General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement
Newsletter—Fall 2010

National Park Service
US Department of the Interior

Gateway National Recreation Area

Join us at one of these Open Houses

for an informal opportunity to meet our planning team, get more information about Gateway and to share your ideas and comments.

NOVEMBER

Thursday, November 4
12:00 to 6:00 pm
Federal Hall National Memorial
26 Wall Street
New York, NY

Monday, November 8
4:00 to 8:00 pm
Starrett City
Brooklyn Sports Club
Community Center Room
1540 Van Siclen Avenue
Brooklyn, NY

Tuesday, November 9
2:00 to 8:00 pm
Monmouth University
McGill Commons, Clubroom 107 & 108
400 Cedar Avenue
West Long Branch, New Jersey

Wednesday, November 10
2:00 to 8:00 pm
Brookdale Community College
Warner Student Life Center, Navesink 1
765 Newman Springs Road
Lincroft, NJ

Friday, November 12
12:00 to 6:00 pm
Kingsborough Community College
Terrace Room (V219)
in the Academic Village
2001 Oriental Boulevard
Brooklyn, NY

Saturday, November 13
2:00 to 6:00 pm
Oakwood Heights
Community Church
345 Guyon Avenue
Staten Island, NY

Tuesday, November 16
2:00 to 8:00 pm
Monmouth Beach Cultural Center
128 Ocean Avenue
Monmouth Beach, NJ

Wednesday, November 17
2:00 to 8:00 pm
Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Visitor Center
Cross Bay Boulevard
Queens, NY

Thursday, November 18
2:00 to 8:00 pm
Fort Wadsworth, Visitor Center
210 New York Avenue
Staten Island, NY

For information on public transportation and driving directions to these Open Houses, visit the park website at:
http://www.nps.gov/gate

Find Common Ground, Navigate New Waters

Gateway National Recreation Area (Gateway) is an urban oasis. Located in the heart of the nation's largest metropolitan area, it is truly a getaway for millions of visitors every year. The woods, waters and beaches at Gateway are perfect for a wide variety of outdoor activities and serve as a permanent or temporary home for a wide variety of birds, butterflies, fish and other species. It's also a place where history comes alive in coastal fortifications, historic air fields and the nation's oldest continuously operating lighthouse.

Congress established Gateway in 1972 as a national park within easy reach of residents in the New York and New Jersey metropolitan area. Thirty years later Gateway is in need of a new general management plan (GMP) that will guide the park for the next 20 years.

Much has been accomplished since the first GMP newsletter was published in Summer 2009. In this newsletter, we share some of the progress we've made on the GMP over the last year. Part of that progress is a result of your comments and suggestions. A summary of those comments can be found in the *We Listened and Learned from You* section of this newsletter.

The Gateway website is the best place to stay connected with the GMP and future events. The General Management Planning section contains updated and expanded information on GMP activities. There you can join the electronic mailing list and sign up on the website to receive e-blasts. Gateway is also on Twitter! You can follow us at *www.twitter.com/GatewayNPS*

Three preliminary concepts, which can be found on pages 10-11, were developed to help you think about how various components of the park could be managed in the future. Think about what the concepts mean to you. Are there ways we could better describe them or are there things we have over looked? WE NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU! Join us at the open houses, or submit comments online or in writing. We are navigating new waters and charting a new course. This is your chance to shape the future of America's first urban national park, please join us.

Linda Canzanelli
Acting Superintendent
Gateway National Recreation Area

The Gateway General Management Plan: Charting a New Course

Imagine you are visiting Gateway National Recreation Area in 20 years. What do you see, feel and experience? Questions about the future of your national park are being explored right now and we want you to be part of creating that vision. Over the last year, Gateway began its journey to develop a General Management Plan (GMP). A GMP lays out a vision for Gateway and guides decision making to get there over the next 20 years.

In this newsletter, you'll read about the progress of the GMP over the last year. We've been collecting your suggestions and comments to help create a vision for the Gateway of the future. A summary of these thoughts can be found under the *We Listened and Learned from You* section. In the first newsletter released in July 2009, the park's draft purpose and significance statements, and fundamental resources and values were described. We've been working with biologists, historians, landscape architects and other NPS staff to revise these statements and are introducing the park's primary interpretive themes under the *Foundation for Planning* section. Under the *Planning Challenges* section, a summary of the most pressing concerns for the GMP to tackle are presented. These planning challenges represent information from scientific studies, existing park plans, and your ideas and observations.

