Management Alternatives: Staten Island

Alternative B: Discovering Gateway

Visitor Use and Experience

The Staten Island units provide opportunities to experience nature, explore our coastal defense heritage, and enjoy the company of families, friends and fellow community members. Improved trailheads and more miles of trail within and between the Staten Island sites as well as picnic areas, water trails and additional water access create many more recreation opportunities. NPS would work with NYCDPR to expand the greenway so that it links Ft Wadsworth, Miller Field and Great Kills together. Additionally, camping would be expanded as a new recreational use on Staten Island.

At Fort Wadsworth, managers would create more to see and do. While visitors may be drawn to the park by Battery Weed or for an afternoon walk they would also find expanded trails and interpretation, access to the water, improved picnic facilities, equipment rentals and other opportunities to recreate in a scenic setting amidst the impressive batteries. Also kayaking would be promoted and visitors would have the opportunity to paddle out to Hoffman and Swinburne Islands for distant wildlife observation from an offshore dock.

At Great Kills, the Education Field Center would be enhanced with a trailhead, outdoor classrooms, camping facilities and a nature playground to create a fun and safe way for youth to connect with nature. The ball fields at Miller Field and Great Kills would remain vibrant centers for community-based recreation and offer new forms of recreation tailored to youth such as a mountain bike park and/or skateboarding facilities built in cooperation with partners such as NYCDPR.

Improved public transportation, the expanded greenway as well as shuttles between the sites would make access more convenient. Also bike infrastructure would be developed throughout the unit including a bike sharing system, maps and convenient bike parking in order to encourage more bike use and connections with other Staten Island trail systems.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

Habitats and current natural resource practices would be maintained including controlling invasive species, planting trees and monitoring beach erosion. With the exception of the primary coastal defense structures that are already interpreted, all other batteries will either undergo limited stabilization for interpretive purposes or remain untreated.

Alternative C: Experiencing Preserved Places

Visitor Use and Experience

Expanded and innovative interpretation of the batteries at Fort Wadsworth including a Coastal Defense Interpretive Trail and self-guided walk would increase opportunities to learn about and enjoy the park's coastal defense resources. Participatory cultural resource stewardship programming in which partners and volunteers could engage in the hands on preservation of the coastal defense structures would be introduced at Fort Wadsworth.

The Staten Island unit, namely Great Kills, would also offer new opportunities for nature-study, environmental educational and participatory natural stewardship programming. The Great Kills Education Field Station would be enhanced to include more programming and exhibits, an outlying interpretive nature trail network and outdoor classrooms in order to better facilitate environmental education and field learning. New camping opportunities, especially introductory and inter-generational programs that teach camping skills would be developed.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

At Great Kills, the valuable natural resources including maritime forest and shrublands and overwash dunes and beaches would be protected and restored. The ball fields complex would be removed to allow for the habitat restoration. Cultural and natural resource stewardship would be prioritized at the Staten Island districts. At Fort Wadsworth preservation camps, trainings and workshops offer opportunities to contribute to the preservation of Fort Tompkins and select Endicott/ Taft era batteries. Management would focus on ensuring visitors leave with a richer understanding of New York harbor's coastal defense history.

Alternative D: Connecting Coastlines

Visitor Use and Experience

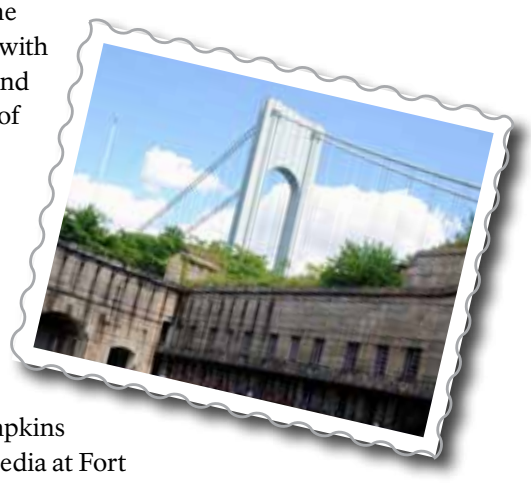
Throughout the Staten Island unit, opportunities to access and experience Gateway waters would be increased. Water trails, interpretive boat tours, kayak launch sites, beach access and boating and fishing equipment rental would encourage exploration of the coastline. Through water trails, guided tours and kayak rentals, NPS would facilitate paddling from Fort Wadsworth out to Hoffman and Swineburne islands and/or down the coast to Miller Field and Great Kills.

In this alternative, Fort Wadsworth would become Gateway's focal point for coastal defense interpretation where expanded programming, activities and interpretive media would engage visitors in the coastal defense story. This alternative focuses on increasing access to the Fort's most compelling historic structures, Fort Tompkins and Battery Weed, and immersing them in the coastal defense history through enhanced interpretive media and experience.

