

Summary of Environmental Impacts Resulting from the Proposed Plan

IMPACT CATEGORY	PROPOSED PLAN
<p><b>Proposed Construction</b></p>	<p>Construction activities associated with facility improvements recommended by the proposed plan would result in moderate impacts to localized areas of the site. Negative impacts are anticipated to be short term in nature.</p> <p>Such activities would create fugitive dust, exhaust, soil erosion and noise from equipment. Temporary disruption to utility services and wildlife habitat could also result, as well as generation of solid waste mainly from clearing and grubbing.</p> <p><i>Proposed Mitigation:</i> Plant quick-growing ground vegetation on cut areas; minimize exposed land surfaces; use sprinkler trucks to water construction sites; minimize open burning; use hay bales or siltation fences on slopes; and implement soil erosion control plan. Recycle uncontaminated construction debris. Dispose of all construction waste in accordance with applicable Commonwealth and local regulations.</p> <p>The proposed plan would entail substantial construction activity; however the proposed construction would build upon the park's existing infrastructure.</p> <p>The construction activities listed below would have the potential to permanently impact below ground resources, the character of the site, patterns of land use, and wildlife habitat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expansion of the current visitor center</li> <li>• rehabilitation/restoration of a portion of the former school for interpretation to the public</li> <li>• construction of a new maintenance facility</li> <li>• construction of new trail segments to provide increased access to resources and better interpretation of the cultural landscape</li> <li>• relocation of washed out sections of the Jack-O-Lantern Branch Trail</li> <li>• expansion of existing parking lot</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recreational Use</b></p>	<p>A policy clarification would officially confirm the position that the park should not be used for active recreational purposes. This would be a positive impact, serving to clarify the park's role relative to the region's other cultural, natural, and recreational resources.</p> <p>Continued use for passive recreation (the present policy) would result in no impact on park resources or visitor experience.</p> <p>Recreational camping would be discouraged within the park (the present policy). This would be a positive impact on resources in the park and a potential negative impact on the visitor experience.</p> <p><i>Proposed Mitigation:</i> Expand the range of on-site visitor programs to encourage types of visitor experiences that are conducive to the purposes of the park.</p>
<p><b>Picnicking</b></p>	<p>Existing picnic facilities would be upgraded, resulting in a minor positive impact.</p>

IMPACT CATEGORY	PROPOSED PLAN
<b>Trails</b>	<p>The proposed plan recommends various types of enhancements to the existing trail system. Modest expansions of the trail network and introduction of additional interpretive devices would result in a moderate positive impact on visitor use.</p> <p>The introduction of additional trails that provide increased access to the park's cultural landscape would increase interpretive opportunities and opportunities for passive recreation. Such activities would be a positive impact on the visitor experience.</p> <p>Potential introduction of horse trails within the park as part of a larger regional system could raise issues of carrying capacity. Such an activity would present a moderate impact on resource protection and visitor use.</p> <p><i>Proposed Mitigation:</i> Trails would be designed so as not to impede pedestrian access or impact the safety of other park visitors. Prior to trail construction, consultation would be carried out with appropriate agencies to determine if potential to affect sensitive species exists. If there is potential to affect such species, appropriate mitigation would be carried out.</p>
<b>Health and Safety</b>	<p>Current safety procedures would continue to be implemented in the proposed plan. Strategies would be undertaken to implement an integrated pest management program for poison ivy and the tick population. These represent minor positive impacts to public health and safety.</p> <p>Current safety procedures would continue to be implemented under all action alternatives. Strategies would be undertaken to implement an integrated pest management program and control poison ivy and the tick population. These represent minor positive impacts to public health and safety.</p> <p>The proposed plan recommends improving safety at the entrance to the park using signage and design strategies. Such improvements would be a moderate positive impact on public health and safety.</p> <p>Provisions for a dedicated bus drop-off would be incorporated in the redesign of the current parking lot in conjunction with the expansion of the current visitor center. The creation of a bus drop-off area would be a positive impact on public safety, especially for groups of school children.</p> <p>The proposed plan recommends removal of maintenance functions from the former school to a new facility with up-to-date health and safety protocols. This would result in a moderate positive impact.</p> <p>Relocation of the maintenance facility would probably require the relocation of existing fuel storage tanks.</p> <p><i>Proposed Mitigation:</i> Fuel storage tanks would be relocated and installed according to US EPA and VA DEQ standards. Prior to any ground disturbance, NPS would coordinate with the VA SHPO regarding potential archeological resources.</p> <p>In the proposed plan the former school would be rehabilitated and opened to the public. This would necessitate the removal of asbestos tiles now present under the hallway carpet.</p> <p><i>Proposed Mitigation:</i> During the rehabilitation process, the tiles would be sealed or removed by a licensed asbestos abatement specialist.</p>
<b>Accessibility</b>	<p>All new facilities would be accessible to people with disabilities. Design of a trail connecting the school and cabin area is proposed. Due to the steep slope present between these two resources, appropriate trail design would be a major consideration.</p> <p><i>Proposed Mitigation:</i> If an accessible trail alignment between the school and cabin area cannot be devised, provisions will be made for vehicular travel between areas. In both parts of the site, visitors with physical disabilities would have access to interpretive trails.</p>

