National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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John Muir National Historic Site News Release

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John Muir NHS Hosts Muir/Strentzel Gravesite Public Workshop

John Muir National Historic Site (NHS) is conducting a public workshop to develop management alternatives for the Muir/Strentzel gravesite in Martinez, California on Saturday, February 22. The workshop will be held from 10 AM to 12 PM in the multipurpose room in John Swett Elementary School, located at 4955 Alhambra Valley Road, Martinez.

Last spring, John Muir NHS staff initiated public scoping for the Muir/Strentzel gravesite. After a season of gathering information and discussing the gravesite with Muir family members and the public, the park will begin developing alternatives. The National Environmental Policy Act requires that the National Park Service (NPS) analyze a reasonable and feasible range of alternatives prior to selecting a preferred alternative. At the February workshop, park staff and members of the public will review the pertinent resource data, public comments, and Muir family concerns. Working together, the group will develop a range of two or three alternative management strategies for the gravesite.

Following the workshop, NPS staff will conduct an environmental impact analysis for each of the alternatives and will select a preferred alternative based on this analysis. These alternatives will comprise the Environmental Assessment, which will be available for public review and comment later in the year.

The Muir/Strentzel gravesite is located approximately one mile from John Muir's former home. The 1.27-acre parcel contains a historic pear orchard and a small family burial area that includes John Muir's final resting place. The site is bounded by Alhambra Creek to the southeast and single-family residences to the north, west and south.

John Muir NHS, established in 1964, originally contained the Muir House, the Martinez Adobe, and their surroundings grounds. In 1980, the NPS conducted a feasibility study for adding the Muir/Strentzel gravesite property to John Muir NHS. At that time, the Muir-Hanna Family Trust owned the parcel. In 1988, Congress passed legislation to include the gravesite within the boundary of John Muir NHS. In 1991, the NPS completed a General Management Plan that included a proposed strategy for managing the gravesite. In 1993, the American Land Conservancy purchased the property with the intent of transferring it to the NPS when funds became available, which occurred in 2000.

According to its founding legislation, John Muir NHS was established as a public memorial honoring John Muir for his contributions to the nation in land conservation and for his crusading efforts in advancing the cause of the national parks. In addition to enhancing the realization of the legislated mission of John Muir NHS, the purpose of this plan is to fulfill the broader NPS mission related to the management of natural and cultural resources under its care, and to plan for all of the aforementioned in a manner that respects surrounding landowners who live in close proximity to the gravesite.

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