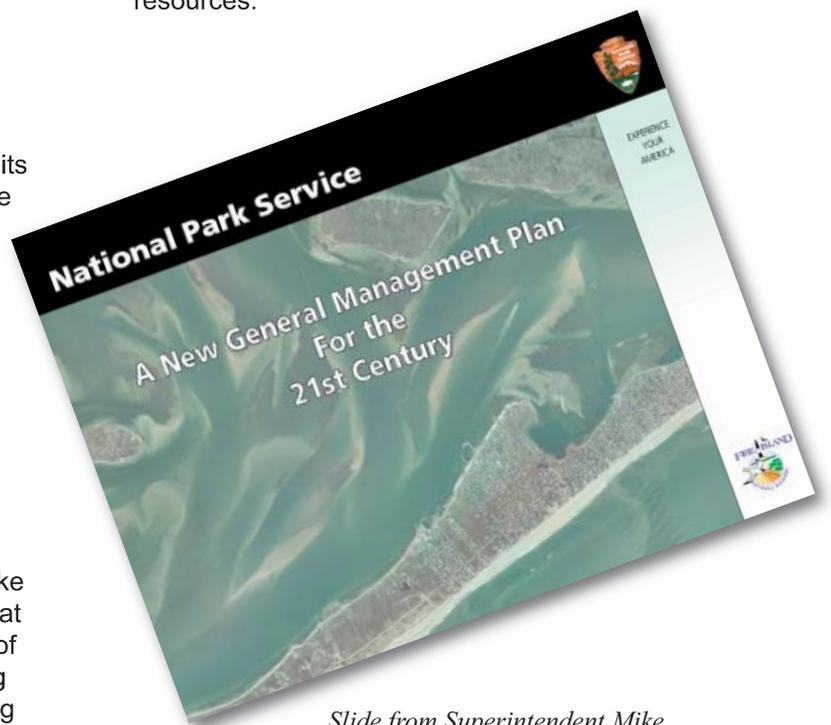
Park and General Management Plan Overview – Park Superintendent Mike Reynolds

After a round of introductions, Superintendent Mike Reynolds delivered a PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview of the Seashore. The title of presentation, "Engaging Stakeholders, Increasing Relevancy, Preserving Resources while Balancing Protection and Use," introduced some of the key

challenges that face the National Seashore as it continues work on the new GMP. Mike reminded participants of Fire Island's "wonderful complexity," and stressed that he was passionate about establishing a collaborative relationship regarding its management. He ended the presentation by posing the question, "What does Success Look Like?" This proved a fitting segue into the next portion of the workshop, a presentation by guest speakers, Woody Smeck and Steve Hess.

Key Points of Superintendent's Presentation

- Purpose of GMP – The new GMP will lay out a vision for the future of the park and provide guidance for park management for the next 15 to 20 years
- Issues/Topics for the GMP to address - Natural resources (threatened and endangered species, mosquitoes, etc.); Zoning and Community Character; Transportation (ferry service and driving on the beach); Beach Nourishment; Bayside Erosion (Docks, bulkheads); Enhancing Visitor Experience; Cultural Resources (William Floyd Estate, museum objects, and the Fire Island Lighthouse); Global Climate Change and Sea Level Rise; National Ocean Park Stewardship program and the health of aquatic resources.



Slide from Superintendent Mike Reynolds' presentation

II. Building Private/Public Partnerships

Building Private/Public Partnerships: A Case Study in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area – Guest Speakers Woody Smeck and Steve Hess

The next phase of the workshop was a presentation by Woody Smeck, Superintendent of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA (SAMO), and Steve Hess, President of Las Virgenes Homeowners' Federation (LVHF), a citizens group that partners closely with SAMO. Woody began the presentation, noting that SAMO contained some parallels to FIIS. Like Fire Island, Santa Monica Mountains NRA is an interweaving of national parkland, state and local parkland, beaches, and established communities. Furthermore, both FIIS and SAMO constitute rare and valuable greenspaces within heavily developed urban and suburban settings. Woody stressed that in building their GMP, the park and its partners worked hard to define common values and a shared vision for SAMO where dynamic natural processes would be sustained.