Summary of Environmental Impacts Resulting from the Proposed Plan

IMPACT CATEGORY	PROPOSED PLAN
<b>Park Staffing</b>	<p>The proposed plan recommends staff increases. Increased staffing levels benefit program development and resource protection and would constitute a major positive impact on park operations and the visitor experience.</p> <p>Creating a historian position and two additional interpreter positions would support the implementation of this research- and programming-intensive plan. Ongoing research and one-on-one interaction between rangers and visitors are both key to the success of this approach. An additional maintenance worker would assist with the increased operational requirements of additional trails and waysides. By enabling the expansion of the park's interpretive program, the creation of four additional positions would be a positive impact.</p>
<b>Partnerships and Cooperative Relationships</b>	<p>Continued participation in community discussions and/or planning initiatives to address concerns such as water quality, wildlife habitat, and scenic character, would result in a minor to moderate positive impact on resource conditions.</p> <p>Cultivating relationships with subject area specialists and institutions with holdings related to BOWA's expanded interpretive program would enhance educational opportunities on site and result in a moderate positive impact.</p> <p>Cultivation of partnerships is an important aspect of these alternatives. By establishing relationships with institutions that possess information on Washington's life and work or on related interpretive issues, the NPS will be able to expand its exhibit and programmatic offerings substantially. Cooperative agreements with institutions of higher education would also enable the park to undertake expanded research initiatives. Partnership development would represent a positive impact on resource management and site interpretation.</p>
<b>Energy Requirements</b>	<p>Increases in consumption of electricity, fossil fuels and sand and gravel would occur during construction. Adequate capacity and resources are available throughout the planning period.</p> <p><i>Proposed Mitigation:</i> Relocation of utility corridors during construction and development of a recycling program and energy conservation are recommended.</p>
<b>Environmental Justice</b>	<p>The proposed plan would not result in adverse effects to human health or economic or social conditions in minority or low-income communities. Site enhancements, such as improved public programs and outreach, could potentially result in a positive impact on these communities.</p>
<b>Economic Impacts</b>	<p>National Park Service purchase of the 15-acre parcel of land which contains the last remaining acreage of Washington's birth place would result in a reduction of \$1,200 a year from the local tax rolls.</p> <p>The park currently plays a minor role in the local economy. That is not anticipated to change, although some minor positive impact from increased salaries, expenditures, proposed construction, and increased visitation may accrue to the state and local economy.</p> <p>An increase in park staffing of 4 positions is recommended. This would result in an estimated increase in expenditures of \$220,000 per year in salaries and benefits.</p> <p>Moderate increases in visitation are expected. An increase of up to 20,000 visitors is anticipated for the proposed plan due to an added emphasis on recruiting school groups and encouraging repeat visits among regional residents through varied educational programs. Such increases would be a positive economic impact. Based on anticipated expenditures, an additional \$400,000 in taxable sales for the county would result. This would be a modest positive impact. A \$50 program fee would be applied for school programs. Assuming 300 groups visit the park annually, the park would receive an additional \$15,000 in annual income, a minor positive impact.</p> <p>Short-term benefits related to proposed construction would also constitute a modest positive economic impact. Estimated construction costs for the proposed plan are \$4.91 million.</p>

