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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ADAAG	Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines
AIA	American Institute of Architects
AOC	Architect of the Capitol
ASLA	American Society of Landscape Architects
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFA	U.S. Commission of Fine Arts
CUE	Center for Urban Ecology (NPS)
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DBID	Downtown Business Improvement District
DDOT	D.C. Department of Transportation
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
GAO	Governmental Accounting Office
GSA	General Services Administration
LCS	List of Classified Structures
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
MWCOG	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
NAMA	National Mall and Memorial Parks
NCPC	National Capital Planning Commission
NCR	National Capital Region (NPS)
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NPCA	National Parks Conservation Association
NPS	National Park Service
PMIS	project management information system (NPS)
SCS	Soil Conservation Service
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USC	United States Code
USDI	U.S. Department of the Interior
US EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
USPP	United States Park Police
WABA	Washington Area Bicyclist Association
WMATA	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
WMATC	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Commission

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# PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PLAN

DRAFT  
NATIONAL MALL PLAN /  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
THE NATIONAL MALL



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# INTRODUCTION

The National Mall stretches west from the U.S. Capitol to the Potomac River, and north from the Thomas Jefferson Memorial to Constitution Avenue (see the National Mall Plan Area map). This highly recognizable space, perhaps the most significant historic landscape in the United States, needs a comprehensive plan to address a number of issues. In 2003 Congress stated that the National Mall is a “substantially completed work of civic art” and that no new or unapproved memorials or visitor centers could be added within the area labeled as the Reserve (40 USC 8901 et seq.). Congress also directed the National Park Service (NPS), as the responsible federal agency, to begin planning for the future of the National Mall. The mandate of the National Park Service is to protect resources and provide for visitor enjoyment.

The National Mall is managed as a unit of the national park system by the National Park Service through the National Mall and Memorial Parks (NAMA); many park areas in central Washington, D.C., are managed by the National Mall and Memorial Parks. The National Mall, which is about 684 acres, received more than 22 million visits in 2008, more than twice the number of annual visits reported for Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Grand Canyon national parks combined (10.9 million visits in 2008). Accommodating this level of use and balancing all types of activities within this limited area present enormous challenges.

The National Mall must function efficiently and flexibly at many levels — as the highly symbolic visual setting for our government; as part of the city’s circulation and transportation network; as the location of the nation’s primary memorials and museums; and as the stage for First Amendment demonstrations, national celebrations, and regional and local special events and activities. The demands on the National Mall are constant and wide-ranging. Every year the National Park Service receives over 6,000 applications for permits, resulting in around 3,000 permitted activities. In 2008 and 2009 between 1,100 and 1,200 permits were issued for events on the National Mall, including First Amendment gatherings and national celebrations. Additional permits were

issued for commercial filming and recreation field use, as well as for other national park system units in Washington, D.C.

The wear and tear of concentrated activity affects the landscape and visitor experiences. Facilities can be overwhelmed with use, vegetation cannot easily recover, and turf may be worn to the ground and soils heavily compacted, which in turn adversely affects the vigor of trees and other vegetation. Walks are not wide enough for current levels of use, and adjacent areas may be damaged when use spills off walks or when people choose a more direct route. The combined effects generate heartfelt complaints by visitors about the deteriorated appearance of the National Mall.

Planning must take into consideration the unique urban planning environment of Washington, D.C. Multiple agencies have jurisdiction over lands and roads within and adjacent to the plan area. These agencies include the National Park Service, the Architect of the Capitol, the National Gallery of Art, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Department of Agriculture. Other governmental entities with some level of responsibility within or near the National Mall include the General Services Administration (GSA), the District of Columbia, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). In addition, governmental organizations such as the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), and the D.C. Historic Preservation Office have consultation, planning, review, and in some cases approval authority for issues related to planning, historic preservation, commemorative works, and design.

Civic engagement with the public, a vital component of the planning process, has been and will continue to be an open and inclusive process.

## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

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The purpose of this planning effort is to prepare a long-term plan that will restore the National Mall so that it may continue to symbolize the ideals and greatness envisioned for the United States of America. The approved plan will serve

as an overarching organizational document for subsequent project implementation. Future implementation plans will generally include standard procedures for site-specific design, commission reviews, public engagement, and historic preservation consultation. As a result, this will be a multiyear and multidisciplinary planning effort. Certain actions may require congressional authorization or revision of federal or park regulations.

Critical to this planning effort is the establishment of a common public understanding of the extent and identity of the National Mall. The National Park Service uses the term National Mall to encompass three specific areas:

- the Mall, which extends from the grounds of the U.S. Capitol to the Washington Monument and includes Union Square
- the Washington Monument and its grounds
- West Potomac Park, which is the setting for numerous memorials, including the Lincoln Memorial, the World War II Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, the Tidal Basin, and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial

Often the terms National Mall and the Mall are used interchangeably, and map labeling and references to the National Mall have further created public confusion.

## **NEED FOR A PLAN**

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Comprehensive planning is needed to define the future for the National Mall and to detail specific desired conditions and actions. The approved plan will be similar to a general management plan, which the National Park Service requires for all parks, but it will not address all areas managed by the National Mall and Memorial Parks, so it is more focused than a general management plan. A comprehensive plan for the National Mall is needed for the following reasons:

- Congress has directed the National Park Service to plan for the National Mall within the Reserve so as to preserve its character.
- The National Mall must be refurbished so that (1) its treasured memorials and historic

landscapes can be preserved, (2) very high levels of use can be sustained, and (3) the needs of visitors can be met. The National Mall plan must address

- how to improve resource conditions; establish a standard of quality that invites respect and generates stewardship; and raise the standard of care and maintenance
  - how to prepare for intensive levels of use for First Amendment demonstrations, national celebrations, and special events
  - how to provide desired experiences, such as opportunities for education, contemplation, rest, relaxation, recreation, entertainment, and social experiences
  - how to address user capacity, which for this plan is defined as the type and level of visitor use that can be accommodated while sustaining desired resource and visitor experience conditions on the National Mall
  - how to provide for the physical needs, enjoyment, and convenience of visitors and park users, including information, restrooms, food, retail, drinking water, and access
- There may be opportunities for partnership groups to help fund construction, landscape renovation, and maintenance projects.

The need for the plan is further discussed in “Opportunities, Problems, and Challenges” (beginning on page 20).

## **PLAN OBJECTIVES**

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Plan objectives identify what achievements would make the plan successful. The objectives take into account the park purpose and significance, NPS policies, planning principles developed in cooperation with other federal and city agencies with planning responsibilities within the District of Columbia, public comments, and park goals and needs.

- *Cultural Resource Protection*

Primary east-west vistas and several north-south vistas on the National Mall are improved and perpetuated.

## **National Mall Plan Area**

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Cultural resources, including memorials and their settings, are preserved and protected.

Historic plans for the National Mall are respected. Resources are managed compatibly with the intent of historic plans.

- ***Natural Resource Protection***

Natural resources, such as water, turf, trees/vegetation, and soils, are improved to be part of a sustainable urban ecosystem.

- ***Demonstrations and Special Events***

The National Mall remains a venue for First Amendment demonstrations and national celebrations.

Special events are managed to sustain the health of park resources, to balance the desires of all users, and to ensure a safe environment. No one's enjoyment of the National Mall is unacceptably compromised by others, now or in the future.

Venues and facilities for demonstrations and special events are provided that are compatible with the historic significance of the National Mall, that enhance the experiences of users, and that accommodate operations efficiently and effectively with minimal impacts on nationally significant resources.

- ***Access and Circulation***

To fulfill its symbolic and civic importance, the National Mall is a role model of inclusiveness and universal design for all citizens.

Public access and circulation are convenient, and visitors are easily able to find their way to all sites on the National Mall.

The National Mall is better integrated with and connected to the urban fabric of Washington, D.C.

- ***Visitor Information, Education, and Enjoyment***

The National Mall provides the quintessential American experience where visitors can

- feel welcome
- fully understand the importance of this preeminent civic area for First Amendment rights
- learn about our core values as a nation by making an educational, emotional, inspirational, or patriotic connection to the memorials that commemorate our history and the physical design that reflects our democratic form of government
- appreciate the beauty of the National Mall during the day, at night, and year-round

Lighting on the National Mall evokes emotion and provides enjoyment, while respecting historic fixtures and existing lighting at memorials. The Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, and Thomas Jefferson Memorial (as well as the U.S. Capitol and the White House) continue to be the most prominent nighttime features.

Visitor information is convenient, accurate, easy to understand, and consistent throughout the site. Information and programs are universally accessible and reach the widest audience possible.

Visitors understand and appreciate the social experiences they are likely to encounter — millions of people come here to celebrate, commemorate, demonstrate, or recreate.

Learning opportunities are provided to engage all ages and abilities of an increasingly multicultural and technologically sophisticated society. Educational information inspires all visitors, including populations that have not typically visited national parks.

Recreational opportunities are balanced with other uses of the National Mall, and both active and passive forms of recreation meet the needs of visitors, residents, and workers.

The National Mall continues to function as an important part of the D.C. park and open space network.

- **Visitor Amenities**

Facilities are of high quality and reflect a compatible and enduring character, thus creating a sense of place that reinforces the civic, historic, and symbolic role of the National Mall to our nation.

Various visitor and commercial amenities are provided that are conveniently located and that are sized and configured to flexibly meet visitor-use patterns during the peak season.

- **Health, Public Safety, and Security**

Safe, healthy, secure visits are provided, and visitors have adequate notification of emergency situations.

The National Mall, including all walks and facilities, is a showcase for inclusiveness and universal design.

- **Park Operations**

The National Mall is a role model in sustainable urban park development, resource protection, and management, focusing on six areas: requirements and policy, resource health, water use, circulation, facilities, and park operations.

Facilities are consistently maintained to the desired standards of excellence.

All maintenance and park operations emphasize efficient, effective, and sustainable practices.