Highlighted in this newsletter are the *Preliminary Alternatives Concepts*. These various options, or alternatives, lay out different directions for the park. Three preliminary concepts are proposed here to create new management focus for the future. Some ideas for different levels of natural and cultural preservation, recreation, transportation and partnerships have been defined. We are interested in hearing your thoughts on these concepts and how they could be further expanded. Check out the many ways to make your voice heard and stay involved in the GMP on page 12.

Get Involved with the GMP Now

We look forward to hearing from you about the information presented in this newsletter, especially the preliminary alternative concepts. Suggestions and comments will be collected by any of the following ways:

- *Drop by at one of the eight Open Houses on November 4-18 to learn more about the GMP. Talk with one of the planning team members, review presentation boards and maps and fill out a comment form.*
- *Go on-line to http://www.nps.gov/gate and fill out a comment form from the General Management Planning page.*
- *Call the park office at 718. 354.4628 and request a comment form that can be mailed or faxed back.*

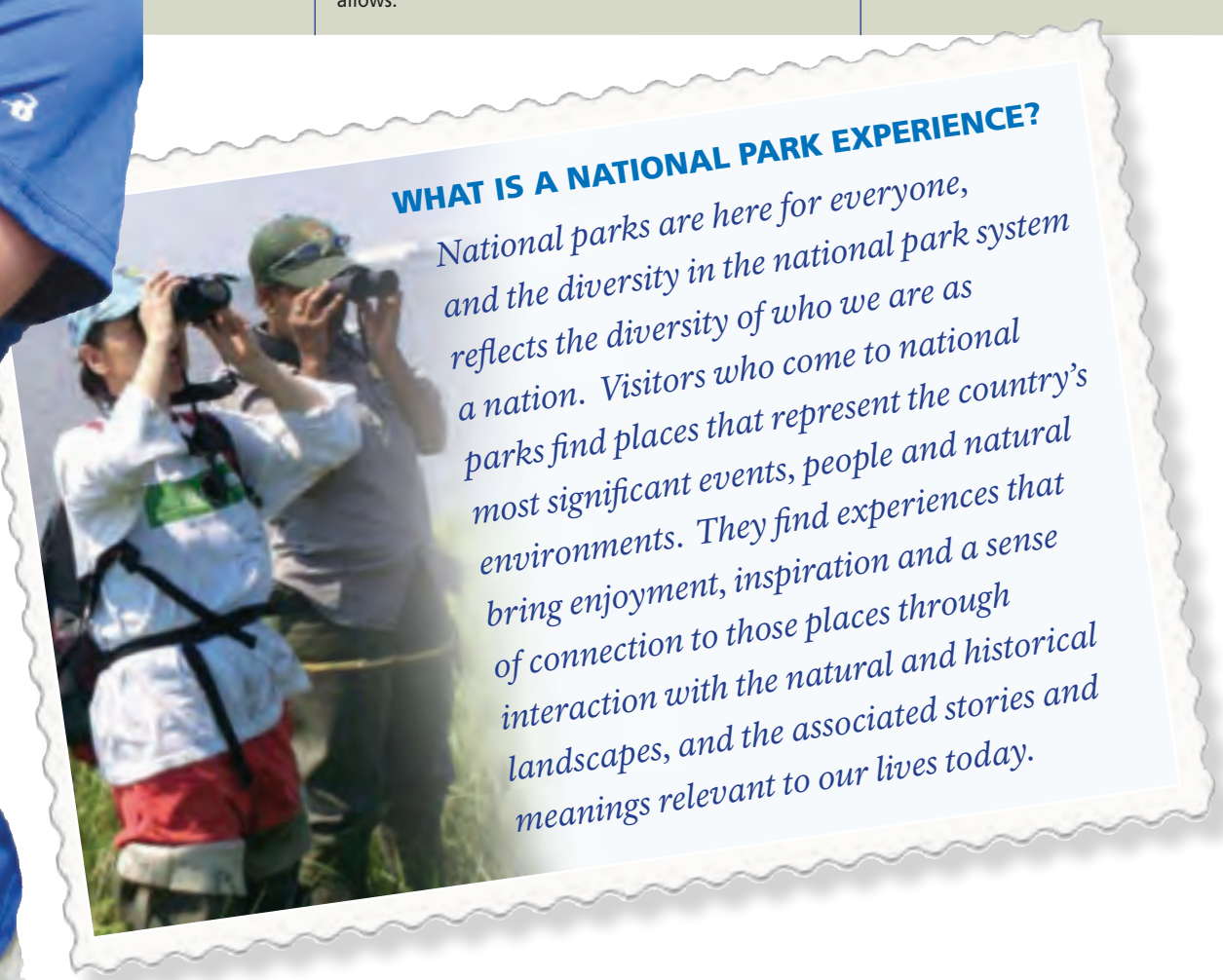
General management planning offers an open, structured decision making process that encourages and considers ideas and comments from many different people and groups. One of the goals for this GMP is to create, build and nurture long-lasting relationships among those organizations, agencies and individuals interested in Gateway and its future.

