

THE
FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: FOVA

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

Fort Vancouver NHS is the heart of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve (VNHR). The VNHR was created by Congress in 1996 and has 4 legislatively designated partners (NPS, City of Vancouver, State of Washington, and the US Army) along with the nonprofit organization, the VNHR Trust. The VNHR was created to bring together a national park, internationally significant museum collections, a premier archaeological site & research institute, a living laboratory for hands-on teaching of people of all ages, the region's first military post, an international fur trade emporium, one of the oldest operating airfields, the first NHS west of the Mississippi River, a waterfront trail, restored wetlands, and an environmental Water Center on the banks of the Columbia River. The VNHR is an internationally significant place—the birthplace of the modern Pacific Northwest—that embodies the changing social, economic and cultural traditions of the past 200 years. Its story is of a unique environment and the impact that settlement and industry has placed on it. The VNHR celebrates the park; it also represents the present by preserving & providing educational programs about the cultural, natural, and recreational resources for current and future generations. The VNHR's Centennial Vision is a bold vision of service to the American people. Through the active participation of the partners, our vision is to: Create a world class living history site, commensurate to Jamestown and Williamsburg; Create a nationally recognized Cultural Research and Education Institute which provides hands-on learning and educational opportunities for students of all ages; Provide a location which actively promotes and provides recreational opportunities and encourages the public to exercise & become more physically fit; Become a site which is relevant to the community and all of the Pacific Northwest; Become a leading location in which the public learns about national parks, preservation, stewardship, sustainability, and public service; Create a future which actively reuses & rehabilitates the Vancouver Barracks for public use; and Upgrade the existing park Visitor Center to address the entire VNHR in order to better serve its already 1 million plus annual visitors. The VNHR partners, the community, volunteers and others stand ready to seize and successfully accomplish all opportunities presented by the Centennial Challenge in order to serve the American people to the best of our abilities.

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Tracy A. Fortmann

Site: FOVA

STEWARDSHIP

Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Fort Vancouver NHS will engage with its partners, community and others to establish a safe, accessible and engaging state of the art Visitor Center that represents the entire Vancouver National Historic Reserve to attract and better serve its visitors. The park's current Visitor Center will be rehabilitated to include accessible, inspiring exhibitry which will greatly enhance the public's better understanding of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve. All efforts will be made to connect more thoughtfully with a wider audience in a meaningful way.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Rehabilitate high-priority historic buildings to good condition, and help communities to preserve their history through programs like Preserve America.

The VNHR partnership is rehabilitating the Mission 66 Visitor Center which will greatly improve the building's condition. Through the new exhibitry, the public will be provided opportunities to learn about the importance of specific park and VNHR resources as well as more generally about such resources and preservation efforts throughout the country. The partnership will also rehabilitate the historic Vancouver Barracks to ensure that the historic structures within the barracks are protected, well maintained, and made available for public uses. Efforts will continue to maintain the historic structures within the Pearson Air Museum Complex as well as the significant reconstructions within and out of the Fort stockade. Finally, efforts will be initiated to protect, maintain, and preserve the extant structures located in Oregon City--the McLoughlin House and the Barclay House.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Improve high-priority assets to acceptable condition, as measured by the Facility Condition Index.

The improvements with the rehabilitation of the Reserve Visitor Center will raise the FCI of this building. Further, all projects associated with historic structures and reconstructions will increase the FCI.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

STEWARDSHIP

Set the standard of excellence in urban park landscape design and maintenance.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The park has worked hand in glove with Regional Cultural Resource staff as well as the State Historic Preservation Office on cultural landscape design and impacts. A VNHR Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) has been completed and all rehabilitative efforts associated with buildings in the VNHR will be consistent with the CLR. Our vision is to develop extraordinary designs that are sustainable and will serve as a model for others across the country to consider and follow. It is also our intent to work to develop, maintain and preserve the cultural landscape which is still much intact. The VNHR is a rarity in that it is a place in which people can "go back in time" to experience what life was like in the mid and late 19th century as well as the early 20th century. Historically accurate trails, outdoor furniture, appropriately designed and scaled waysides will all be created. The VNHR partners will also be working to implement the park's approved GMP and other associated documents to build more reconstructions and develop a world class waterfront area.