Cooperating agencies coordinate planning, information, services, facilities, and programs for visitors, residents, and the local workforce.

## THE PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

In recognition of the importance of the National Mall to many Americans, this planning effort has and will continue to emphasize open and inclusive communications to engage the public and to understand their desires and concerns. Completing the National Mall plan and subsequent

implementation plans will require ongoing consultation and coordination with other entities involved in planning and construction efforts.

The planning process and public involvement are described in detail in the “Consultation and Coordination” chapter, beginning on page 559.

## THE NEXT STEPS

The *Draft National Mall Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* was on public review from December 18, 2009, to March 18, 2010, after which the planning team evaluated comments from other federal agencies, organizations, businesses, and individuals regarding the draft plan. Appropriate changes have been incorporated into this *Final Environmental Impact Statement*. Comments from cooperating agencies, consulting parties, regional governments, organizations, and individuals are reprinted in volume 2, along with NPS responses to those comments. Following distribution of the final plan and a 30-day no-action period, a record of decision approving a final plan will be signed by the NPS National Capital regional director. The record of decision will document the NPS selection of an alternative for implementation. Once it is signed, the plan can then be implemented.

The approved National Mall plan will provide a comprehensive vision and framework to protect the historic character of the National Mall, to restore its health and beauty, to help it function better as America’s civic space, and to meet the needs of local, national, and international visitors today and tomorrow for enjoyment, education, and recreation. However, completing the plan does not ensure that all actions will take place or that funding will be forthcoming. As the plan is implemented, many of the proposed projects would provide additional opportunities for public involvement. They would undergo reviews by and consultation with the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, the National Capital Planning Commission, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the D.C. Historic Preservation Office. Some projects might require congressional action or changes in federal or park regulations.

# FOUNDATION FOR PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Park planning and management are based on the legal purposes of a park, its significance, its fundamental resources and values, and its primary interpretive themes. These elements establish a foundation for planning and management so that everyone has a shared understanding of what is most important about the park. It is also important to identify the constraints of special mandates on planning and management. The purpose of the foundation statement is to help ensure that planning and management stay focused on what is most important. All alternatives must be consistent with and contribute to fulfilling the park's purpose, significance, and mandates.

- **Purpose** — The park purpose is the specific reason that a park was established by Congress or the president. Purpose statements are grounded in a thorough analysis of the park's establishing legislation or executive order, as well as the legislative history and studies prior to authorization. Purpose statements may go beyond a restatement of the law to document shared assumptions about what the law means in terms specific to the park.
- **Park Significance** — Park significance statements express why the park's resources and values are important enough to warrant national park designation. The statements capture the essence of the park's importance to our nation's heritage and help ensure that managers make decisions that preserve the resources and values for which the park was established or that are necessary to accomplish the park's mission.
- **Fundamental Resources and Values** — These are the most important ideas, tangible resources, or intangible values to be communicated to the public about a park and that warrant primary consideration during planning and management because they contribute to significance and are critical to achieving the park's purpose. A fundamental resource and value is one that was specifically sanctioned by Congress in legislation (such as for a memorial or

monument), an important element or remnant of a historic plan (such as the L'Enfant plan), or an element without which the park would be greatly diminished.

- **Primary Interpretive Themes** — These are the major messages that visitors to a park should receive during their visit, and they connect park resources to relevant ideas, meanings, concepts, contexts, beliefs, and values. They support the desired interpretive outcome of increasing visitor understanding and appreciation of the significance of the park's resources. Primary interpretive themes are based on the park's purpose and significance.
- **Other Important Resources and Values** — Additional resources and values may have particular importance and warrant special consideration during general management planning, even though they do not contribute directly to the purpose and significance of the park.

The five foundational elements for the National Mall plan are presented below. They were developed as part of an NPS Foundation Workshop for the larger National Mall and Memorial Parks held in July 2006. The following purpose and significance statements specific to the National Mall were derived from court decisions; congressional statements; the laws, regulations, and policies that guide the National Park Service; and other laws and plans for Washington, D.C. (The foundation elements for the National Mall and Memorial Parks that relate to the National Mall plan are included in appendix A.)

## THE NATIONAL MALL

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### Purpose

The purposes of the National Mall are to

- Maintain the National Mall in the heart of our nation's capital as a stage for national events and a preeminent national civic space for public gatherings because "it is here that the constitutional rights of speech

and peaceful assembly find their fullest expression.”

- Provide a monumental, dignified, and symbolic setting for the governmental structures, museums, and national memorials as first delineated by the L’Enfant plan and further outlined in the McMillan plan, as well as other significant plans.
- Maintain and provide for the use of the National Mall with its public promenades as a completed work of civic art — a designed historic landscape providing extraordinary vistas to symbols of our nation.
- Maintain National Mall commemorative works (memorials, monuments, statues, sites, and gardens) that honor presidential legacies, distinguished public figures, ideas, events, and military and civilian sacrifices and contributions.
- Forever retain the West Potomac Park section of the National Mall as a public park for recreation and enjoyment of the people.
- Maintain the National Mall as an area free of commercial advertising while retaining the ability to recognize sponsors.

## Significance

The National Mall is significant for the following reasons:

- *The National Mall is the home to the enduring symbols of our country.* It provides an inspiring setting for memorials, the backdrop for the legislative and executive branches of our government, as well as a visual connection between the branches of government, represented by the United States Capitol and the White House. The National Mall’s monuments, memorials, statues, and other commemorative works honor important personages, historical events, and the ideals of democracy. As a result, it offers emotional and intellectual connections that affect our national perceptions, consciousness, and identity.
- *The National Mall is the heart of our nation’s capital and has endured since the city’s original design by Pierre L’Enfant over 200*

*years ago.* The form and character of our planned national capital still reflect the historic L’Enfant and McMillan plans.

- *The National Mall is an inclusive and open environment where we celebrate our national identity and important events.* The National Mall, the nation’s foremost civic space, is the primary location for political demonstrations, First Amendment activities, rallies, parades, and numerous festivals. Visitors of every race, nationality, and faith come to the National Mall to celebrate, commemorate, demonstrate, or recreate.
- *The National Mall is a preeminent national landscape, and its history and appearance have been enriched by gifts to the United States from other countries.* It is a combination of formal designed areas, such as the Mall and the grounds of the Washington Monument, and naturalistic areas, such as the Tidal Basin and West Potomac Park. Various trees and gardens symbolize cultural and diplomatic exchanges and gifts from other nations — such as the Japanese cherry trees, pagoda, and lantern, and the German-American Friendship Garden, and Italy’s gift of the *Arts of Peace*.
- *The National Mall is the center of our nation’s cultural heritage.* The National Mall is surrounded by many of the country’s most significant educational and cultural institutions, including the national museums of the Smithsonian Institution and the National Gallery of Art, along with the nearby National Archives, the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

## Fundamental Resources

### Memorials

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial
- Korean War Veterans Memorial
- Lincoln Memorial and Reflecting Pool
- Thomas Jefferson Memorial
- Ulysses S. Grant Memorial

- Vietnam Veterans Memorial, “In Memory” plaque, *The Three Servicemen* statue, Vietnam Women’s Memorial, catalog listing of names on the wall, the flagpole
- Washington Monument
- World War II Memorial
- 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence Memorial (Constitution Gardens and Lake)
- D.C. War Memorial
- First Air Mail Flight Marker
- George Mason Memorial
- John Ericsson Memorial
- John Paul Jones Memorial
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Plaque — “I Have a Dream” Speech (steps of the Lincoln Memorial)

### **Park Areas**

- Constitution Gardens and Lake
- German-American Friendship Garden
- Mall (1st Street to 14th Streets)
- Tidal Basin — first cherry tree planting, first planting plaque, inlet bridge, Japanese lantern, Japanese pagoda, Kutz Bridge, Outlet bridge, seawall, paddleboat kiosk

### **Statues**

- *Arts of Peace* — Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway entrance (the complementary sculptures, *Arts of War*, are under the jurisdiction of George Washington Memorial Parkway)

### **Views and Vistas**

- Hierarchy of internationally recognized symbolic views and vistas based on the L’Enfant and McMillan plans
- Key vistas defined or framed by vegetation, such as the formal rows of American elms on the Mall, European elms along the Lincoln Reflecting Pool, and cherry trees around the Tidal Basin

- The primary east-west cross axis between the Capitol and the Potomac River and beyond, planned by L’Enfant and symbolizing potential westward expansion of the nation, and the north-south vista from the White House to the Thomas Jefferson Memorial
- The Washington Monument — a pivotal, central element of most views and vistas

### **Plans**

- “L’Enfant Plan of the City of Washington” (1791)
- “Ellicott Plan for the City of Washington in the Territory of Columbia” (1792)
- “Report of the Senate Committee on the District of Columbia on the Improvement of the Park System of the District of Columbia” (Senate Report No. 166, 57th Congress, 1st Session, 1902); hereafter referred to as the McMillan plan

### **Fundamental Values**

- A majestic landscape and a fitting setting for the pomp and ceremony of state events, with the symbolism of strength, power, protection, and safety.
- Free and open public access, both to the physical space (which belongs to all citizens and is under the stewardship of the National Park Service) and to the government.
- The nation’s premier civic space — a venue for First Amendment demonstrations, national celebrations, reflection and contemplation, recreation, and special events; a place to explore values and ideas that reflect how Americans see themselves; an area free of commercial advertising.
- A visible connection between the legislative and executive branches of government.
- The portrayal of our nation’s history in the monuments and memorials that bear testimony to the vision of the founding fathers, and the struggles and sacrifices of extraordinary leaders and ordinary citizens to achieve that vision.