The heart of the GMP is the alternatives that provide different management options for the park. Your ideas, expectations and concerns about the future of the park are important to us and carefully considered in decision making. In order to create the best possible future for Gateway, these ideas and comments are matched with scholarly and scientific information and analysis. The GMP must also comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This means that impacts to the social, cultural and natural environments in the park and surrounding areas will be taken into consideration.

All of the ideas, options and potential impacts are presented in a written document that will be available for you to read and make comments on. After all comments are received and considered, together, we will choose the best future for the park. A summary of the planning process, timeframe and ways for you to participate is provided on the following chart.

Planning Process for the General Management Plan

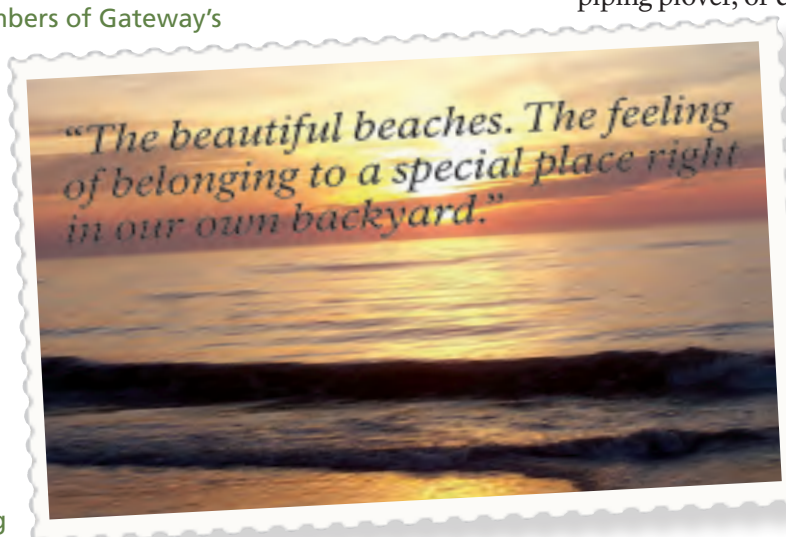
Estimated Time Frame	Planning Activity	Ways to Be Involved
Summer 2009	**Scoping—**identify ideas, expectations, and comments related to the park with the public, government agencies and other stakeholders.	Review newsletter and send us your ideas and concerns. Attend an Open House, learn about the project and share your ideas and concerns.
Fall 2010—Spring 2011	**Develop and Present Preliminary Alternatives—**Outline different possible futures for the park and provide opportunities for review and comment by public, partners, government agencies and other stakeholders.	Review newsletter and send us your ideas and comments. Attend an Open House, comment on concepts and help define management alternatives.
Fall 2011	**Prepare and Distribute a *Draft General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement*—**Review and comment by public, partners, government agencies and other stakeholders.	Attend an Open House and share your ideas and concerns. Review the *Draft GMP/EIS* and provide written comments.
Spring 2012	**Revise Draft Plan and Prepare a *Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement***	Review the *Final GMP/EIS*.
Fall 2012	**Implement the Approved Plan—**Prepare and issue a "Record of Decision" and implement plan as funding allows.	Work with Gateway to implement the plan.



We Listened and Learned from You

Over the last year, many of you shared your ideas, thoughts and inspirations for the future of the Gateway with us as we launched the beginning of the GMP. In July 2009, the first GMP newsletter was introduced and more than 7,000 copies sent out to the park's mailing list, posted on the park's website and distributed at visitor contact stations or by staff throughout the park. In order to reach as much of our metropolitan audiences as possible, the newsletter was translated and printed in Mandarin Chinese, Russian and Spanish.

In July 2009, the park hosted five outdoor Open Houses at the Great Kills Beach Center, Bay 9 at Riis Park, Sandy Hook Lot D Beach Center, Aviator Sports at Floyd Bennett Field and the Fort Wadsworth Visitor Center. Members of Gateway's Planning and Civic Engagement Team, rangers, and other staff were on hand to share information and answer questions about the GMP process. Children were encouraged to draw their ideas while many of you shared your thoughts on our comment sheets. Another six Open Houses were held in September at the Gateway Marina, World War Veterans Park at Miller Field, Fort Hancock Chapel, Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, Fort Wadsworth Visitor Center and the Ranger Station at Floyd Bennett Field.



The highlight of the Open Houses was hearing from you. We appreciate the thoughtfulness and enthusiasm for Gateway that was displayed in writing and through conversations with staff. Comments were also received by mail, electronic mail and through the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment website. Almost a thousand people participated in these combined forums which resulted in hundreds of comment sheets and thousands of individual comments. All ideas and suggestions that were received at the Open Houses, by mail, or on-line are equally valuable to us.

Looking ahead to the next 20 years, we asked you to reflect on important questions that reflect the planning challenges the GMP will tackle:

- What do you enjoy most about Gateway now?
- How can Gateway best protect its historic sites, woods, wildlife and waters through 2029?
- What programs would you like to see at Gateway?
- How can technology connect Gateway to new audiences that live far away?
- What should Gateway do to become a "green" or more environmentally friendly park?
- How should Gateway National Recreation Area look in 20 years?

What follows is a summary of what you shared with us including responses to our questions as well as your other ideas and thoughts. Not surprisingly, certain topics took considerable precedent over others depending on location. While there are some differing opinions and ideas, the planning team considers all comments with an eye towards fulfillment of its mission to preserve and protect the park for current and future generations. A complete listing of all comments received is available on our website at: *www.nps.gov/gate*

Enjoyment and Value

"Fresh air and access to the bay and ocean. It is an oasis in a busy city."

Enjoyment of the beaches and access to the Atlantic Ocean was expressed by many as their favorite feature of Gateway. The entire beach experience—clean sand, salty air, sunshine and water—was considered exceptional particularly within a short ride from the city. Others also appreciated the opportunity to watch shore birds like the piping plover, or discover sea life along the shore's edge.

One of the sentiments that we heard most frequently was the great value placed on the relatively undeveloped natural setting and open spaces throughout areas of the park, especially so close to urban areas. Many expressed appreciation for the diversity of bird and wildlife habitats that provides the chance to view the natural world. This connection to nature and opportunities for solitude also figured prominently in people's responses. Tranquility, peacefulness and quiet moments for reflection, in all seasons, were particularly important. In addition to the natural environment, numerous comments referenced the value of the cultural and historic resources recognizing their important connections to our national history.

A large number of the comments we received from you expressed appreciation for the affordable, close to home and family oriented experiences available at Gateway. Many of you cited the value of experiencing Gateway with family and friends. The clean, comfortable and safe environment with lifeguards, playgrounds, and picnic space was especially important.

Overall, most people were delighted with the opportunities to explore the park and participate in the diverse activities that exist today. Not surprisingly, some of your favorite activities are connected to water including swimming, canoeing, fishing, surfing and kayaking. Others shared their enjoyment for learning and discovery in the natural environment through star gazing, camping, bird watching, nature hikes and ranger-led programs. Many frequent park users expressed appreciation for the various trails that promote bicycling, walking and daily exercise. Community-oriented activities such as gardening, sports leagues, theatre and specialty hobbies were also considered important.

"Get the community involved with preservation."

Community Concerns

"Need public transportation nearby. It is too far right now and we have to rely on someone to give us a ride."

Many people commented on the difficulty of reaching park sites from communities within the metropolitan area, especially when dependant on public transportation. Others mentioned the difficulty of getting around park areas without a vehicle and identified the need for connectivity between the Staten Island, Jamaica Bay and Sandy Hook units. Some of you expressed frustration with parking, traffic, and congestion especially on busy summer weekends at Sandy Hook or in conjunction with special events. Conflicts between walkers, bikers and motor vehicles sharing the same park roads were also mentioned.

Some people voiced concerns with the current level of maintenance at some visitor facilities, especially bathrooms. Many expressed a need for addition places and services including benches, shade, healthier food and beverages and larger picnic and family gathering spaces. Maintaining public access and ensuring a variety of recreation opportunities were equally important.

Some of you expressed concern about appropriate development and commercialization in the park. Development of new recreational uses or adding new buildings to the landscape could diminish open space. Others worried that the re-use of historic buildings for partner activities, visitor services, recreation and more commercial activities would detract from their experience.