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Site: FOVA

STEWARDSHIP

Assure that no compelling chapter in the American heritage experience remains untold and that strategically important landscapes are acquired, as authorized by Congress.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The rehabilitation of the NPS Visitor Center will include Reserve-wide stories which will better accommodate and educate the public in American heritage experience to leave no stories untold. The partnership is working to actively ensure that the entire VNHR is addressed within the rehabilitated Visitor Center. The focus is not just to tell all of the stories, however. It is to tell all of the stories in a compelling way which enables all visitors to connect with the rich legacy of this area and makes the histories, stories, and resources relevant to them. The Visitor Center will effectively connect with the public. Efforts will also be made to expand interpretive and educational programs to include all aspects of the history of the VNHR. In addition, it is desired that site bulletins and self-guided walking brochures will be created to further assist the public in learning about many of the stories of the VNHR. Finally, a professionally designed and developed film which effectively targets all of the VNHR is critically needed.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

STEWARDSHIP

Serve as the Preeminent resource laboratory by applying excellence in science and scholarship to understand and respond to environmental changes.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site will employ modern scientific techniques to better understand cultural and environmental relationships related to 200 years of development and technological change in the Pacific Northwest. Through scholarly and scientific work in archaeology, anthropology, history, and other fields, facilitated by the existing and new partnerships with Portland State University, Washington State University Vancouver, and other institutions of higher learning, park staff and interns/graduate researchers of the Northwest Cultural Resources Institute will explore the changes to prairie, river, and other environmental and cultural resources associated with the introduction of technology, new cultural institutions and peoples. These baseline data are deemed crucial to exploring the human dimension of response to environmental change. Aspects of waste disposal, human health and disease, management of natural and cultural resources, and other topics are the subject of the institute.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

STEWARDSHIP

Encourage children to be future conservationists.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The state of the art exhibitry planned for the rehabilitated Visitor Center will include hands on, interactive activities educating children as well as adults in the importance of resource conservation. Exhibitry will be designed to garner children and other's interest and motivate them to become involved in conservation and other forms of public service. Over 20,000 students visit the national park and the VNHR annually to learn about the Pacific Northwest History. It is the intent to grow the number of students that are currently served as well as identify new ways to connect with them not only about history, but also about science, cultural resources, conservation, and public service. The partners would like to serve 40,000 to 50,000 students annually, but this goal is not based on the numbers just for the sake of increasing numbers. We want to increase the number of students we serve, but in ways that truly provide benefit to them, through increasing and expanding the number of hands-on young people programs currently provided.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

ENVIRONMENT

Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.

Reduce the environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality.

The rehabilitated Reserve Visitor Center will be built with sustainable products. Newer, updated insulation over the current Mission 66 condition, will allow the park to save on heating and cooling. Better insulation will cause less overall emissions through the use of less electricity. The design will include more natural lighting into the building which, in turn, will allow days of less power usage. Efforts will also be made to reach the LEEDS gold standard, and there is a desire to seek ways to share with the public the process of this rehabilitation to invoke discussion in building sustainable structures. The rehabilitation of historic Vancouver Barracks as well as efforts associated with the houses in Oregon City, the park's reconstructions, and the Pearson Air Museum Complex will all occur in a way that addresses to the best way possible sustainability issues as well as complying with all historic preservation laws.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

Establish programs to showcase exemplary environmental practices and increase visitor awareness of how the practices apply to their daily lives, as measured by surveys.

The park will establish environmental programs in connection with the rehabilitation of the Visitor Center. Through displays, visitors will learn how the Visitor Center was constructed using sustainable materials. The Visitor Center is envisioned to be a place in which the public is made aware of things that they can do to leave "no footprint" behind. As an example, visitors will be encouraged to support environmental practices not just during their visit, but when they leave. Materials will be provided to assist the visitor in leaving no footprint from their visit.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Demonstrate environmental excellence through increased use of alternative energy and fuels at every park.