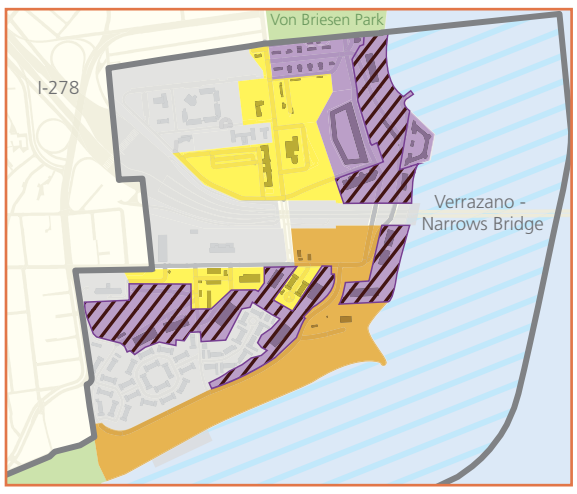
A shuttle system, linking the Staten Island units with St George Ferry Terminal would be explored to promote sustainable access and provide a first point of visitor orientation to the Staten Island Unit.

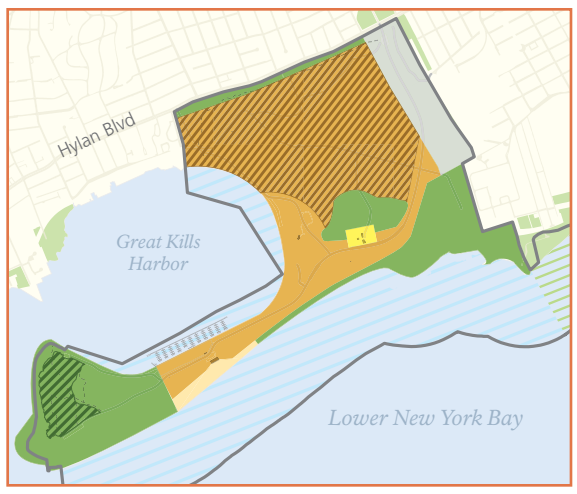
Natural and Cultural Resource Management

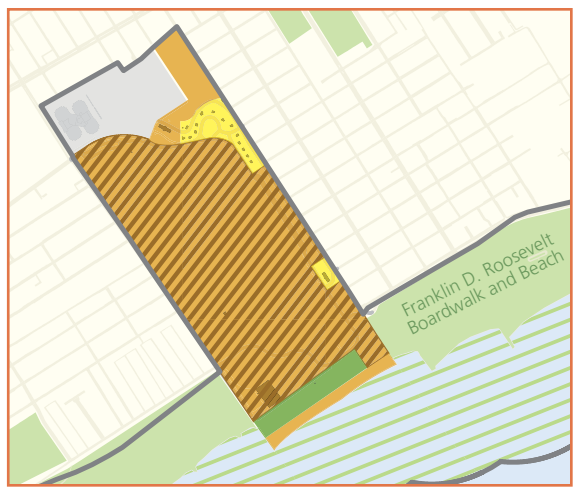
NPS would focus resource protection efforts on improving beach/dune habitat at the unit and working with neighbors and partners to expand and care for the coastal stretch of protected wetlands and beach/ dune habitat. Featured as the park's center for coastal defense interpretation, the park would work with partners to ensure the long-term preservation of iconic cultural resources like Battery Weed and Fort Tompkins while expanding interpretive media at Fort Wadsworth and remote digital media. Like Alternative B, some batteries will either undergo stabilization or remain untreated.



Management Alternatives: Staten Island







Fort Wadsworth

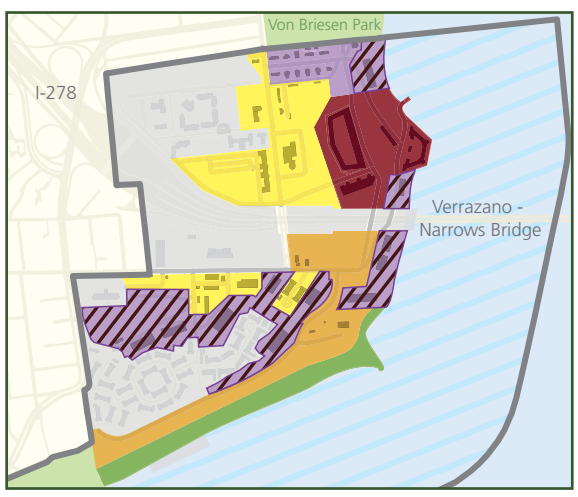
- More recreation facilities, support and activities including introductory camping
- Increased access to the water
- Expanded trail system along Verrazano North batteries and connections to NYC Greenway
- New visitor contact station at Gate House

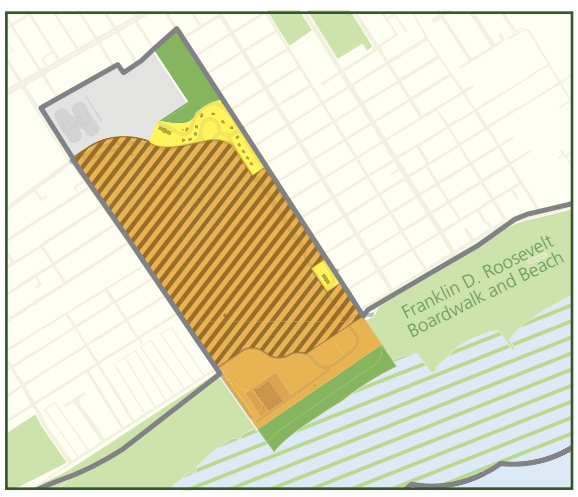
Great Kills

- Improved the ballfield complex and add additional outdoor recreation facilities
- Expanded multi-use trails system
- Enhanced Education Field Center with a trailhead, outdoor classrooms and a nature playground and introductory camping
- Direct access off Hylan Blvd by secondary access

Miller Field

- Increase NPS programs at the fields
- Expanded community gardens and play features
- New mtn. bike park & trails in swamp oak forest
- With partners rehabilitate hangar for recreational uses and new picnic pavilion and trailhead
- Perimeter trail developed connecting forest and ocean





Fort Wadsworth

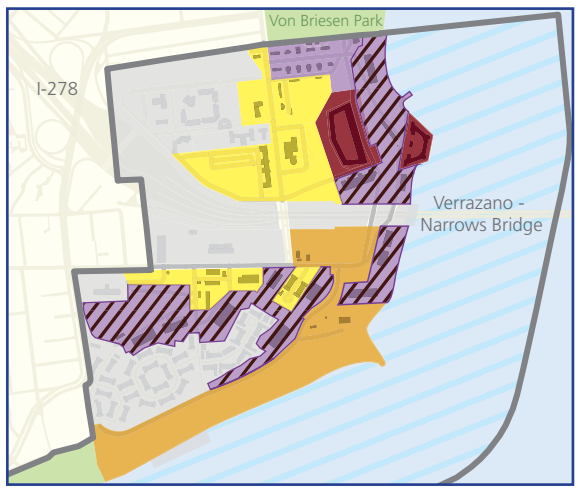
- New interpretive trail along coastline and Verrazano batteries
- Hand's on opportunities to preserve the batteries via volunteer stewardship programs
- Rehabilitation of Fort Tompkins as a visitor facility
- Overnight lodging, camping developed
- Maintain existing recreational uses and facilities

Great Kills

- Ballfield area restored to maritime ecology, also beach/dunes across the site. Reestablish salt marsh
- Expand study of geomorphology & beach erosion
- Habitat restoration at Crooke's Point and improved nature trail
- "Ecology village" developed in conjunction with other camping opportunities

Miller Field

- Rehabilitate the hangar for recreation, interpretation, community use with partners
- New Discovery trail from fields
- Improve hiking conditions and experience in forest
- Dune restoration



Fort Wadsworth

- New "Coastal Defense Trail" among the batteries
- Expanded water-based recreation including a coastal water trail, boat rentals and greater fishing access
- Expanded interpretation of coastal defense resources
- Water-based boat tours
- Rehabilitation of Fort Tompkins as a visitor facility
- Off shore moorings and boatels

Great Kills

- Promenade developed along the inner harbor from Crooke's Point to Hylan Blvd
- New kayak launch, offshore dock, water trail and an instructional boating zone within Great Kills Harbor
- Improved beach/dune habitat (Crooke's Point)
- "Ecology village" developed in conjunction with extensive camping opportunities in former ballfield area

Miller Field

- Launch site and kayak instructional zone developed
- Hangar removed and site rehabilitated to support water-based recreation
- Trailhead, parking and special events space developed

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Stay Connected

The Gateway website is the best place to stay connected with the GMP and future events. Check out the General Management Planning section for updated and expanded information on GMP activities. Join the electronic mailing list. Sign up on the website to receive e-blasts. You can follow Gateway National Recreation Area on Facebook. Gateway is also on Twitter! You can follow us at **www.twitter.com/GatewayNPS**

- Stay connected to the project by visiting **www.nps.gov/gate** where you can also sign up for news alerts, read newsletters and find related reading materials.
- Attend open houses and other park events.
- Share your ideas, questions and comments in person or online.
- Encourage your neighbors and friends to visit Gateway and to also become involved.

Creating a Great Urban Park at Gateway!