Key Points from Woody's Presentation

- 50% of SAMO is in a form of public ownership. NPS owns about 22,000 of 153,000 acres total.
- 12 cities are located within the park boundary including Malibu, with a total population of 300,000 residents.
- Use of land is regulated by local governments.
- Role of NPS – to work with local governments and communities to ensure conservation
- NPS is actively purchasing lands to “knit together” parts of the park (for scenery, habitat, etc.)
- Values of NRA from GMP: *Preserving community heritage and a sense of place; A place of solace and beauty; Providing for quality of life*

Steve Hess picked up where Woody left off, discussing the Las Virgenes Homeowners' Federation (LVHF). This non-profit organization is composed of about 30 homeowner associations and represents over 2,000 local residents. Its purpose is to influence local and regional governments with respect to land use and “quality of life issues” within the Santa Monica Mountains.

How does the Las Virgenes Homeowners' Federation (LVHF) work?

- Comments on local and regional planning activities
- Integrates closely with government agencies (county, NPS, utility providers etc.)
- Writes grant proposals, sample legislation, and monthly newsletter
- Does not endorse political candidates.
- Offers an avenue for integration between various entities (agencies, departments, and residents)

What does the NPS do for residents of the Santa Monica Mountains?

- Acquires and protects land (Ahmanson Ranch, Solstice Canyon)
- Establishes trails (backbone trail connects 500 miles of trail within NRA)
- Preserves historic sites (King Gillette Ranch)

What do the residents do for the NPS?

- Embrace the concept of a national park (conservation, recreation, interpretation)
- Support NPS activities and be good neighbors
- Guide management of the park (commenting on the GMP etc.)

Following the presentation was an informal discussion, in which Woody and Steve fielded questions on development pressures, wilderness values, the visibility of the NPS within the L.A. metropolitan area, and other topics. One topic that generated interest among the group was the North Area plan, an overlay plan for development within the Santa Monica Mountains.



Participants converse during a break



NPS Planner Ellen Carlson facilitates discussion while Tom Gibney takes notes

Roles and responsibilities voiced by NPS personnel are included below:

- Interpreting and educating the public about Fire Island
- Enforcing federal regulations and guidelines (NEPA, CFR etc.)
- Being good neighbors/partners to communities and fostering a sense of trust
- Serving as trustees of public land for the American public

Issues/Challenges

Rather than describing the specific challenges they faced in carrying out their stewardship responsibilities, the stakeholders tended to outline what they saw as the greater challenges facing Fire Island. This discussion highlighted some of the major issues that the GMP must address, and it underscored differences in viewpoint regarding complex topics such as coastal dynamics. Some responses are summarized below:

- To find common ground. To help all players to understand our common needs and agree on a shared vision. To aggressively pursue objectives on which we all agree.
- To see that good science/engineering informs our decisions regarding sand replenishment, and to recognize that Fire Island performs an important protective function as a barrier island
- To apply the best possible science to “the sand

issue” and others and to interpret that science correctly (the comments recorded in this bullet and the preceding one are related; they deal largely with the topic of coastal dynamics on both the oceanfront and bayside, and the appropriate management response.)

- To promote effective communication and work together through difficult issues
- To build sustainable and quality facilities

Turning Challenges into Opportunities

The remainder of Day 1 was devoted to an exercise called “Turning Challenges into Opportunities.” Based on the input from the preceding discussions, facilitators identified six topics for the participants to examine further in small groups. Each participant was assigned to one small group, and these groups were challenged to brainstorm creative solutions to the challenges. Afterwards, a representative from each group reported back to the entire body. Below is a list of the study topics and questions the groups were asked to address, followed by summary notes from the group discussions:

- 1) **Development Pressures** (group changed name to “Development that Preserves Values”) – How do we deal with development, access, and land use in a way that preserves values?
- 2) **Protection of a Barrier Island** – What do we mean by “natural resources” and “natural processes?”



