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# Public Meeting about Fort Stanwix National Monument

## Draft General Management Plan/ Environmental Impact Statement

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Thursday, October 23, 2008 7pm

Rome City Hall  
198 North Washington Street  
Rome, NY

Read the plan online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>

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Fort Stanwix National Monument  
National Park Service  
112 E. Park Street  
Rome, New York 13440

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# Fort Stanwix National Monument Draft General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement



## Significance of Fort Stanwix National Monument

Fort Stanwix National Monument (NM) was established as a national monument in 1935, but fort reconstruction did not commence until 1974. The reconstructed fort was opened to the public in 1976. In 2005, the Marius Willett Collections Management and Education Center opened to provide year-round collections management and interpretation.

Fort Stanwix NM has national significance because it was the site of a major military engagement between American and British forces, including Indian allies, during the American Revolutionary War in 1777. The successful defense of Fort Stanwix and the Battle of Oriskany undermined the British strategy to split the colonies. The actions at Fort Stanwix and nearby Oriskany set the stage for the critical American victory at Saratoga, which helped attract European allies for the United States. Fort Stanwix was also the site where treaties were negotiated with Indian tribes between 1768 and 1790, establishing important precedents for the relations between the United States government and native tribes.

## The General Management Plan

Fort Stanwix NM has needed a General Management Plan, since it has been reliant on a 1967 Master Plan and a 1974 Development Concept Plan. The National Park Service, therefore, has prepared a Draft General Management Plan (DGMP)/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which is now being released for public comment. The Fort Stanwix NM General Management Plan defines the basic management philosophy that will guide park management decisions over the next 15-20 years and directs the actions required to support that strategy. The plan describes the conditions and experiences that currently occur at Fort Stanwix NM and those that should exist in the future. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement assesses the possible impacts of the proposed plan and alternatives.

Extensive research and consultation with many subject matter experts, local community representatives and institutions was conducted throughout the planning process. Thoughtful participation by Fort Stanwix NM staff, partners, city offices, community groups, tribal organizations, state agencies, and other institutions has been instrumental in developing the plan.

The main issues covered by the Fort Stanwix National Monument (NM) GMP include protection of cultural resources, visitor services, partnership opportunities, carrying capacity, and the lack of a properly defined boundary.

The DGMP/DEIS describes two planning alternatives – a “No Action” and an “Action” alternative. The two planning alternatives described below share several common elements. Both recognize the 2005 opening of the multi-purpose Marinus Willett Collections Management and Education Center, which addressed longstanding operational needs; both provide for visitor orientation (the Willett Center proposal underwent its own public planning and environmental compliance process, which was completed in early 2003). Each alternative assesses the potential environmental and socioeconomic effects on park resources, the visitor experience and the surrounding area.

### **Alternative 1**

**No Action Alternative:** The No Action alternative describes current management practices and conditions at Fort Stanwix NM. Current management directions, practices, and conditions would continue largely unchanged if this alternative is selected. This alternative focuses on interpreting the siege of Fort Stanwix in the Revolutionary War.

### **Alternative 2**

**Action Alternative:** The National Park Service would seek to broaden interpretation of Fort Stanwix in the context of the Northern Frontier, the Mohawk Valley, and American Indian history; forge enhanced partnerships, including a partnership with Oriskany Battlefield State Historic Site; upgrade exhibits and waysides; expand the interpretive role of the Marinus Willett Center; and develop an 18<sup>th</sup>-century cultural landscape treatment plan.

Alternative 2 has been identified as the environmentally preferred alternative, since it provides the greater number of benefits in comparison with Alternative 1. Any adverse impacts are considered minimal. Potential environmental impacts

on the cultural resources, interpretive and educational programming, visitor services, park operations, parking, circulation, and the socioeconomic environments are also included. Projected expenditures are subject to NPS budget priorities and available funding.

The Fort Stanwix NM General Management Plan is related to two other National Park Service studies. One study examined how Fort Stanwix NM might coordinate more closely with Oriskany Battlefield State Historic Site in Whitestown, New York, where a related Revolutionary War battle took place in 1777. The study found that Oriskany Battlefield is nationally significant and it would be suitable to be added to the national park system. The study did not find it feasible at the time to include in the national park system, because of New York State’s interest in continuing to manage the battlefield site. The National Park Service will continue to explore with New York State officials the feasibility of a future boundary adjustment and agreements to coordinate programs.

A second National Park Service study analyzed whether to create a national heritage area for the Northern Frontier, which encompasses a ten-county area of central New York. The Northern Frontier study explored the themes and resources related to the intersection of Indian, British, French, and American interests in central New York from the late 17<sup>th</sup> until the early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Although the study did not recommend creation of a national heritage area, it did advocate for enhanced interpretation of these historic themes by existing organizations, including Fort Stanwix NM.

## **Public Comments on Fort Stanwix NM Draft General Management Plan**

The Fort Stanwix National Monument Draft General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement will be available for public review for 60 days, until December 1, 2008. During the review period, the National Park Service will accept written and oral comments regarding these proposals. The National Park Service will carefully review all comments and incorporate them, as appropriate, in the final plan and the final environmental impact statement. Park managers will then implement the plan, as

funding and other contingencies allow.

The Draft General Management Plan/ Environmental Impact Statement for Fort Stanwix National Monument will be available for public review and comment online at the National Park Service's Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website, which is at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>. The public is encouraged to comment on the plan at this website or by mailing comments to Superintendent Debbie Conway, Fort Stanwix National Monument.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information, you should be aware that your entire comment - including your personal identifying information - may be made publicly available at any time. Although you can ask us to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. We will always make submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives of or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

Printed copies of the General Management Plan can be obtained from and public comments on the plan can be submitted to:

Debbie Conway Superintendent  
Fort Stanwix National Monument  
112 E. Park Street  
Rome, New York 13440  
Phone: (315) 338-7730  
FAX: (315) 334-5051  
[FOST\\_superintendent@nps.gov](mailto:FOST_superintendent@nps.gov)

## Notice of Public Meeting to Present Draft General Management Plan

Fort Stanwix National Monument will host a public meeting to present the Draft General Management Plan (DGMP)/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The meeting will be held on Thursday, October 23, 2008, at 7:00 PM at the Rome City Hall, 198 North Washington Street, Rome, NY. A presentation on the contents of the General Management Plan will be made, and comments and questions from the public will be solicited. All are invited to attend.