**FIGURE 1: THE NATIONAL MALL**



*The National Mall*

- *the home to the enduring symbols of our country*
- *the heart of our nation's capital*
- *a preeminent national landscape*





- The ideas and values symbolized in commemorative works — freedom of speech, national union, democracy, courage to fight for ideals, citizenship, patriotism, leadership, invention / innovation, international friendship, justice, unity leading to nationhood, and the emotional connections that provide inspiration and healing.
  - The physical and symbolic gateway of the nation’s capital, which was oriented to the west, representing national expansion.
  - Educational opportunities (museums, cultural institutions, NPS interpretive programs).
  - The visibility day and night of the National Mall’s architecture and designed landscapes from the sky.
  - The contribution of the design and architecture to the city’s character, and landmarks that orient visitors to the city.
  - Association with the preeminent names in late 19th and early 20th century landscape architecture, including Frederick Law Olmstead Jr.
  - Healthy green infrastructure, ecosystems, and rivers; recognition that the National Mall is a significant component of the Washington, D.C., park system.
- the Lincoln Memorial at the west end of the National Mall and the Grant Memorial at the east end, which physically and symbolically represent the re-unification of the nation at the end of the Civil War
  - Land reclamation by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the creation of park lands for a range of recreational uses

### Other Important Resources

- Washington Monument flagpoles and U.S. flags, dedication flag, commemorative stones, plaques, elevation obelisk, Monument Lodge (tickets / bookstore), Survey Lodge (ranger station and information), Jefferson pier marker, Sylvan Theater, Bullfinch gateposts
- Museum collections and/or exhibits associated with the memorial sites — George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Vietnam Veterans
- Character-defining historic site furnishings — historic seating (NPS standard Washington benches) and lighting (Olmsted plan, Washington globe, Twin Twenty and Saratoga lantern streetlights)
- Lockkeeper’s House for the Washington Canal
- Rainbow Pool Fountain renovated as a central feature at the World War II Memorial
- West Potomac Park — Watergate steps, Constitution Avenue belvedere, riverfront, seawall, and the historic fountain at the George Mason Memorial
- Trails and walks
- Active recreation space and athletic fields for the local workforce, residents, and visitors:
  - ballfields at the Washington Monument and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial
  - JFK hockey fields
  - Lincoln Memorial volleyball courts and ballfields

### Primary Interpretive Themes

- The history of our capital and the story of our nation
- The symbolic nature and unique purposes of civic space in the nation’s capital:
  - First Amendment freedom of speech
  - celebration and patriotism
  - The National Mall and Reserve as a completed work of civic art
  - L’Enfant and McMillan plans
  - Themes directly related to commemorative works:
    - themes common to multiple memorials (presidential legacies, sacrifice, liberty, equality, democracy, freedom, Civil War, etc.)

- activities such as bicycling, kite flying, Frisbee, baseball, softball, kickball, soccer, touch football
- Tidal Basin paddleboats

## LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

To aid in the discussion about the future of the National Mall, it is important to understand some of the key legal authorities that affect the management of these special areas and that will factor into the planning decisions for the National Mall plan. By no means does this discussion mention all of the authorities that apply. For more information about laws and regulations applying to the National Park Service, see the NPS website at [www.nps.gov/applications/npspolicy/index.cfm](http://www.nps.gov/applications/npspolicy/index.cfm).

### NPS Laws, Regulations, and Policies

#### *The National Park System*

As part of the national park system, the National Mall is administered by the National Park Service. NPS historians describe the National Mall as one of the oldest elements of today's national park system, dating from the creation of the District of Columbia in the 1790s. Knowing why these legal considerations apply is essential to factoring them into planning decisions for the National Mall plan. In this instance, many of these laws and other requirements are applicable because these areas are part of the national park system. As described by the *NPS Management Policies 2006*,

The national park system was created to conserve unimpaired many of the world's most magnificent landscapes, places that enshrine our nation's enduring principles, and places that remind us of the tremendous sacrifices Americans have made on behalf of those principles. They are the most remarkable collection of places in America for recreation and learning. Visitors can immerse themselves in places where events actually happened and enjoy some of the most significant natural and historic places in America. As required by the 1916 Organic Act, these special places must be managed in a special way — a way that allows them to be enjoyed not just by those who are here today, but also by generations that follow (*NPS Management Policies 2006*, p. iii).

Laws, regulations, and authorities that govern the management of the National Mall include those that are applicable to all national parks and to the National Park Service as a federal agency. As explained in the *NPS Management Policies 2006*,

The management of the national park system and NPS programs is guided by the Constitution, public laws, treaties, proclamations, executive orders, regulations, and directives of the Secretary of the Interior and the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Water (*NPS Management Policies 2006*, p. 2).

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Clean Air Act, and the Clean Water Act are among the laws applicable across the system. Other laws apply to specific situations, such as those for making planning decisions affecting parks in the greater Washington, D.C., area and that involve the National Capital Planning Commission and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts. Still other laws and requirements apply to just the National Mall, such as those for individual memorials.

#### *NPS Organic and General Authorities Acts*

According to the *NPS Management Policies 2006*, the most important statutory directive for the National Park Service is provided by interrelated provisions of the NPS Organic Act of 1916 and the NPS General Authorities Act of 1970, including amendments to the latter law in 1978. The key management-related provision of the Organic Act (16 USC 1) is as follows:

[The National Park Service] shall promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations hereinafter specified . . . by such means and measures as conform to the fundamental purpose of the said parks, monuments, and reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

Congress supplemented and clarified these provisions through enactment of the General Authorities Act in 1970, and again through

enactment of a 1978 amendment to that act (16 USC 1a-1). These acts added

[t]he authorization of activities shall be construed and the protection, management, and administration of these areas shall be conducted in light of the high public value and integrity of the National Park System and shall not be exercised in derogation of the values and purposes for which these various areas have been established, except as may have been or shall be directly and specifically provided by Congress.

### First Amendment Jurisprudence

Any governmental regulation of demonstrations and related sales activities is subject to First Amendment jurisprudence. The National Park Service’s regulation of demonstrations and sales activities on federal parkland has been the subject of extensive First Amendment litigation for many years.

Recognizing the importance of the National Mall and its nearby monuments and memorials, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit stated that “the Mall is more than home to these enduring symbols of our nationhood.” The court opinion continues,

Its location in the heart of our nation’s capital makes it a prime location for demonstrations. It is where Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech, where both sides of the abortion debate have staged their demonstrations, and where on any given day one may witness people gathering to voice their public concerns. As the court has stated before, “It is here that the constitutional rights of speech and peaceful assembly find their fullest expression” (*Friends of Vietnam Memorial v. Kennedy*, 116 F.3d 495, 496 (D.C. Cir. 1997), quoting *ISKCON of Potomac v. Kennedy*, 61 F.3d 949, 952 (D.C. Cir. 1995)).

In the context of such longstanding First Amendment jurisprudence, and consistent with NPS regulations and policies that allow demonstrations and sales activities under certain conditions, as discussed below, demonstrations must be considered to be at least legally consistent with the special nature and sanctity of the National Mall. Other cases involving First Amendment rights are listed in Table 1.

### Regulating Public Use

Regulations in the *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) apply to all federal agencies, and certain regulations apply only to the administration of the national park system. The *Code of Federal Regulations* addresses public use limits, which the superintendent may establish based on a determination that limits are “necessary for the maintenance of public health and safety, protection of environmental and scenic values, protection of natural and cultural resources, . . . or implementation of management responsibilities, equitable allocation and use of facilities, or the avoidance of conflict among visitor use activities” (36 CFR 1.5).

Permitted activities “shall be consistent with legislation, administrative policies and based upon a determination that public health and safety, environmental or scenic values, natural or cultural resources, scientific research, implementation of management responsibilities, proper allocation and use facilities, or the avoidance of conflict among visitor use activities will not be adversely affected” (36 CFR 1.6). A permit may be denied if the capacity of the area or facility would be exceeded by one or more of the factors previously listed.

Regulations at 36 CFR 7.96 contain provisions specific to the greater Washington, D.C., area. The following are provisions that center on public uses and figure prominently in the administration of the National Mall.

#### **Demonstrations, Special Events, and National Celebrations**

Demonstrations, special events, and national celebrations are defined as follows (36 CFR 7.96(g)(1)):

- **Demonstrations** — The term includes demonstrations, picketing, speechmaking, marching, holding vigils or religious services, and all other like forms of conduct that involve the communication or expression of views or grievances, engaged in by one or more persons, the conduct of which has the effect, intent, or propensity to draw a crowd or onlookers. This term does not include casual park use by visitors or

**TABLE 1: RECENT FIRST AMENDMENT CASE LAW SUMMARY**

Date	Topic/Issue and Outcome
1972	If one group is allowed to use structures to communicate views, then others must be similarly allowed. <i>Women Strike for Peace v. Morton</i> , 472 F.2d 1273 (D.C. Cir. 1972).
1975	The National Park Service may regulate demonstrations, including permit denial (36 CFR 7.96 (g)) if "enforced uniformly and without discrimination." The National Park Service may not limit the duration of demonstrations in view of the availability of less restrictive methods. <i>A Quaker Action Group v. Morton</i> , 516 F.2d 717 (D.C. Cir. 1975).
1982	The application of NPS camping regulations on the National Mall and in Lafayette Park does not violate the First Amendment. The regulation meets the requirements for a reasonable time, place, or manner restriction of expression, whether oral, written, or symbolized by conduct. The regulation is neutral and narrowly focuses on the federal government's substantial interest in maintaining the parks in the heart of the capital in an attractive and intact condition, readily available to the millions of people who wish to see and enjoy them. <i>Clark v. Community for Creative Non-Violence</i> , 468 U.S. 288 (1984).
1992	A prohibition against the free distribution of leaflets on certain sidewalks within the restricted zone of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (36 CFR 7.96(j)(2)(vi)) was voided as not "narrowly tailored." <i>Henderson v. Lujan</i> , 964 F.2d 1129 (D.C. Cir. 1992).
1992	A conviction (36 CFR 2.12(a)(1)(i)) for creating an audio disturbance was voided. While the court recognized that the government may justifiably impose sound volume restrictions, the regulation was not "narrowly tailored." <i>United States v. Doe</i> , 968 F.2d 86 (D.C. Cir. 1992).
1995	NPS sales regulations (36 CFR 7.96(k)) were upheld as consistent with the First Amendment. <i>ISKCON of Potomac v. Kennedy</i> , 61 F.3d 949 (D.C. Cir. 1995).
1997	NPS sales regulations were again upheld as consistent with the First Amendment. <i>Friends of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial v. Kennedy</i> , 116 F.3d 495 (D.C. Cir. 1997).
2001	NPS sales regulations were again upheld as consistent with the First Amendment, as well as consistent with Religious Freedom and Restoration Act and equal protections. <i>Henderson v. Kennedy</i> , 253 F.3d 12 (D.C. Cir. 2001).

tourists which does not have an intent or propensity to attract a crowd or onlookers.