- 3) **Sustainable and Exemplary Facilities**
– How can we build model facilities?
- 4) **Community Character and Identity/
Cultural Resources**
- 5) **Shared Vision** – What is the approach to defining a shared vision? (combined with group 6)
- 6) **Communication** – How can we improve outreach and appreciation? (combined with group 5)

- Moratorium on development – legally binding. There will be no development for a set period of time. Does not deny people their property rights, but puts development on hold for a while.

2) Protection of a Barrier Island

- What do we mean by protecting natural resources? Mandate is to protect beaches and dynamic natural processes. However, some would like NPS to assist in protection of island as a whole—including communities—from such natural processes. Protecting wilderness area and values is something everyone agrees on.
- Allowing natural processes to occur means that planning should be geared toward strategies that recognize the barrier island will change (allowing nature to take its course).
- Many other approaches (manipulating Moriches Inlet, controlling a breach in the Wilderness Area, putting sand on beaches etc.) raise questions about impacts. Furthermore, if GMP develops recommendations that are inconsistent with natural resource protection criteria, these might require a waiver of national management policies.
- Is there even enough sand offshore to accomplish the permanent beach nourishment that some people advocate? Big question.
- FIMP: How timing of FIMP and the GMP relate is a big concern. NPS has veto power over ACE proposals. Traditional, engineered approaches to coastal processes or alternative, non-structural approaches.
- Some look at “the sand issue” as analogous to fire in the West. We could develop protocols: if this occurs, then do this...; if breach in this place, then treat this way.... (adaptive management policies).

1) Development that Preserves Values

- Many residents of Fire Island feel the character of their communities is threatened by development (inappropriate kind; too much; in wrong place etc.).
- In the past, many variances to zoning codes have been issued—perhaps too many. Variances set precedents. There is a need to educate about zoning codes and their intent. Towns/villages need to enforce zoning codes.
- Communities have some power to oversee their community character. Even within a village there could be separate blocks (zones, historic districts etc.).
- NPS is not engaged in “protecting the communities” but should support community efforts to influence the character of development within those communities—help them preserve what they believe is important. NPS assists towns and communities in moving forward with the concept of community-based planning.
- Hamlet Plans – There is already precedent for this on the mainland. On Fire Island a moratorium could be considered to give time for a hamlet-level plan to be completed (North Area Plan as possible model).



Local Context Map, one of several very large maps prepared for the Stakeholders' Workshop

3) Sustainable and Exemplary Facilities

- Sustainable facilities are responsive to local environment and efficient in the use of materials, energy, and other resources. Also means thinking long-term (costs, maintenance etc.).
- NPS should lead by example and use facilities as opportunity to educate the public.
- FIIS has taken some positive steps in this direction in last few years: recycled plastic lumber on boardwalks, solar powered buoy lights.
- Missed opportunities too: permanent dock at Barrett Beach, West Entrance Station etc.
- Must change culture of how to design and manage parks.
- NPS should strive to build facilities that are LEED certified – requires real commitment to sustainability at all levels of NPS. Seeking grant money etc.
- Requires NPS knowledge of sustainability – key personnel could acquire LEED accreditation so that they could request proper projects and oversee/guide projects. Another resource: *NPS Guidelines for Sustainable Development*.
- Work with design/construction contractors who possess local knowledge.
- Some possibilities: removable structures; floating docks; better septic systems; buildings such as geodesic domes that work well with winds.
- Once sustainable projects are built, important to publicize them.
- Sustainable practices are also important (4-stroke engines rather than 2-stroke etc.).
- Take advantage of local resources: work with non-profits to lobby Congress and raise money. May be opportunities to partner with Brookhaven National Laboratory.

4) Community Character and Identity/Cultural Resources

- NPS is not engaged in “protecting the communities” (community character or identity etc.) However, NPS has an interest in finding better ways for us all (communities, NPS, local governments) to protect natural resources of Seashore.
- NPS recognizes character and contribution of communities to the spirit of Fire Island. NPS would like to support efforts of others to be joint stewards of the island.
- Community history and character present



“Barrier Island Habitats,” one of six posters prepared for the workshop, which illustrate important resources and values of Fire Island National Seashore.

interpretive opportunities. There are many stories that are not told. Getting the word out could also be beneficial to the communities.

- Role of NPS could be to coordinate local knowledge (about history, architecture etc.). Partners could include: local historians, historical societies, FI School Library (oral history project) etc. Idea is communities working together to maintain and/or promote history/identity.
- Ocean Beach and Point O’ Woods have sophisticated preservation programs. Could help mentor other communities.

5) Shared Vision

- An effort to create a shared vision for Fire Island would need to include stakeholders. Stakeholder group must be broad.



IV. Parks and Their Stories

- A first step would be to define the stakeholders – key players from NPS, officials from community, town, county, community, state, NGOs, visitors, commercial interests (fishermen etc.), others.
- The shared vision should be about Fire Island as a whole, unconstrained by geopolitical boundaries. (Context is bigger than FIIS; includes larger view of bay and region.)
- A Core group would draft the vision statement, drawing from foundation workshops to date and background notes. It would invite stakeholders to react to this draft. Core group would keep constituencies informed.
- “Concentric circles of involvement” to stakeholder groups – getting larger and larger.
- Fundamental workshops to test and refine the vision. Such workshops must be well publicized.

6) Communication

- NPS should evaluate efficacy of outreach program.
- One goal is to bridge the distance between park and communities. Could conduct meetings and informal “teas” during summer. Use community meetings and general meetings (at schools, firehouses etc.) as opportunities for “relationship building.”
- Employ different types of communication. Use both the new world of technology and also old-fashioned methods (snail mail).
- Facilitate links to web pages; podcasts and blogs; encourage groups to subscribe to FIIS e-newsletter.
- Also, GMP team could write short articles to be incorporated in existing newsletters (Davis Park community, Friends groups, Audubon Society etc.).
- Pick topics that are inclusive, constructive, and universal: clamming, native landscaping.
- Nurture year-round communication. “Year-rounders” are key people to keep engaged, but also reach a broad cross-section.
- Many summer residents will want to be engaged to some level. Renters (2 weeks or so) probably won’t be as interested.
- Encourage flow of messages outward, and also back inward to the park (Q and A is helpful).

Presentation by Julia Washburn, co-chair, NPS Educational Council and Interpretive Planner, NPS Conservation Study Institute

Julia Washburn described the relationship between a place and its stories, and the important role of stories in fostering stewardship. To illustrate her points she drew upon personal memories of growing up near Rock Creek Park in Washington DC, her professional experiences, and a recent trip to Arches National Park with her family.

Key Points/Examples

- The NPS preserves more than tangible things. It preserves meanings and stories. Places are constantly invested with new meanings
- Rock Creek Park – childhood memories; passing on park’s significance to younger generations
- Old Soldier’s Home – President Lincoln’s personal story of an assassination attempt on him. Finalized Emancipation Proclamation here and spent last night before Ford’s Theater. Direct connection to life of extraordinary significance
- Arches National Park – Natural resources such as ephemeral pools and cryptobiotic crust are interpreted; children create their own stories of exploration and discovery
- Sequoia & King’s Canyon NP – connection to Buffalo Soldiers
- Mt. Kilauea – Community art contest to represent volcano goddess Pele; images tell stories.

Afterwards, Julia encouraged everybody to share some of their own stories about Fire Island. Long-time residents related what growing up on the island was like. Stressing the importance of resourcefulness, living simply, and being part of a community, their stories illustrated the circumstances of living on an isolated barrier island. Others told of specific encounters they will always remember: the first time they witnessed snow on the beach or were overcome by the silence of a secluded place. Each of these stories called to mind values that came to light during Day 1: solitude, roadlessness, beauty, and timelessness.

V. Foundation for Planning

Background on Foundation Pieces

The next portion of the workshop was devoted to reviewing important "Foundation for Planning" pieces, including the draft park purpose statement, park significance statement, and fundamental resources and values. Drafting these pieces had been the focus of a February 2007 workshop that was attended by park staff and other NPS officials. At the February workshop, discussion had centered on the 17 preexisting communities located within the Seashore, and the appropriateness of including them in the foundation statements. In general, workshop participants agreed that the island communities greatly contribute to the character of Fire Island, and that a healthy relationship with these potential partners is vital to good management. Nevertheless, they did not resolve how to include the communities within the foundation statements based on the park's enabling legislation and other factors. As a result, the island communities were not included in a preliminary list of fundamental resources and values (see definition below). Instead, participants acknowledged their importance by identifying the Fire Island communities as related resources. At the June workshop, the GMP planning team was eager to share these draft statements with the stakeholders and to solicit their feedback.

Definitions

Park Purpose - The specific reason(s) for establishing a particular park.

Park Significance - Statements of why, within a national, regional, and systemwide context, the park's resources and values are important enough to warrant national park designation.

Fundamental Resources and Values - Features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other resources and values determined to warrant primary consideration during planning and management because they are critical to achieving the park's purpose and maintaining its significance.

Related Resources - Associated resources that complement a park's purpose and significance.

Draft Park Purpose (drafted at Feb. 20-21, 2007 Workshop)

Fire Island National Seashore conserves, preserves, and protects for the use and appreciation of current and future generations certain relatively unspoiled

and undeveloped beaches, dunes, and other natural features and dynamic processes which possess high values to the nation as examples of great natural beauty in close proximity to large concentrations of urban population.

Fire Island National Seashore conserves, preserves and protects the historic structures, cultural landscapes, collections and archeological resources associated with Fire Island Light Station and the William Floyd Estate.

Fire Island National Seashore works in collaboration with others to achieve its mission.

Group Response to draft Park Purpose

Several members of the stakeholder group reacted strongly to the purpose statement because it did not mention the island communities. As one group member objected, the purpose statement contained "no mention of people at all" except for "future generations" and "others." This group felt that other community members would also reject this purpose statement. They predicted that if it were not revised to include the communities, then it could become a major obstacle for the GMP that would impede NPS efforts to gain community support for the plan. Audience members also remarked that the current administration of Fire Island National Seashore has done an admirable job reaching out to islanders and engaging them in dialogue. However, there was no guarantee that these efforts would continue under future administrations, which underscored the importance of clarifying the park's relationship with communities and "getting it down in writing." Other members of the group pointed out that the park itself would not exist without the historic resistance of island communities to a planned highway, and that when Congress created the Seashore, it specifically granted these communities a right to exist. Furthermore, they remarked that the future of the park depends on partnerships with the communities, and that if the park wishes to engage the communities in a model for shared stewardship, then this commitment by the community members should be recognized in the purpose statement or in other foundation pieces. Finally, one of the participants suggested adding a statement addressing preservation of the Otis Pike High Dunes Wilderness Area.



NPS personnel listened closely to this feedback and assured the group that it was possible to craft a purpose statement on which everybody could agree. The statement could be revised to include the communities and define an appropriate relationship between them and the park. One park official stressed that it was “important to get this right,” because the purpose statement is a key building block that will be referenced time and again throughout the GMP process. Workshop organizers resolved to redraft the purpose statement using the stakeholders’ input and to share the revised statement for further review at a later date.

Park Significance (drafted at Feb. 20-21, 2007 Workshop)

Fire Island National Seashore is a barrier island encompassing relatively unspoiled and undeveloped beaches and dunes and other natural features and dynamic processes that are of great beauty and quality within close proximity to the largest concentration of population of any national seashore in the United States.

The Sunken Forest, a 25-300 year old American holly-shadblow-sassafras maritime forest, is a rare and important habitat in the Northeastern United States.

Fire Island National Seashore provides important habitat for marine and terrestrial plants and animals, including a number of rare, threatened and endangered species.