The park and its partners will seek to demonstrate sustainable, green practices wherever possible. As just one example, the rehabilitated Visitor Center will serve as a model in sustainable, cutting edge design which will be an intriguing learning opportunity in this very historic setting. The rehabilitation of the historic Vancouver Barracks will provide another setting in which sustainable, environmentally sensitive practices and efforts will take place.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Serve as a model for energy efficiency, under Executive Order 13423, by ensuring Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

The rehabilitated Visitor Center will be developed as a clear model for energy efficiency and will meet LEED standards. All rehabilitation efforts and reconstructions will be initiated with a goal of developing energy efficient historic structures.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

ENVIRONMENT

Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The rehabilitation of the Reserve Visitor Center will showcase the reuse of a current non-serving building into a state of the art building. Other examples include developing the waterfront of the VNHR so that it has more native vegetation, less asphalt, and larger public use space---all of which will be developed and operated in a more sustainable manner. The large green space of the VNHR will be maintained in an environmentally sensitive manner. Ultimately, by the use of sustainable materials and a focus on public environmental consciousness which we will share with the public, we hope to encourage our visitors, partners and the community to follow our lead.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

RECREATION

Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

Rehabilitate over 2,000 miles of trails within or connected to national parks, including trails accessible to those with disabilities.

We currently serve over 100,000 visitors on the waterfront on accessible trails. The park's General Management Plan and the VNHR Cooperative Management Plan support the development of accessible trails which are historically based within the Fort's stockade as well as accessible trails out to the Village Houses which will be reconstructed. There are goals to connect accessible trails from the Visitor Center to the Pearson Air Museum and the Fort as well as an accessible trail from Evergreen Street down to the entrance of the Visitor Center. The VNHR is a wonderful site which is very welcoming and our goal is to develop accessible trails throughout to make the entire site accessible as well as encourage people to get out of their cars and to additionally better protect this historical archaeological site.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The Vancouver National Historic Reserve is an active, growing partnership made up of local, state, and federal government entities along with the support of the community through the nonprofit VNHR Trust. The partners work together to reach out to all Americans to come and enjoy this site. Hundreds of thousands of visitors currently utilize the site for recreational purposes. The soon-to-be-completed land bridge project will entice even more visitors to come to the VNHR to enjoy the current trail system and spend time out of doors. Trails are accessible and efforts are being made to grow the number of visitors to the site. Efforts are also being made to work with the State School of the Deaf and the State School of the Blind to identify ways in which those students may more fully experience the Vancouver National Historic Reserve.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

RECREATION

Establish "volun-tourism" excursions to national parks for volunteers to help achieve natural and cultural resource protection goals.

Increase annual volunteer hours by 100 percent, from 5.2 million hours to 10.4 million hours.

Fort Vancouver NHS and the Reserve partners have a very large volunteer staff. With the increase number of visitors expected with the additional services, educational opportunities that will come with the rehabilitated Visitor Center, an increase in volunteerism will follow.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

RECREATION

Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

Increase visitation by 25 percent at lesser-known parks through a national tourism effort aimed at helping people to discover the breadth of parks and experiences.

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, which is part of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve, is a hidden jewel. Although the visitation at the national park and the VNHR continue to grow, the partners are working to develop a marketing plan and strategy which will "get the word" out about this internationally significant site and encourage more Americans from around the country to take the opportunity to learn about this very special place. Visitation continues to grow and it is anticipated that with the activities planned for the future at the VNHR, visitation will grow to close to 2 million in the not-to-distant future.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Increase the number of visitors that attend ranger-facilitated programs such as campfire talks, hikes, and school programs.

Visitation will increase through the rehabilitation of the Visitor Center through designing a more effective footprint which will enable us to serve more groups of students and other visitors. The exhibitry itself will bring in more visitors since it will be more relevant, informative, and accessible. In many cases, the updated Visitor Center will provide the first encounter that the public has at this site and will enable park staff, partners, and volunteers to inform the public of interpretive opportunities which are available on a more frequent basis. Additional ranger led or facilitated programs will be created utilizing the land bridge, the waterfront, the Village, the Pearson Air Museum Complex, the McLoughlin and Barclay Houses in Oregon City, and the historic Vancouver Barracks. These increased programs will more effectively tell all stories of the VNHR, consistent with the legislation, partner goals and planning documents.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