- **Special events** — The term includes sports events, pageants, celebrations, historical reenactments, regattas, entertainments, exhibitions, parades, fairs, festivals, and similar events (including such events presented by the National Park Service), which are not demonstrations as previously defined, and which are engaged in by one or more persons, the conduct of which has the effect, intent, or propensity to draw a crowd or onlookers. This term also does not include casual park use by visitors or tourists which does not have an intent or propensity to attract a crowd or onlookers.
- **National celebration events** — The term means the annually recurring special events regularly scheduled by the National Capital Region, including Lighting of the National Christmas Tree and Christmas Pathway of Peace, Cherry Blossom Festival, Fourth of July Celebration, Smithsonian Folklife

Festival, Columbus Day Commemorative Wreath-Laying, and Presidential Inaugural Ceremonies.

Public gatherings or demonstrations involving more than 25 people within the National Mall and Memorial Parks generally require a permit issued by the National Park Service. To preserve an atmosphere of calm, tranquility, and reverence, certain memorial areas exclude demonstrations or special events. These areas include specific portions of the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the Thomas Jefferson Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and the World War II Memorial (see 36 CFR 7.96(g)(3)(ii) for specific exclusions).

A permit may be denied if multiple uses cannot be accommodated in the same area at the same time; there is a clear and present danger to the public safety, good order, or health; the proposed demonstration or special event is of such a nature or duration that it cannot reasonably be accommodated in a certain area; or activities are

contrary to other applicable laws or regulations (36 CFR 7.96(g)(4)(iii)).

Permit conditions for demonstrations and events include how long events may last; hours of operation to avoid unreasonable interference with rush-hour traffic; and allowance of temporary structures erected for the purpose of symbolizing a message or meeting logistical needs (such structures may not unreasonably harm park resources and shall be removed as soon as practicable). Permits for special events are limited to four months. Permits for demonstrations may be extended if space is available (36 CFR 7.96(g)(5)). The regional director may impose reasonable restrictions on the use of temporary structures in the interest of protecting park areas, traffic, and public safety.

Sound amplification equipment is allowed in connection with permitted demonstrations or special events as long as it does not unreasonably disturb nonparticipating persons in, or in the vicinity of, the area (36 CFR 7.96(g)(5)(xii)).

### **Recreational Activities**

Regulations pertaining to recreational activities require permits for organized games such as baseball and football, and for model airplane flying; prohibit athletics if the grounds are wet or otherwise unsuitable for play without damage to the turf; allow fishing in accordance with state law; allow ice skating only in designated areas; and prohibit swimming (36 CFR 7.96(b) through (e)).

### **Soliciting**

Soliciting is allowed if under a permit (*ISKCON of Potomac v. Kennedy*, 61 F.3d 949 (D.C. Cir. 1995)).

### **Sales**

A permit is required for the sale or distribution of books, newspapers, leaflets, pamphlets, buttons, and bumper stickers from a stand or structure during a special event (36 CFR 7.96(k)).

## **Memorials and the Reserve**

Each memorial on the National Mall was placed there pursuant to a specific law or laws enacted by Congress for that particular memorial. Since the mid-1980s the process through which a memorial is authorized, funded, designed, and sited has been governed by the Commemorative Works Act (40 USC 8901 *et seq.*). This law provides standards and requirements for the location, design, and construction of new memorials on federal lands administered by the National Park Service and the General Services Administration in the District of Columbia and a portion of northern Virginia near the District. Provisions of the Commemorative Works Act include those requiring consultation with the National Capital Memorial Commission and for the review and approval of new memorials by the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission. Compliance with this law is informed by memorial guidance plans that have been developed by these commissions and others. Some of the 2003 amendments to this law stemmed from recommendations in these plans that were also presented to Congress in hearings.

The purposes of the Commemorative Works Act include preserving the integrity of the comprehensive design of the L'Enfant and McMillan plans for the nation's capital; ensuring the continued public use and enjoyment of open space in the District of Columbia; preserving and maintaining open space; and ensuring that these memorials are appropriately designed, constructed, and located, and that they reflect a consensus of the lasting national significance of their subjects.

Congress, in the 2003 amendments to the Commemorative Works Act, defined the Reserve as "the great cross-axis of the Mall which . . . generally extends from the United States Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial, and from the White House to the Jefferson Memorial" (sec. 202(a)). The National Mall is located within the Reserve. Frequently, memorials have some visitor facilities such as restrooms, visitor contact stations, and bookstores, but they stop short of being visitor centers both in size and in range and types of facilities they contain. Further, Congress provided that following enactment of the 2003 amendments "no commemorative work or visitor center shall be located within the

Reserve” (sec. 202(b)). This did not include those unbuilt memorials that had been previously approved for sites on the National Mall, such as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center.

On December 16, 2003, Congress authorized the establishment of the National Museum of African American History and Culture as part of the Smithsonian Institution and stated that it could be sited in some places on the National Mall. The site selected in January 2006 pursuant to that law is on the Washington Monument grounds, between 14th and 15th Streets NW and Constitution Avenue and Madison Drive NW. At present the site temporarily accommodates an NPS concession facility for refreshments and sundries. The National Park Service will not be administering this museum or its grounds.

## Commercial Activities and Transportation

The National Park Service Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998 directs that “except as provided by this title or otherwise authorized by law, the Secretary [of the Interior] shall utilize concessions contracts to authorize a person, corporation, or other entity to provide accommodations, facilities, and services to visitors of the National Park System” (Public Law [PL] 105-391, sec. 403, 112 Stat. 3504). The NPS regulations concerning concessions are found at 36 CFR Part 51.

It is the policy of Congress and the Secretary of the Interior that visitor services in park areas may be provided only under carefully controlled safeguards against unregulated and indiscriminate use so that commercial activities will not unduly impair park values and resources. Development of visitor services is limited to locations that are consistent to the highest practicable degree with the preservation and conservation of the resources and values of the park area. It is also the policy of the Congress

and the secretary that development of visitor services in park areas must be limited to those as are necessary and appropriate for public use and enjoyment of the park area in which they are located.

At present, the National Park Service has a concession contract with Guest Services, Inc., to provide an array of services to visitors to the National Mall. Visitors to the National Mall may also obtain interpretive transportation services through the NPS concessioner known as Landmark Services Tourmobile Inc.

The Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2004 (PL 108-108, Nov. 10, 2003) contains provisions to prohibit the erection, placement, or use of structures and signs bearing commercial advertising at special events on the National Mall (sec. 145). The sponsors of special events may be recognized provided that the size and form of the recognition is consistent with the special nature and sanctity of the National Mall.

The following regulations restrict commercial activities in all units of the national park system:

- **Advertisements** — Commercial notices or advertisements shall not be displayed, posted, or distributed on federally owned or controlled lands within a park area unless prior written permission has been given by the superintendent. Permission may be granted only if such notices and advertisements are found by the superintendent to be desirable and necessary for the convenience and guidance of the public (36 CFR 5.1).
- **Business operations** — Engaging in or soliciting any business in park areas, except in accordance with the provisions of a permit, contract, or other written agreement with the United States, except as such may be specifically authorized under special regulations applicable to a park area, is prohibited (36 CFR 5.3).

# SCOPE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This chapter discusses opportunities, problems, and challenges that the alternatives need to address in order to fully meet the purpose of and need for the plan. Following this discussion is a list of the environmental impact topics that have been analyzed in detail; these topics are based on this discussion of opportunities, problems, and challenges, as well as on federal laws, regulations, and policies, and also on public scoping comments. This chapter concludes with a list of the topics that were dismissed from further consideration because there would be no impacts or because the impacts would be negligible or minor.

Both the National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue were addressed during the early stages of this planning effort. Because the issues facing these areas are somewhat different, a separate environmental document will be prepared for Pennsylvania Avenue. This is consistent with the *Monumental Core Framework Plan: Connecting*

*New Destinations with the National Mall*, a joint effort of the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (NCPC 2009).

## OPPORTUNITIES, PROBLEMS, AND CHALLENGES

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A number of critical issues need to be addressed through comprehensive planning. Areas of public interest and concern include preservation of resources and the historic character, the health and appearance of the National Mall, appropriate uses and levels of use, the impacts of permitted events and security on public and recreational uses, and the challenges of maintaining the National Mall to high standards of excellence.

The most important goal for planning is to define a clear and common vision for balancing use of the National Mall, and achieving desired

### Ongoing Projects on the National Mall

Several ongoing projects are related to this plan but are beyond its scope because they would be undertaken by other entities or because they have been previously approved and funded and implementation is underway.

When Congress amended the Commemorative Works Act in 2003, it stated that the National Mall is a "completed work of civic art," and it established the Reserve area to protect it (see page 263). The Reserve is to remain free of additional memorials and visitor centers except for the following, which Congress had already approved:

- *Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center* — An underground facility will include restrooms, information, exhibits, administrative space, and a bookstore.
- *National Museum of African American History and Culture* — Land has been transferred to the Smithsonian Institution. The food service and retail functions at the Washington Monument will be relocated.
- *Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial* — The new memorial will include restrooms, a visitor contact station, and a bookstore.