Situated along the Atlantic Flyway, Fire Island is a globally important area for more than 330 migratory, over wintering and resident bird species.

The Otis Pike Fire Island High Dunes Wilderness is the only federally designated wilderness in New York State and offers a rare opportunity for wilderness access to a broad spectrum of the American public.

Owned and occupied by the Floyd Family from 1720 to 1976, the William Floyd Estate was the home of General William Floyd, a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Fire Island Light was constructed in 1858 and has served as a critical navigation aid for the port of New York for over 150 years.

Group Response to draft Park Significance

The response to the significance statement was similar to that of the purpose. In general, the group approved of the statements that were included, but felt strongly that the communities should be included. As one stakeholder commented, it is entirely possible that a person reading this statement “would not think there were any people at all” on Fire Island. Moderating the discussion, NPS planner Ellen Carlson explained that the NPS uses precise definitions for the term “significance,” and that during the February workshop, the group had struggled to place the island communities within a nationally significant context. Audience members volunteered that the significance of the communities lay partially in their involvement in the establishment of the Seashore and in their continuing role in supporting it. NPS personnel committed to reworking the significance statement.



Posters illustrating Foundation planning concepts

Fundamental Resources and Values

(identified at Feb. 20-21, 2007 Workshop)

include: Barrier Island Habitats, Dynamic Natural Systems, Wilderness and Undeveloped Lands, Cultural Resources, Visitor Experience.

Related Resources (from Feb. 20-21, 2007 Workshop)

Island communities were identified as the most important resource related to Fire Island National Seashore.

Group Response to Resources and Values

Stakeholders felt that the Related Resources category did not adequately convey the importance of the communities.

NPS personnel thanked the stakeholders for their input on the foundation pieces, and reiterated their plan to craft statements on which everybody could agree. After this discussion, the group took a brief break, during which organizers determined how best to spend the time remaining in the day.

VI. Interpretive Themes

Interpretive Themes – Stories to be Told. Presentation by Patti Reilly, NPS Northeast Region

The proceedings resumed with a presentation by Patti Reilly, Interpretation and Education Specialist with the Northeast Region. This presentation introduced the group to the topic of interpretive themes. Patti presented a definition and several themes that had been developed for parks with similar resource issues as Fire Island. These examples may be used as models for developing interpretive themes for Fire Island.

Key Points

- Interpretive Themes are the most important ideas or concerns to be communicated to the public about a park
- They **capture the essence of the park's significance** and help define the broad conceptual framework for park interpretive planning
- Themes encourage audiences to see themselves in a park's story and discover personal relevance.

Example Themes

- Assateague Island National Seashore – stresses dynamism of natural resources
- Boston Harbor Islands NRA – explores the concept of isolation
- New Bedford Whaling NHP – theme of renewal and reconnection with history
- Padre Island National Seashore – human interaction with barrier island environments



Slide from Patti Reilly's presentation, highlighting an Interpretive Theme from Padre Island National Seashore

VII. Visions for the Future

For the final activity, participants were asked to express their personal visions for the future of Fire Island National Seashore by answering the question, "What should this place be like in ten years?" This activity reminded all present that the GMP really is a vehicle for positive change, and it ended the workshop on an optimistic note. These responses are included as notes in an appendix to this summary report.