**Unavoidable and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources**

IMPACT CATEGORY	PROPOSED PLAN
<b>Adjacent Land</b>	Purchase of the proposed 15-acre parcel, which includes the remaining seven acres of land historically associated with Washington's birthplace would be an irretrievable commitment of resources.
<b>Energy Requirements</b>	Limited amounts of non-renewable resources, including energy supplies, would be used in construction-related activities. Although energy supplies are expected to be sufficient, once committed these resources are irretrievable.
<b>Vegetation</b>	Loss of some areas of vegetation due to construction-related clearing would be an irretrievable loss.

**Unavoidable Adverse Impacts**

IMPACT CATEGORY	PROPOSED PLAN
<b>Adjacent Land</b>	Left unaddressed, encroachment of development from West Lake Corner would result in an adverse impact on the current rural character of the park. If unsympathetic development were to occur on lands adjacent to the park, the visual and aesthetic values of the park would be compromised.
<b>Proposed Construction</b>	As described in <i>Proposed Construction</i> certain activities would alter portions of the site from their present appearance. Some loss of wildlife habitat would also likely occur. Short term impacts to water quality, air quality, and noise levels would be mitigated as described above.
<b>Archeological Resources</b>	Construction also has the potential to disrupt below-ground resources. In consultation with the SHPO, the park would determine appropriate mitigation before undertaking any ground-disturbing activity.
<b>Wildlife Habitat</b>	Expansion of the trail system would introduce a regular human presence into new areas of the park. This could result in relocation of some species to different areas of the park or surrounding property.

**Cumulative Impacts**

These are defined as "impacts which result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, actions taking place over a period of time." (40 CFR 1508.7)

IMPACT CATEGORY	PROPOSED PLAN
<b>Viewshed</b>	Purchase of the 15-acre parcel containing the remaining acreage of the Burroughs Plantation would ensure protection of the site in perpetuity. It would also protect the viewshed of the park to the northeast.
<b>Land Use</b>	Development encroaching from West Lake Corner will cumulatively affect the park's cultural landscape and natural resource values, the historic context of the park, the visual and aesthetic values and the visitor experience en route to and within the park. The panoramic viewshed has the potential be disrupted and increased traffic, noise, and emissions will likely continue.
<b>Water Quality</b>	Realignment of washed-out sections of the Jack-O-Lantern Branch Trail would help reduce erosion and improve water quality.
<b>Regional Transportation</b>	Depending on the selected alignment, construction of I-73 in Franklin County could result in increased population, congestion, and development in the vicinity of the park.
<b>School Rehabilitation</b>	Rehabilitation of the school for public use and relocation of the current maintenance facility might require relocating underground fuel tanks, a new septic system, and removal and abatement of asbestos tiles in the school hallway.
<b>Energy Consumption</b>	Increases in annual visitation would result in an increase in energy consumption at the park.
<b>Wildlife Habitat</b>	Construction, selective clearing, and increased human presence on trails may result in some loss of wildlife habitat and relocation of species to other areas of the park.
<b>Resource Management</b>	Increased research and investigation would result in a better understanding of the cultural landscape of the site, improved resource protection, and greater opportunities for interpretive programming.
<b>Staffing</b>	Staff increase would result in enhanced resource management and program development.