Memorials are now being considered for sites outside the Reserve. These sites have been identified in the 2001 *Memorials and Museums Master Plan*, which was produced by the National Capital Planning Commission working with the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Memorial Commission (which includes the National Park Service) as the Joint Task Force on Memorials. Existing memorials on the National Mall will be maintained and protected under applicable law, regulations, and policy.

Five deferred maintenance projects affecting the National Mall have been funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. They include the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool area (lower approachway, pool, and related landscape, plus the north and south elm walks), the D.C. War Memorial, the Thomas Jefferson Memorial plaza seawall, Madison Drive, and Ohio Drive. Also the preferred alternative in the NPS 2006 *Visitor Transportation Study*, which addresses strategies to reduce and manage transportation demand within the area, as well as a visitor transportation service around the National Mall, is being implemented. Other projects include a coordinated National Mall sign system, which has been approved, and the Potomac Park levee project, which will address flood protection for downtown D.C. These projects are considered as present and reasonably foreseeable projects in the cumulative impact analyses in "Environmental Consequences."

natural and cultural resource conditions. The NPS presence is not readily apparent on the National Mall, and the agency's stewardship mission and regulations may not be understood.

## National Mall Issues and Background

### Cultural Resources

#### *The National Mall's Evolving History*

**Issue** — To what extent can the evolving history of the National Mall be balanced with the conservation of the historic landscape character, and what desired cultural resource management standards should be achieved?

**Background** — The National Mall concept dates from the 1791 L'Enfant plan and took its present form as a result of the 1901 McMillan plan and other historically significant plans. Within the National Mall separate park areas have evolved as memorials and have been built to honor famous Americans or to commemorate important events. Planning over the last quarter of the 20th century focused on specific projects, such as memorials. The result has been a fragmented approach that affects our country's premier national historic landscape with its great American symbols of democracy.

Primary vistas that were defined in historic landmark plans, along with large areas of unprogrammed open space that emphasize historic landscape features, may be obscured. For example, the view from the White House to the Thomas Jefferson Memorial is somewhat obscured by trees on the northeast side of the Tidal Basin, and temporary facilities for events on the Mall can sometimes obstruct the view between the U.S. Capitol and the Washington Monument.

#### *The Historic Landscape's Health and Appearance*

**Issue** — To what extent can the highest standards for various landscapes be achieved and sustained while accommodating frequent intensive public use?

**Background** — The National Mall is a symbol of our nation and is expected to exemplify superior standards. Nearly 600 American elms line the

**FIGURE 2: MALL TREE CONDITIONS**



It takes many years for replacement trees to reach the height of established trees. The bare spots are the result of temporary event facilities.

Mall and over 2,100 Japanese cherry trees encircle the Tidal Basin. Flower beds are botanical showplaces for thousands of tulips, pansies, and annuals. The impressive mingling of natural and cultural resources has made Washington, D.C., one of the most heavily visited and photographed cities in the world. However, the National Park Service has repeatedly heard from the general public that landscape conditions and maintenance need to be improved.

Turf and trees are generally perceived as renewable resources, but it takes generations to grow the Mall's magnificent shade and ornamental trees, which are important contributing features of the historic landscape. Over the last two decades there has been a substantial loss of tree cover within the District of Columbia, affecting not only air quality and temperature, but also the quality of life. Soil compaction affects the health of trees, as well as the urban ecosystem, and urban flooding.

### Natural Resources

**Issue** — What is the most appropriate way to deal with water quality issues of natural and man-made features, soil and vegetative conditions, flood control, and urban wildlife?

**Background** — Water quality issues affect most water features, such as pools and ponds, and changes in water chemistry have resulted in algae growth. Some pools and ornamental fountains lack proper circulation systems, and the Tidal Basin does not flush as intended. Three major water features (the Lincoln Reflecting

Pool, Constitution Gardens Lake, and the Capitol Reflecting Pool at Union Square) use millions of gallons of potable water each year.

About half of the National Mall has been constructed from tidal flats, and much of the western portion of the National Mall lies within the 100- and 500-year floodplains. Imported soils have often been of poor quality. Additionally, soil compaction and hardened turf areas from high levels of use affect tree root systems, particularly the cherry trees near the Tidal Basin and the American elms on the Mall. Social trails (user-created trails off paved paths) adjacent to formal trails or water edges destroy turf and further compact soils. In 1992 the director of the National Capital Region wrote to the director of the National Park Service about the impact of activities on turfgrass on the Mall:

The only way maintenance efforts can be realized is to restrict the recurrent scheduled activities and heavy visitor use patterns that negate every effort the National Park Service expends to manage the site.

Various urban wildlife species are present, along with less frequently seen fox and deer. Visitors have complained about droppings from resident ducks and Canada geese.

Urban air quality is impacted by vehicular exhaust. Urban sounds, such as traffic and airplane noise, are audible throughout park areas. Water features may mask noise to some degree.

Park managers can do little to prevent global climate change; however, they can take some steps to mitigate its impact. A 3-foot rise in sea levels would affect areas and infrastructure throughout Washington, D.C., including the National Mall. Increased storm severity could result in tidal surges that inundate more park areas.

A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood control levee runs north of the Lincoln Reflecting Pool to the Washington Monument grounds. Standards for flood control were modified after Hurricane Katrina, and the levee will need to meet higher standards. As a result, new improvements for the levee are being developed.

Large rainstorms may temporarily exceed the capacity of the stormwater drainage system and result in flooding. There is a high water table as a

result of putting Tiber Creek underground to create Constitution Avenue.

### ***Demonstrations, Special Events, and National Celebrations***

**Issues** — Different regulations apply to demonstrations and special events, so the issues are slightly different.

- Within the confines of policy and regulation, to what extent can the ability to accommodate First Amendment demonstrations be improved on the National Mall?
- Within the confines of policy and regulation, to what extent can events be sustainably and efficiently staged on the National Mall while simultaneously achieving desired resource conditions?
- What is the role and physical expression of the civic stage in the 21st century?

**Background** — The National Mall has been referred to as the nation's front yard, the space where national pageantry, celebrations, cultural events, and demonstrations occur. This highly visible space in the heart of our nation's capital has evolved into the national forum — the place where large and small demonstrations and rallies take place, and where people can petition their government, present and debate differing positions, advocate for action, or express pride in their identity, organizations, or causes.

Over 3,000 permitted demonstrations, national celebrations, and other events (including permitted sporting events) take place annually on the National Mall, including

**FIGURE 3: A NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION AT THE U.S. CAPITOL AND UNION SQUARE**



Demonstration organizers frequently choose the National Mall because of its high visibility and recognizable national symbols.

- public demonstrations in connection with First Amendment rights
- annual celebrations, such as the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Memorial Day, the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, and the Fourth of July
- regularly scheduled concerts and cultural programs
- hundreds of events such as solar technology displays, book fairs, public employee recognition events, the laying of commemorative wreaths, re-enlistment ceremonies, or school group musical performances, as well as one-time events, such as a state funeral or home building for Hurricane Katrina victims
- annual marathons, triathlons, and foot races benefiting various causes, and hundreds of recreational league team sports

Additionally around 900 commercial filming permits are issued every year.

The sheer number of special events with attendant deliveries and logistics, setup and take-down, and temporary facilities affects landscape health and the ability of NPS staff to maintain park natural resources such as turf and trees. Significant character-defining elements and historic planned vistas are also affected. Temporary facilities, which include stages, signs, tents, bleachers, portable restrooms, and food service, are frequently located on turf or under tree canopies. Turf may be demolished and its health impacted by compaction that affects water infiltration. Compaction near the roots of trees is detrimental to tree health.

A late 1980s practice of installing 6 inches of mulch under trees was abandoned because of the cost burden of clean up. Instead, mats or temporary surfaces are used in some areas. Temporary walks, which spread weight to reduce soil compaction, at the same time deprive the turf of air and moisture, and in hot weather result in burning of the turf. In 1989 construction trenching of more than 4,400 linear feet severed tree roots on the Mall.

Utility infrastructure is lacking, and tent stakes used during events have penetrated into the

**FIGURE 4: A SPECIAL EVENT ON THE MALL**



Tents and other structures are used during permitted events.



Food tents set up in the elm tree panels on the Mall for a permitted event.

irrigation system, rendering the system largely dysfunctional.

A number of highly visible venues are attractive for First Amendment demonstrations because their backdrops contain symbols of our nation. Improvements to access, paving, facilities, and utilities could facilitate demonstrations.

The *Code of Federal Regulations* limits permitted special events (not demonstrations) on the National Mall to four months, including setup and takedown time. This event time limit has not been enforced uniformly. The reservation system for events does not take advantage of current technology.

### **Access and Circulation**

**Issue** — To what extent can public access be improved?

**Background** — The urban streets near the National Mall accommodate around 400,000 commuters every weekday. The road system

may be difficult to navigate for infrequent visitors. Crosswalks have limited pedestrian crossing times. There is a large regional bicycle riding population that commutes and engages in recreational riding. Up to 25% of visitors may not be able to walk long distances or may become exhausted from walking between memorials. There are few amenities for pedestrians walking to the National Mall.

The addition of public transit, including the Metro stop in front of the Smithsonian Castle, and increased nighttime visitation are important changes that were not anticipated by the original planners. Once visitors are on the National Mall, public transit access is limited. Tourmobile provides hop-on/-off service to attractions on the National Mall for \$27 per day. The Smithsonian–National Gallery of Art Circulator provides seasonal service on Independence and Constitution avenues west to 17th Street.

Parking is at a premium within and near the National Mall, with many more vehicles than parking spaces. The National Park Service provides approximately 1,000 free on-street public parking spaces in and around the Mall. About 550 public parking spaces under the Smithsonian Institution museums were closed between 1983 and 1985 for security reasons. The District of Columbia has 200 parking meters on north-south cross streets (3rd, 4th and 7th streets NW/SW). There are 3,750 on-street metered parking spaces with 0.5 mile north and south of the National Mall. Drop-off locations for visitors with disabilities are not always convenient.

Public scoping comments have suggested that underground parking should be provided on the National Mall. Approved plans by the National Capital Planning Commission and the D.C. government envision a transit-oriented future for central Washington to address congestion and insufficient parking. Up to a third of visitors to the National Mall may arrive by tour bus.

The National Park Service has prepared an *Environmental Assessment and Visitor Transportation Study* (NPS 2006c) to continue providing interpretive visitor transportation service for access to museums and other visitor destinations on or near the National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue. The system would offer more frequent

service to destinations, improved connections to public transit, and links to public transportation. The preferred alternative in the study would be common to all alternatives and has been described under cumulative impacts in the “Environmental Consequences” portion of this document.

### **Visitor Education, Interpretation, and Enjoyment**

#### *The National Mall within a Complex Urban Framework*

**Issue** — To what extent can this national symbolic landscape function efficiently and be compatible with desired experiences of national and international visitors while meeting the needs of federal and city governmental agencies, local residents, and the local workforce?

**Background** — The National Mall is a pilgrimage site for many people, precisely because it is located at the core of our national capital. It symbolizes the openness and diversity of a democratic society, and its design captures the country’s core values and ideals. When it was planned, the National Mall was at the edge of the downtown area, now it is the heart of the city and its role in the city has evolved. The concentration of visitor destinations within the core area and ongoing numerous large-scale gatherings bring vitality to the urban environment, but also complicate maintenance tasks. Landscape conditions are not maintained to the highest standards. Streets accommodate heavy commuter traffic, and a large number of bicyclists use the same walkways as slower pedestrians. To orient people to the city, the Smithsonian Institution makes Tourmobile brochures available at the Smithsonian Castle visitor center, and the NPS Mall kiosk by the Metro entrance is supplied with a Smithsonian-designed Mall map on tear-off pads.

#### *Interpretation / Education*

**Issue** — What kinds of opportunities or improvements in interpretation and education should be made so that park visitors and all Americans can be inspired by the National Mall, as well as understand and enjoy it, and develop a personal stewardship ethic toward supporting its preservation?

**FIGURE 5: RECREATION ON THE NATIONAL MALL**

Portions of the National Mall are regularly used by local residents for informal recreation.

**Background** — Visitors come to the National Mall to experience and learn more about our national capital and the wealth of educational, cultural, civic, and recreational opportunities that it offers, from the many monuments and memorials, to the museums of the National Gallery of Art and the Smithsonian Institution, along with the National Archives, the U.S. Capitol, the Library of Congress, the U.S. Botanic Garden, the Supreme Court, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Memorials and park areas provide numerous opportunities to learn about commemorative sites, unique features, activities or uses such as demonstrations, and site history. With many international tourists, special efforts are made to communicate with non-English speaking visitors. Educational and interpretive opportunities are affected by the numerous activities that occur within the boundaries of the National Mall, from First Amendment demonstrations to large-scale annual celebrations. Space and time constraints also limit interpretive contacts.

### **Enjoyment**

**Issue** — To what extent can additional opportunities be offered for visitors to enjoy themselves on the National Mall, while respecting the historic design and significance of the area?

**Background** — Inspiration, welcome, and patriotism are components of an enjoyable visit to the National Mall. Visits may also include

programs, performances, demonstrations, sightseeing, and taking pleasure in eating, recreation, or other activities within the context of a nationally symbolic landscape.

### **Recreational Use**

**Issue** — To what extent can recreational uses of the National Mall be achieved in combination with public gatherings and visitation to monuments, memorials, and museums?

**Background** — The National Mall has historically been the location for numerous local recreational activities. Passive recreation, such as picnicking, strolling, or sunbathing, occurs simultaneously with informal or organized activities, such as pickup games and league sports (softball, baseball, football, and soccer). The majority of active recreation occurs on open turf areas, with groups supplying their own equipment, such as goals and bases. The only recreational facilities provided are the paddleboats on the Tidal Basin, seasonal ice skating facilities, and a few locations with backstops or goal posts. Skateboarding is prohibited since it damages memorials, curbing, steps, and walls. Swimming and wading in memorial fountains are also prohibited.

Differing goals may result in safety concerns for various types of users. Out-of-town visitors typically want opportunities for passive recreation and sightseeing, along with access to monuments, memorials, and cultural destinations. Local residents, however, may desire consistent access to public open space that is suitable for active recreation. Large-scale events in particular may interfere with either or both of these uses.

### **Visitor Amenities**

**Issue** — What visitor amenities and services are appropriate? How should the architectural character be unified?

**Background** — The National Park Service provides visitor amenities such as restrooms, bookstores, and concession and food service facilities. Past planning proposed a wider variety of restaurants and food service.

The variety of architectural styles in visitor facilities within the National Mall does not contribute to a unified identity to make them, as well as the NPS presence, readily apparent. Some facilities are outdated and difficult to maintain. Restrooms are insufficient for demand and are not located near food service outlets. Park furniture is not coordinated, and seating is insufficient at some times and is not focused on views. Shaded seating is highly desirable in the summer as is group seating. Shelter is desirable in case of inclement or hot weather.

The use of multiple types of paving throughout the National Mall does not contribute to a sense of place or unified character. Loose paving material, such as gravel, migrates onto paved walks and into grass. Gravel is also slippery to walk on, dust has resulted in complaints, and it makes access difficult for people with disabilities. Existing paving materials may not meet the needs of joggers and bicyclists.

The night sky in Washington, D.C., is dominated by five symbolic icons that focus how people see the city — the U.S. Capitol, the White House, the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial. Other public and private buildings, memorials or public art, streets and walks, and park areas are lit to varying degrees, with the potential for conflict. There is no written and approved lighting plan to protect the city's nighttime character and provide guidance.

Food service is offered at refreshment stands and mobile carts, and retail items are available at some locations. Public comments indicate that additional commercial visitor services are desired, including recreational opportunities, such as kayaks, rowboats, model boats, and lawn chairs. The alternatives indicate general locations for these types of opportunities. Park staff must assess the economic feasibility, necessity, and appropriateness of any service changes.

Park staff must also assess the economic feasibility, necessity, and appropriateness of additional commercial services, plus determine the service types and levels that would be offered. Commercial service would be offered using available authorities. Currently authorized visitor services would be continued.

## **Health, Public Safety, and Security**

*Issue* — What health and safety improvements are needed? How do safe, secure visits correlate with the openness that is characteristic of a democracy?

*Background* — The National Mall attracts immense numbers of visitors who need and expect adequate safety, public notification, protection from crime, and the ability to get help if they have health emergencies.

The National Capital Planning Commission and consultants have been involved for many years in reviewing the planning, design, and implementation of security measures throughout the District, even before the events of September 11, 2001. Constructed and proposed interim and permanent measures to protect important national symbols have been criticized for altering the character, openness, and democratic symbolism of the National Mall, and also for not addressing the area comprehensively.

NPS perimeter security projects have been completed or are underway for the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial. Museums lining the Mall also have perimeter security projects underway or completed.

Highly used areas with many different activities can result in safety concerns or use conflicts. Examples are bicycle use on sidewalks and softball games near areas where people are picnicking or walking. Paving materials make some areas difficult to access for visitors with disabilities, and some furniture does not meet accessibility guidelines for disabled individuals.

Pedestrian waiting areas at some intersections are too small. Street crossing times may be too short for many visitors, and jaywalking is common in some areas. Some pedestrian walks are not lit at night. No lighting and low lighting can contribute to occurrences of criminal activity.

Hot, humid weather and air pollution contribute to visitor discomfort and health issues for the public as well as staff. Weather-related warnings are issued as needed both for the public and staff. Drinking fountains need frequent repairs, and surfaces and basins may not be sanitary.

Plastic water bottles generate a large amount of trash, and recycling is not universal.

The General Services Administration operates an aging steam tunnel / vent system that runs under the National Mall. The system needs extensive repairs; some repairs have been recently completed. It contributes to excess moisture inside the Washington Monument and can adversely affect nearby trees and vegetation. The vents attract use by homeless people during cold weather. Steam leaks may result in burns.

Shrub beds and other densely planted areas are used for storage and sleeping by the city's homeless population. Federal regulations prohibit camping on the National Mall. Restrooms and fountains may be misused for personal hygiene.

Nighttime visitation has become more common. Public comments have indicated the need for better lighting in some areas.

### **Park Operations**

#### ***Maintenance and Operational Challenges***

**Issue** — What types of facilities, furnishings, or organizational practices would make park maintenance operations more efficient?

**Background** — There is a substantial amount of deferred maintenance on the National Mall, totaling approximately \$508 million. Park staff may not be able to keep up with planned and scheduled maintenance due to multiple, often conflicting and immediate demands. There are over 20,000 light fixtures and various site furnishings, such as bollards, post-and-chain fences, and signs. Park standards are outdated and limited to grounds maintenance; consequently, service improvement opportunities are neglected.

Adequate access for vehicles was never designed, affecting deliveries, trash removal, and grounds maintenance. As a result, vehicles drive over curbs and damage resources, as well as make operations less efficient. Some operations, such as trash removal, can be mechanized to improve efficiencies. There are nearly 900 trash containers, and 3–4 tons of trash are removed daily and up to 32 tons during events, such as the Fourth of July. Even though eating and drinking are prohibited at memorials, spills, stains, and

gum removal may require special maintenance techniques.

Site furnishings such as signs, bicycle racks, or seating at specific memorials have been custom designed, or they may be contributing elements of historic landscapes and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Various non-standardized furnishings (such as irrigation systems, mechanical systems for water features, and light fixtures and bulbs) contribute to maintenance challenges because of the need to stock an assortment of replacement parts and for staff to be familiar with multiple maintenance practices.