Appendix I. List of Participants

Day 1 – June 25, 2007

Diane Abell – Park Planner/Landscape Architect, Fire Island National Seashore
Joseph (Harry) Baker – Village of Saltaire
Michael Bilecki -- Chief, Resource Management, Fire Island National Seashore
Pam Boyle – President, Friends of Watch Hill
Alexander Brash -- Northeast Regional Director, National Parks & Conservation Association
Steve Czarniecki -- Cultural Resource Management Specialist, Fire Island National Seashore
Bob DeBona – Mastic Beach Property Owners Association
Mike Deering – Executive Vice President for Legislative and Economic Affairs, Long Island Association
Jim Dunphy -- Chief of Facility Management, Fire Island National Seashore
Jeff Fullmer – Executive Director, South Shore Estuary Reserve
Dave Genaway -- Town Planner, Dept. of Planning & Development, Town of Islip
Tom Gibney – Planner, Shapins Associates
Kevin Gillespie – FI Year Round Residents
Suzy Goldhirsch – Vice President, Fire Island Association
Dave Griese -- Administrator, Fire Island Light Preservation Society
Steve Hess – President, Las Virgenes Homeowners Association
George Hoag – President, Friends of Fire Island National Seashore
Jeff Kassner – Planner, Town of Brookhaven
Robin Lepore -- Coastal Management Specialist, NPS Northeast Region
Jay Lippert -- Chief Ranger, Fire Island National Seashore
John Lund – President, Davis Park Association
Ann Moss – Principal Planner, Shapins Associates
Sean McGuinness -- Deputy Superintendent, Fire Island National Seashore
Nora Mitchell -- Director, NPS Conservation Study Institute
Sara Newkirk – Coastal Program Director, The Nature Conservancy
Jen Panko -- Administrative Officer, Fire Island National Seashore
Paul Pontieri – Mayor, Village of Patchogue
Patti Reilly – Interpretation and Education Specialist, NPS Northeast Region
Michael Reynolds -- Superintendent, Fire Island

National Seashore

Woody Smeck – Superintendent, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area
Ken Stein – Owner, FI Concessions, LLC
Gerry Stoddard – President, Fire Island Association
Paula Valentine -- Public Information Specialist, Fire Island National Seashore
Tom Williams – Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County
Joe Zysman – President, FI Wilderness Committee

Day 2 – June 26, 2007

Diane Abell – Park Planner/Landscape Architect, Fire Island National Seashore
Joseph (Harry) Baker – Village of Saltaire
Michael Bilecki -- Chief, Resource Management, Fire Island National Seashore
Pam Boyle – President, Friends of Watch Hill
Steve Czarniecki -- Cultural Resource Management Specialist, Fire Island National Seashore
Bob DeBona – Mastic Beach Property Owners Association
Jim Dunphy -- Chief of Facility Management, Fire Island National Seashore
Tom Gibney – Planner, Shapins Associates
Kevin Gillespie – FI Year Round Residents
Suzy Goldhirsch – Vice President, Fire Island Association
George Hoag – President, Friends of Fire Island National Seashore
Jeff Kassner – Planner, Town of Brookhaven
Mary Laura Lamont – Park Interpretive (WFE), Fire Island National Seashore
Robin Lepore -- Coastal Management Specialist, NPS Northeast Region
Jay Lippert -- Chief Ranger, Fire Island National Seashore
John Lund – President, Davis Park Association
Sean McGuinness -- Deputy Superintendent, Fire Island National Seashore
Nora Mitchell -- Director, NPS Conservation Study Institute
Ann Moss – Principal Planner, Shapins Associates
Sara Newkirk – Coastal Program Director, The Nature Conservancy
Patti Reilly – Interpretation and Education Specialist, NPS Northeast Region
Michael Reynolds -- Superintendent, Fire Island National Seashore
Irene Rosen – Park Interpreter/Volunteer Coord., Fire Island National Seashore

Ken Stein – Owner, FI Concessions, LLC
Gerry Stoddard – President, Fire Island Association
Paula Valentine -- Public Information Specialist, Fire
Island National Seashore
Julia Washburn – Co-chair, National Park Service
Education Council
Joe Zysman – President, FI Wilderness Committee



Appendix II. Values

What makes this Place Great? Universal Values

- NYC Values – transit system to park
- Long Island -- use as resource to engage people in Fire Island's values
- Patchogue – public involvement – citizen – importance of gateways
- “Solitude” – roadlessness, residency
- Uniqueness of community character – “solitude to craziness”
- Barrier Island habitats – unique
- WFE – cultural landscape, open space, local/national history
- Arrangement of buildings and land uses – “makes the people nicer”
- Individual community histories – from 100+ years – not as well-known
- Seaview – generational community – becoming generational communities
- Living on an Island – scarcity, interdependence, security, recycling and reuse of materials;
- Natural beauty – importance of preservation unimpaired and un-manipulated – in contrast to communities (different beauty) – wilderness, etc.
- Solitude – important aspect of Wilderness – preservation of character. Aldo Leopold Center – put out recommendations for maintenance of wilderness – solitude has a legal basis
- Shared future between natural area and communities. Communities not in conflict with natural areas – Shared identity
- Timelessness – WFE, Lighthouse, Sunken Forest, Communities, no cars, wagon culture – “Timeless Place”
- Lack of automobiles – unique way of getting there. “Calmness” on boats, pedestrian, bike, mode of travel
- Contrast to other places, friendliness, porch culture, opportunities to connect with others and place, and “people really around each other in times of need” – true community, intimacy, opportunity to educate. “People 15 miles away don't even know.” Solitude (#6) – 6:30 AM can be on beach and not see anybody – Anybody can experience/ access it – easy to find.
- Outlet for urban kids – freedom
- Boardwalks, etc. provide opportunity to connect with and learn about – interpretation – Watch Hill/ Sailors Haven
- Social component – family, school groups, friends getting together
- Recreational opportunities for people from outside – people from other countries, boating opportunities
- Historic “Outing Destination” Identity has continued
- Gateway communities – Long Island connections. Maritime identity of it and gateway communities. Patchogue is a maritime community; Sayville/ Bay Shore possess this character
- Relation to history of our country – WFE, immigration, ecological change and culture intertwined
- Rare, endangered, and threatened communities
- Dynamics of barrier Island (Dynamism)

Appendix III. Visions for the Future

What should this place be like in 10 years?

- Harvesting flora (cranberry, beach plum, etc.)
- Harvesting shellfish – no longer prolific (clamming)
- Family – marriage between communities and the park
- Fire Island Inlet brought under some control – regional sediment management
- Anyone from anywhere who wanted to visit the park could and feel comfortable here.
- Visitor experience needs to be improved – is improved.
- People are aware that they are in a National Park.
- Like to see that the park staff and community folks have a great passion for the place... maintain level of commitment.
- Re: Wilderness – should look like it does now in 20 years. There is little that needs to be done to preserve its wilderness character.
- Other non-developed lands – returns its natural character
- Would like to see the footprints of the communities remain the same – no net growth
- Would like to see greater awareness of Fire Island in the greater NY area. Schools are already doing this; not necessarily adults. Maybe seashore and communities need to work collectively to develop curriculum-based programs. (Traveling chest to school.)
- Thousands of kids come to FIIS to visit a new education center @ Sailor's Haven or Watch Hill.
- Estuary and the Ocean be as important to the park, be as important as the terrestrial uplands. What happens underwater influences what happens on the land.
- Fire Island NS is recognized as not being just another beach...need resources to manage to higher standard. Culture of the agency needs to change – no longer stop gap – need to manage to meet higher expectation of park constituency.
- Communities can be advocates for the park.
- Fire Island is under threat – NS are the natural group to organize the rest of the groups to rally. Need leadership, advocacy, discipline and courage to move forward.
- Thriving school visitation to the William Floyd Estate.
- Expanded outreach to school districts with limited funds.
- Regulations have come together to understand

FIIS needs and support a vision for the park and communities.

- FIIS managers go on the road like Woody & Steve to talk about their success at FIIS.
- Would like to see the return of clams/oysters
- Would like to see the birds come back (orioles?, blue herons)
- Would like to see animals come back
- RegNeg must be finalized.
- Finally, once and for all, address the question of driving on Fire Island.
- Better meshing between expectations and roles and responsibilities of park and partners.
- Strategic sustainability
- Continuity and change – balancing.
- Wants this list – FIIS – vision – FIIS remains a unit of the National Park system
- Carry forward to next generations, the special experience that one had growing up on the bay.
- Island looks different from the perspective of NPS management presence.
- Fire Island is a big player on Long Island – need to get involved in larger region.