EDUCATION

Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Fort Vancouver NHS and its partners deliver high quality and relevant education programs that inspire and engage visitors. Barriers are removed to program participation such as, transportation, language, culture and facilities. The Reserve serves as a catalyst and exemplar for delivering quality education programs. Through the use of appropriate evaluation tools and methods to evaluate and improve education programs, Fort Vancouver and its partners are able to deliver quality educational programs.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

EDUCATION

Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

Use technology to create an interactive Interpretive Visitor Aide for visitors in particularly targeting young people. Through increasing the number of reconstructions inside the Fort and at the Village along with growing the living history program, the VNHR partners can bring the site to life by providing the public and young people an understanding of this place in a very unique and creative way. The goal is to create the Williamsburg of the West here and through further build-out of reconstructions and an expanded living history program this place, which was known as the New York of the West, is much more easily understood and appreciated. Further, the goal is to develop and expand hands-on programs, such as "Day of the Soldier," "The Company Servant," Kids Dig, as well as create new programs geared toward young people to allow them to actively participate here and then broadcast these activities to reach even wider audiences of students.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

EDUCATION

Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.

Enroll an additional two million children in the Junior Ranger program.

Park special events allow for the visitor to become part of history. Annual special events bring in the entire family repeatedly as a family event. Kids-Dig, an archaeology program for school age children and various other trade and educational programs, are offered. The park's events are multi-generational in that volunteers and visitors have been coming to many of the park's activities for years and they are bringing their children and grandchildren. Efforts will continue to grow the number of volunteers and visitors to the park's special events and activities through proactive assessment on our efforts and determining ways we can improve.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Engage diverse individuals and communities through programs, publications, educational materials and partnerships.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

EDUCATION

Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.

99% of the Visitors to Fort Vancouver understand the significance of the park. 99% of visitors are satisfied with park facilities, services, and opportunities. We are, on a continuing basis, looking for ways in which we can continue to improve services to our visitors.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Fort Vancouver delivers high quality and relevant interpretive programs that inspire, engage and educate. The park fosters community participation in resource stewardship through education and action.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

PROFESSIONALISM

Be one of the top 10 places to work in America.

Meet 100 percent of diversity recruitment goals by employing people who reflect the face of America.

Fort Vancouver NHS recruits, develops and retains a diverse workforce that represents the demographics of the Pacific Northwest.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

PROFESSIONALISM

Promote a safety and health culture for all employees and visitors.

Reduce the number of employee lost-time incidents and serious visitor injuries by 20 percent.

Fort Vancouver strives to ensure employees, volunteers and contractors have a safe working environment. Employee lost time injuries is maintained at or below the previous 5-year annual average of 1.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

PROFESSIONALISM

Model what it means to work in partnership.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The Vancouver National Historic Reserve is built on the partnership concept. The US Congress, through legislation, has brought together the National Park Service, the City of Vancouver, the State of Washington, and the US Army to create a working, pro-active, cutting edge, innovative partnership which best protects the incredible resources of the VNHR, develops best practices for managing the VNHR, protects and preserves the cultural, natural, and recreational resources, and provides evocative educational and interpretive opportunities for the public. The VNHR partners working closely with the nonprofit support organization, the VNHR Trust, in this model of a true partnership that focuses on an open, honest relationship which stresses the following three over-arching tenets: resource preservation, education, and public access. Our model we believe is a successful one which others can follow.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: FOVA

PROFESSIONALISM

Make national parks the first choice in philanthropic giving among those concerned about environmental, cultural, and recreational values.

Improve communications and marketing capacity to increase public understanding of our mission, opportunities, and benefits.

The VNHR partners and the Trust are working in a myriad of ways to increase public understanding. Examples include marketing and outreach efforts to inform diverse populations about the opportunities and activities at the VNHR. The rehabilitated Visitor Center and innovative exhibitry will improve and increase public understanding of the roles, responsibilities, benefits, and opportunities of the VNHR.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Inspire public trust by properly managing park assets, people, and resources. Fort Vancouver and its partners foster community participation in resource stewardship through education.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS