

THE  
**FUTURE**  
OF  
**AMERICA'S**  
**NATIONAL**  
**PARKS**

First Annual  
Centennial Strategy for

# New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: NEBE

Year: 2007

**Vision Statement**

New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park (NEBE) is a compelling destination that preserves and interprets the American whaling industry and its global influence through an exemplary national model of partnership and community collaboration.

Through partnerships with local, regional, and national institutions, organizations, and communities, NEBE supports the preservation of the historic landscapes, structures, and museum and archival collections in New Bedford associated with the history of whaling.

The park contributes to the accumulation of knowledge and understanding of historic resources related to the social, economic, and environmental history of whaling and their associated themes, and fosters the stewardship of these resources through a network of private and public partners.

NEBE collaborates with a wide range of institutions within the City of New Bedford and beyond to promote the delivery of high-quality, comprehensive, interpretive, cultural, and educational programming to the general public.

At NEBE visitors understand the global dimensions of the city's whaling industry and maritime trades including their social, economic, and environmental history, the diversity of cultures associated with the industry, and its relationship to arctic exploration and Native Alaskan cultures.

The park and its partners achieve these goals in a flexible, cost-effective, and responsive manner.

The National Park Service recognizes that NEBE is a source of community identity and pride and that positive, local participation in support of the park will yield success. NEBE fosters a climate in which community initiatives and collaborations are encouraged.

**Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager**

Celeste Bernardo

Site: NEBE

STEWARDSHIP

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

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Research a comprehensive online reservation system as a planning tool for visitors and program participants.  
Ensure visitor safety by maintaining landscape infrastructure including street lighting, sidewalks, and crosswalks to a high level.  
Improve connectivity of park with waterfront through Route 18 redevelopment project.  
Implement trailblazer sign plan.  
Complete Route 18 project planning to improve vehicular movement.  
Implement parking and traffic circulation study.  
Conduct feasibility study to evaluate shuttle bus service.

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

Site: NEBE

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

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

Provide technical support to New Bedford Historical Commission and property owners within the park so that structures are maintained, protected, and preserved in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Complete rehabilitation of the fire damaged Corson building complex.

Restore the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum fence.

Restore the interior of the historic Bourne Building that is part of the Whaling Museum complex.

Restore exterior elements of the Sundial Building.

Provide technical assistance to rehabilitate the National Historic Landmark Schooner Ernestina.

Paint exterior of Rotch-Jones-Duff House and replace windows.

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

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

Rehabilitate fire-damaged Corson building complex.

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Complete all cultural resource inventories for designated priority resources.

Facilitate completion of NPS HABS-HAER measured drawings of Schooner Ernestina.

Complete Form B project for historic properties located within park boundary.

Conduct archaeological overview and inventory.

Prepare historic structure documentation for NEBE.

Complete historic structure report for Seaman's Bethel.

Prepare park-wide National Register Documentation.

Complete Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum Cultural Landscape Report.

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

Site: NEBE

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Provide required technical support and resources for preservation of museum and archival collections.  
House Ernestina collection.  
Restore Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum's Carpenter painting.

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Site: NEBE

STEWARDSHIP

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

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Partner with the City of New Bedford to complete the acquisition and installation of historically appropriate street lampheads.  
Partner with the City of New Bedford to maintain the historic fabric of streets and landscapes.

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Site: NEBE

STEWARDSHIP

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

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Seek legislative authority for NEBE to preserve, protect, and interpret the Nathan and Polly Johnson House. The Johnsons were African American entrepreneurs who participated in, among many industries, whaling. They rented a room to Frederick Douglass upon his escape from slavery.

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Site: NEBE

ENVIRONMENT

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

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

With the New Bedford Whaling Museum, develop and install a comprehensive core exhibition in 20,000 sq. ft. of galleries to introduce visitors to the park's interpretive themes using the Museum's vast collection. The exhibition will serve as the park's primary attraction for visitors to learn about the economic, social, and environmental impacts of America's nineteenth century whaling industry.

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Site: NEBE

RECREATION

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

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

Develop, with partners, a joint strategy for the recruitment, training, and retention of volunteers.

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Site: NEBE

RECREATION

Expand partnerships with schools and boys and girls associations to show how national park experiences can improve children's lives.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Through its partnership with "Youth Build," the park will hire two project managers and 10 youth to work on historic preservation projects in the park for ten weeks (including at least one week of training).

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Site: NEBE

**EDUCATION**

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

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Work with the NER Center for Education Service, the Organization of American Historians and Hampton NHS to develop a comprehensive Underground Railroad education program to convey the experiences of fugitive slaves, from plantation to freedom in New Bedford.

Offer teacher's workshop entitled "19th century Whaling Communities in New Bedford" that will explore the diverse cultural groups that came to New Bedford to work in the whaling industry both at sea and shoreside. Some of the primary resources used as a framework for the workshop include several Ethnohistorical reports/studies commissioned by the park in partnership with the Northeast Region Ethnography Program.

Install a video-conferencing program with web-based components that will enable the park to serve middle and high school students to communicate with partners in Barrow, Alaska; Hawaii; San Francisco, CA; the Azores, Portugal; who share our common whaling history.

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Site: NEBE

**EDUCATION**

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

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

Develop virtual tours and podcasts of the park's cultural landscape.

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

**Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

Plan, produce, and install educational exhibits and teaching aids for the 2,500 square foot flexible education space in the Corson Building.

Install a video-conferencing program with web-based components that will enable the park to serve middle and high school students to communicate with partners in Barrow, Alaska; Hawaii; San Francisco, CA; the Azores, Portugal; who share our common whaling history.

Research and develop an audio visual program to provide a brief overview to the history of the Seaman's Bethel and Mariner's Home, connecting them to the New Bedford Port Society, the philanthropic organization that supported seamen and their families in New Bedford.

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Site: NEBE

EDUCATION

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

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

With the New Bedford Whaling Museum, develop and install a comprehensive core exhibition in 20,000 sq. ft. of galleries to introduce visitors to the park's interpretive themes using the Museum's vast collection. The exhibition will serve as the park's primary attraction for visitors to learn about the economic, social, and environmental impacts of America's nineteenth century whaling industry.

Work with New Bedford Whaling Museum to host a symposium "Needlework and the Sea" to engage the diverse communities affiliated with New Bedford's whaling industry.

Develop "Faces of Whaling" Living History program to introduce visitors to a diverse representation of individuals who participated in New Bedford's whaling industry.

Host a one-day "gathering" for scholars, educators, and other interested individuals to share new scholarship, resources, and preservation strategies pertaining to Underground Railroad history in southeastern New England.

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Site: NEBE

EDUCATION

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

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

Insert Park Text

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Site: NEBE

PROFESSIONALISM

Use strategic planning to promote management excellence.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Complete a partnership strategic action plan through a process that brings together the park's core partners and sets a course for the future through the identification of objectives and action items that align with the parks' mission, vision, and goals.

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Site: NEBE

PROFESSIONALISM

Model what it means to work in partnership.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Implement NEBE Partnership Strategic Action Plan recommendations.

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Site: NEBE

PROFESSIONALISM

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

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Research collaborative fundraising and revenue opportunities with partners.

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