Communication capabilities for park operations, events, public information/education, emergencies, or media use are inefficient or lacking.

## **Specific Area Issues and Background**

### ***The Mall***

- *Union Square (1st to 3rd Streets)* — The Ulysses S. Grant Memorial needs to be repaired and restored, and the Capitol Reflecting Pool needs to be rehabilitated. The Capitol backdrop makes this a popular venue for demonstrations and events, but there are no amenities or utilities to meet the needs of visitors or demonstrations and permitted events. The large pool is an obstacle to convenient pedestrian circulation between the Capitol and the National Mall. Multiple levels or grade changes inhibit universal access and include narrow walks that limit pedestrian circulation and park

**FIGURE 6: UNION SQUARE**



Grade level changes at Union Square and deteriorated paving make access difficult for visitors in wheelchairs.

operations. The reflecting pool contains 2.5 million gallons of potable water, but no circulation system, so the water becomes stagnant every summer. The pool is drained and cleaned twice a year. The Architect of the Capitol is responsible for roads surrounding Union Square, including permit parking.

- *The Mall (3rd to 14th Streets)* — The Mall is the designed historic landscape that articulates the vision of the McMillan plan in 1901–02 and renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. in the 1930s. The rows of American elm trees define the view between the Capitol and the Washington Monument and are internationally recognized. The shade provided by the mature elms is much appreciated by visitors during the hot, humid summer. Access to the Mall for million of visitors is by way of the Smithsonian Metro station, the only one within the National Mall. In addition to hosting millions of sightseers, the Mall is heavily used for demonstrations and permitted events. Resulting soil compaction affects the designed historic landscape and the health of trees and turf, as well as the urban ecosystem. Poor water infiltration may contribute to urban flooding. The Mall lacks restrooms (see appendix D); while restrooms are available in adjacent museum buildings, these buildings have prescribed hours of operation, and visitors need to go

**FIGURE 8: WASHINGTON MONUMENT TEMPORARY CONCESSION FACILITY**



The temporary refreshment and retail facility for the Washington Monument is at the future site of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. The tent cover was removed in 2010, while the underlying structure remains.

**FIGURE 7: THE SMITHSONIAN METRO STATION**



The Smithsonian Metro stop has minimal facilities for visitors.



There is an opportunity to improve information for visitors getting off the Metro at the Smithsonian station.

through a security check to use them. Gravel-paved walkways make access difficult for some visitors, and gravel migrates onto lawns. The former Adams and Washington drives, which ran parallel to Jefferson and Madison drives, were closed to traffic in 1975 and replaced with wide graveled walkways over asphalt that run along the inner edges of the rows of American elms.

### ***The Washington Monument and Grounds***

- Celebrations, demonstrations, special events, and recreational activities take place on the monument's grounds. The temporary food and retail facility must be relocated to allow for construction of the National Museum of African American History and Culture on the northeast corner of the grounds. Survey Lodge, the main visitor contact station, is off the main circulation

routes and not easy to identify. Circular restrooms near a tour bus drop off are outdated and inadequate for demand. The north grounds are highly used for demonstrations, permitted events, celebrations, civic activities, and recreation, but no infrastructure is provided. The south grounds (south of Independence Avenue), which are cut off by park drives and roadways from both the monument and the Tidal Basin, provide recreation fields.

- In 2003 a landscape plan was approved for the grounds of the Washington Monument. This plan, developed by the Olin Partnership for the National Park Service, called for planting hundreds of additional trees to improve the appearance and health of the grounds, as well as to provide shade, to complement the revised circulation pattern, and to frame the grounds and reinforce viewsheds. The construction of the National Museum for African American History and Culture and other ongoing or proposed projects provide opportunities to update this plan.

### **West Potomac Park (North of Independence Avenue)**

- *World War II Memorial* — No large-scale changes are recommended other than increased education at the World War II Memorial.
- *Constitution Gardens* — The gardens were designed as a resting area for people visiting the memorials. Poor quality soils have stunted tree growth, and the 7-acre concrete-lined shallow lake contains 5.5 million gallons of potable water but no circulation system, resulting in water quality problems. Asphalt walks embedded with small stones are deteriorating and are difficult to maintain.

The historic Lockkeeper's House, previously moved to the corner of 17th Street and Constitution Avenue NW, is not being used and requires some preservation. Its location near the intersection affects pedestrian visibility and represents a possible threat to its preservation.

**FIGURE 9: CONSTITUTION GARDENS LAKE**



Constitution Gardens Lake has water quality problems from a lack of adequate water recirculation. The original 1970s plan included a restaurant at the east end of the lake.

- *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* — No opportunities for contemplation are provided near the memorial.
- *Lincoln Memorial and Grounds* — Multiple tour bus arrivals cause peak-season crowding, and restrooms are inadequate and frequently overwhelmed by demand. Recently opened north and south concession / refreshment stands provide visitor services but no restrooms. Concentric rows of elm trees affect where facilities can be placed. The exhibit area and bookstore are outdated.

Events on the lower approachway require organizers to install temporary utilities and equipment. Issues related to the reflecting pool, approachway, and elm walkways are being addressed under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The Watergate area is on the northwest edge of the National Mall, and it has been identified by the National Capital Planning Commission as a location for future national memorials. This area is discussed in the *Monumental Core Framework Plan: Connecting New Destinations with the National Mall* (NCPC 2009). This primary vehicular entrance to the city contains historic features, volleyball courts, and ball fields. There are proposals by other agencies to rebuild and simplify the road system and celebrate the Constitution Avenue belvedere.

**FIGURE 10: TIDAL BASIN WALKWAY**

The walkway around the Tidal Basin is frequently flooded by high water.

- *Korean War Veterans Memorial* — Narrow entry walks are frequently congested. Visitor walking patterns have changed, and there is no access from the east.
- *D.C. War Memorial* — This small events venue requires major preservation work, which has been funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Use of the area as a performance venue could be enhanced.
- *Ash Woods* — Utilitarian wood fencing, truck and horse trailer parking, and the office trailer at the U.S. Park Police mounted patrol facilities are not in keeping with the historic character of the National Mall. The access road has become a popular pedestrian route. The circular restrooms on Ash Road are outdated and hard to maintain; this facility is near the newer restrooms at the World War II Memorial.

### **West Potomac Park (South of Independence Avenue)**

- *Tidal Basin Area* — Local streets and parking bisect recreation areas. Commuter and recreational bicyclists share narrow sidewalks with much slower pedestrians.

The Tidal Basin was designed to help flush the Washington Channel to support navigation. Over the last 100 years the flushing capability has been reduced and the basin has silted in. The Tidal Basin gates were replaced in 2007 to help restore the flushing

function to the basin, but additional studies and improvements are needed.

The deteriorating Tidal Basin walls are overtopped in some areas by high tides, spilling onto walkways and resulting in social trails as visitors try to avoid the water.

Walkways are too narrow for current levels of use, so the adjacent cherry tree root systems are trampled by visitors. Paddleboats are the only boating choice for recreation, seasonal refreshment and recreation equipment rental facilities are outdated, and no restrooms are available with the exception of those located at the Thomas Jefferson Memorial and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial.

- *Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial* — Visitors trample some planting areas to take photos or shortcuts.
- *West Potomac Park Riverfront* — Dry-laid stone river walls are deteriorating and are overtopped by tidewater and debris. The National Capital Planning Commission's *Extending the Legacy* plan (1997) and the *Monumental Core Framework Plan* (2009) both call for water taxis along the river.
- *Thomas Jefferson Memorial* — The plaza edge is uneven due to the shifting of the Tidal Basin seawalls in front of the memorial, which is being addressed through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Pedestrian access near the tour bus drop-off area has been controlled to pre-

**FIGURE 11: WEST POTOMAC PARK RIVERFRONT**

Dry-laid stone riverwalls have deteriorated, and riprap is used in some areas to control erosion.

**FIGURE 12: NORTH PLAZA OF THE THOMAS JEFFERSON MEMORIAL**



Temporary paving repairs have been made on the north plaza to correct problems caused by the settling seawalls. Permanent repairs have been funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and are now underway.

vent unwanted visitor paths to the Tidal Basin and the memorial. Walks near the Tidal Basin have been relocated so that they are not inundated daily by tides.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT TOPICS

This management plan develops a vision, or a shared understanding between NPS managers and the public, about the kinds of resource conditions, visitor experiences, and facilities that would best fulfill the purposes of the National Mall. Part of this process is the analysis of environmental impacts. This document identifies the types of impacts that would occur and where.

Impact topics were identified on the basis of federal laws, regulations, and executive orders; *NPS Management Policies 2006*; and NPS knowledge of limited or easily affected resources, as well as public input. A brief rationale for the selection of each impact topic is given below.

### Impact Topics Analyzed in Detail

#### **Cultural Resources**

Impact topics were evaluated for archeological resources, historic properties, cultural landscapes, ethnographic resources, Indian Trust resources, and museum collections. It was determined that historic properties (buildings, sites, structures, objects, districts) and cultural landscapes could be affected by the implementation of the alternatives considered in this document,

and they are the focus of the discussion of cultural resource impacts.

- Historic properties consist of several types — memorials, buildings, sites, structures, objects (such as statues), and districts.
- Cultural landscapes are defined areas associated with significant events, persons, design styles, or ways of life (such as a park or an estate).

Only properties listed on, or eligible for listing on, the National Register of Historic Places are considered cultural resources for the purposes of this plan.

It was determined that archeological resources, ethnographic resources, Indian Trust resources, and museum collections were dismissed from further analysis, as explained below.

#### **Natural Resources**

Impacts on soils, water resources (including water quality and quantity, floodplains and stormwater, and use of potable water), vegetation, and fish and wildlife are analyzed in detail. Impacts on geology, paleontology, topography, air quality, wetlands, special status species, soundscape, lightscape, climate change, agricultural lands / farmlands, and energy requirements were dismissed from further analysis, as explained beginning on page 34.

#### **Demonstrations, Special Events, and National Celebrations**

Impacts on First Amendment demonstrations, celebrations, and special events are analyzed. The analysis also considers opportunities to participate in demonstrations and events, including knowledge about what is happening, where, and how to participate. The capacities of various venues under each alternative are presented.

#### **Access and Circulation**

The analysis looks at (1) visitor access and circulation, including vehicle access, parking, and transit access (Metro system as well as taxis); (2) the pedestrian environment, including pedestrian experiences on the National Mall and con-

nections to adjacent areas; (3) bicycle use; and (4) motorized uses and the road system.

### **Visitor Use and Experience**

Impacts are analyzed on a quality visitor experience, which is defined as one that would allow visitors (1) to understand and be able to contemplate core American values, government, and democracy as symbolized by the National Mall's history and memorials, as well as the adjacent cultural institutions; (2) to enjoy a welcoming experience and the beauty of the National Mall, both during the day and at night; and (3) to make emotional or intellectual connections to the National Mall and what it represents. The impacts of opportunities for information and education; for enjoyment, entertainment, and informal recreation; and for active recreation are evaluated. The impacts of visitor facilities and amenities on the visitor experience are also analyzed. Finally impacts on public health and safety, plus user carrying capacities, are analyzed.

### **Socioeconomic Environment**

The analysis considers the impacts of increased visitation; impacts on commercial business opportunities, including commercial facilities for recreation and food service, and the type and dispersal of facilities; the impacts of construction opportunities on the local and regional economy, and visitor costs if free parking is converted to paid parking.

### **Park Operations**

Impacts on park conditions are evaluated in terms of deferred maintenance projects, infrastructure, permitted activities, and staffing. The aspect of efficient and safe operations looks at permit processes for special events, the maintainability of mechanical systems, and best practices for operations that are used for maintaining high-use urban parks. Sustainability is considered in terms of facility design, recycling, water use, renewable energy, and circulation (vehicle trips and congestion).

### **Impact Topics Dismissed from Further Consideration**

The following impact topics were considered, but further analysis showed that there would be

no impacts or that the impacts would be negligible to minor.

### **Cultural Resources**

#### *Archeological Resources*

Archeological resources — the physical evidence of past human activity — can represent both prehistoric and historic occupations. There is little potential for prehistoric sites to occur throughout most of the National Mall due to the fact that much of the area was created by the filling of Potomac River wetlands. In other areas any prehistoric resources would be so deeply buried as to be effectively inaccessible. There may, however, be areas where prehistoric archeological sites remain intact, although minimal archeological investigations have been undertaken.

The infill that created much of the National Mall may contain historic debris of archeological interest. Historic archeological features likely remain at each of the monument and memorial sites. Examples might be the foundations of buildings that once existed on the Mall, road traces, the remains of railroad structures and tracks, remnants of old landscape features, and canal structures.

While no complete survey or inventory of archeological resources on the National Mall has been attempted in accordance with section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, NPS policies and procedures require a professional archeologist to evaluate the possibility of such resources occurring before any ground disturbance. Based on previous archeological work, further testing or excavation may or may not be necessary before ground disturbance. As an additional precaution to avoid inadvertent destruction of archeological resources and to expedite project planning, the National Park Service will coordinate with the D.C. Historic Preservation Office to more thoroughly identify areas where archeological monitoring and testing may be appropriate. Should unexpected archeological resources be discovered during the course of proposed work, NPS policy requires that all work be halted until a professional archeological evaluation of the find can be made, along with a determination of its significance.

The NPS regional archeologist of the National Capital Region will determine the efficacy of a complete archeological resource survey of the National Mall in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act and NPS policy. Until then, or in the absence of a complete archeological inventory, these procedures should provide a level of protection for any archeological resources that remain.

Because the National Park Service is required by law and policy to archeologically evaluate any site proposed for development, and because this plan does not entail actions that would affect specific known archeological resources, this topic has been dismissed from further consideration.

### *Ethnographic Resources*

The NPS *Management Policies 2006* define park ethnographic resources as “the cultural and natural features of a park that are of traditional significance to traditionally associated peoples” (NPS 2006e). Traditionally associated peoples may include contemporary park neighbors as well as ethnic or occupational communities that have been associated with what is now a park for two or more generations (40 years), whose interests in the park’s resources began before the park’s establishment and whose cultural heritage and traditional way of life are involved.

Traditionally associated peoples generally differ as a group from other park visitors in that they typically assign significance to ethnographic resources — places closely linked with their own sense of purpose, existence as a community, and development as ethnically distinctive peoples. These places may be in urban or rural parks and support ceremonial activities or represent birth-places of significant individuals, group origin sites, migration routes, or harvesting or collecting places. Although these places have historic attributes that are of great importance to the group, they may not necessarily have a direct association with the reason the park was established or be appropriate as a topic of general public interest. Some ethnographic resources might also be traditional cultural properties. A traditional cultural property is one that is eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places because of its association with cul-

tural practices or beliefs of a living community that are (1) rooted in that community’s history, and (2) important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community (NPS 2006e).

No ethnographic overview and assessment study has been done for the National Mall to identify traditionally associated peoples; however, many park resources have significance to local Washingtonians, veterans, and individuals or groups who associate with the themes of the national memorials. An ethnographic overview and assessment could lead to a review of existing nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to determine if ethnographic data for traditional cultural property status should be included. Some resources have special associations for specific groups of people. Veterans of conflicts may associate with the World War II Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, or D.C. War Memorial. Asians may associate with the flowering cherry trees along the Tidal Basin, the Japanese lantern, and the pagoda. The Lincoln Memorial has associations for African Americans owing to President Abraham Lincoln’s emancipation of slaves, and events that have occurred on its steps, such as Marian Anderson’s 1939 concert and Martin Luther King Jr.’s 1963 “I Have a Dream” speech. No American Indian tribes or sacred sites associated with the National Mall have been identified.

Even though an ethnographic overview and assessment have not been completed, preliminary analysis indicates that this plan will not affect those features that have the potential to be determined ethnographic resources. This plan does not propose any actions that would limit access to any of the monuments, memorials, or other features, nor change their cultural meaning to any group. All visitors will continue to have access to and use of the monuments and memorials as they do now. Permits for events or ceremonies will continue to be issued or denied under current rules and regulations. As a result, this topic has been dismissed from further discussion.

### *NPS Museum Collections*

The museum collections of the National Mall and Memorial Parks contain both natural and

cultural objects. Collections of museum items are preserved either onsite or at the National Capital Region Museum Resource Center.

The Lincoln Memorial collection is made up of approximately 60 objects, only a few of which are actually on exhibit in the museum area, with the rest at the Museum Resource Center. The majority of these objects are related to the construction of the memorial; the installation of the Daniel Chester French statue of Abraham Lincoln or the murals painted by Jules Guerin; objects related to individuals who participated in the construction of the memorial, statue, or murals (ca. 1911–22); and objects related to architect Henry Bacon’s involvement in the design and execution of the memorial.

The collection associated with the Washington Monument is made up of objects related to (1) the planning, design, and construction of the monument, including involvement by the Washington Monument Society, the Army Corps of Engineers, and architect Robert Mills, (2) individuals who participated in the construction, and (3) the design, production, and installation of the 191 memorial stones that are set in the interior walls of the monument. All of these objects are housed at the Museum Resource Center.

One object from the small Thomas Jefferson Memorial collection is on display at the memorial; the rest of this collection is housed at the Museum Resource Center.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial collection is international in scope and is comprised of more than 100,000 objects that have been left at the memorial wall. The collection includes objects directly related to (1) military activities (dog tags, patches, uniforms and military clothing, combat boots, C rations, discharge papers, photographs, and medals); (2) framed and unframed materials (letters, poems, birth announcements, birthday cards, personal dedications, newspaper obituaries, books, Bibles, family photographs, and Vietnam snapshots); and (3) patriotic-to-protest objects (artificial flowers and wreaths, flags, missing-in-action and prisoner-of-war bracelets, clothing, canes, high school diplomas, records and tapes, teddy bears, liquor bottles, beer cans, and cigarette lighters). The collection also includes objects related to designer Maya Ying

Lin’s involvement in the design and construction of the monument, along with objects related to the Joel Meisner Foundry’s involvement in the design, construction, and installation of the *Three Servicemen* statue. The proposed new Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center will exhibit many of the items in the collection, but the majority will remain at the Museum Resource Center.

Under all alternatives nearly all NPS museum objects will continue to be stored offsite at the Museum Resource Center. A small number of selected museum objects will be exhibited in buildings outside the floodplain. In addition, museum objects will continue to be acquired, accessioned and cataloged, preserved, protected, and made available for access and use according to NPS standards and guidelines (NPS 2000b). Therefore, museum objects would not be affected under any alternative, and this topic has been dismissed from further consideration.

### **Indian Trust Resources**

The Department of the Interior is responsible for protecting Indian trust resources, including tribal lands, assets, resources, and treaty rights, that are held in trust by the Secretary of the Interior for the benefit of American Indians due solely to their status as American Indians. There are no Indian trust resources on the National Mall. Therefore, this topic was dismissed from further impact analysis.

### **Natural Resources**

#### ***Geology, Paleontology, and Topography***

The District of Columbia lies on the line between the Atlantic Coastal Plain physiographic province on the southeast and the Piedmont province on the northwest. This line roughly follows Rock Creek Park. The National Mall lies in the Atlantic Coastal Plain.

The Atlantic Coastal Plain province borders the Atlantic Ocean and consists of gravel, sand, silt, clay, and marl. Deposition of these sediments began 100 million years ago and continues to the present time. The oldest rocks in the Coastal Plain are poorly consolidated (i.e., easily crumbled) gravel, sand, silt, and clay derived from the weathering of rocks to the north and