Looking to the Future

"Better bicycle and pedestrian connections… Need to coordinate with city and state to get connections between one Gateway facility and others."

Looking ahead 20 years, many of you suggested that the preservation of natural areas, open space and historic buildings should be a priority. Protecting wildlife, limiting access to sensitive areas, and working with partners to restore damaged areas was mentioned as important to you. Many others would like to see the plan address the preservation of historic sites and landscapes including a strategy for stabilization and appropriate reuse. People also expressed an interest in a greater number of interpretive and education programs about the park's history and cultural and natural resources that would provide more access to the sites.

As we look towards Gateway's future, many people expressed interest in additional recreational activities, especially water-related. Demonstration programs and lessons for ocean swimming, surfing, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, water safety and fishing were suggested. New launch areas for kayaks and canoes, designated water trails, boat rentals, and other supporting facilities were mentioned as important to support greater water-based recreation. Promoting traditional national park experiences, such as hiking, camping and conservation programs, were also encouraged. Family-oriented activities, especially hands-on learning for children, were frequently mentioned as a way to create a new generation of stewards for the park's resources. In addition, special events and public performances like concerts, live music, movies, tournaments, and sports were suggested.

Increasing opportunities for alternative transportation and trails connections was frequently mentioned. Many of you referenced the need to work with local transportation providers and agencies to develop a coordinated system of buses, ferries and other environmentally-friendly vehicles to increase opportunities to visit more park sites. Better walking and bicycling connections with communities and projects adjacent to the park was suggested to help reduce personal car use.

In order to better protect Gateway's resources in the future, some of you proposed specific solutions and ideas such as additional signage, more trash and recycling cans, litter control measures and continuing public education. Enhanced monitoring and enforcement of current rules was also mentioned as important for resource protection.

Many commented that outreach and education efforts need to be increased. Reaching out to new and different audiences to make them aware of and connected to the park was mentioned as important for the future. The web, including virtual tours, and social networking sites were suggested as methods for engaging new audiences. Many want to see the web as the major vehicle to connect people locally and across the country to Gateway.

Foundation for Planning

In the first GMP newsletter, the park presented its *Draft Foundation Statement* which included the park purpose, its significance, and the fundamental resources and values. This Statement is grounded in the park's legislation and provides a shared understanding of what is most important about the park. The purpose and significance statements are used to guide planning and management decisions to ensure that the resources and values that Congress and the president wanted preserved are the first priority. Over the last year, NPS staff reviewed, analyzed and revised the *Draft Foundation Statement*, including the addition of new primary interpretive themes.

Park Purpose

The park purpose is a specific reason for why Congress and/or the president established the park as a unit of the national park system.

Gateway National Recreation Area provides a national park experience in the country's largest metropolitan area. The park preserves a mosaic of coastal ecosystems and natural areas interwoven with historic coastal defense and maritime sites around New York's Outer Harbor. Beaches, marshes, waters, scenic views and open space offer resource-based recreational opportunities to a diverse public, recognizing the importance to preserve these special places and leave them unimpaired for future generations.

Park Significance

Statements of significance define what is most important about the park's resources and values. Each area of the park contains many significant resources, but not all these resources contribute to why the park was designated.

Statement 1: Gateway contains an assemblage of coastal ecosystems formed by natural features, both physical and biological, that include barrier peninsulas, estuaries, oceans, and maritime uplands. The habitats that comprise these ecosystems, so rare in such highly developed areas, support a rich biota that includes migratory birds, marine finfish and shellfish, plant communities, and rare, threatened, and endangered species. These features provide opportunities to restore, study, enhance, and experience coastal habitats and ecosystem processes.

Statement 2: Forts Hancock, Tilden and Wadsworth comprise one of the largest sets of military installations and distinctive fortifications in the country, dating through the 20th century. These installations represent a long period of military presence and served as the defense of New York, America's largest city.

Statement 3: The maritime resources of Gateway include the first federally sponsored lifesaving station in the country and the oldest working lighthouse in the United States. These resources served to protect ocean commerce and enhance the safety of the busiest American seaport.

Statement 4: The vast and diverse park resources at the gateway to the most densely populated region of the United States provide an abundance of outstanding recreational and educational opportunities.

Fundamental Resources and Values

The National Park Service works to ensure that those resources and values that are fundamental to maintaining the park's significance are preserved for public enjoyment. Understanding the fundamental resources and values that support each significance statement will provide managers and their staff with a focus on what is truly most important about each park. If the fundamental resources and values are degraded, then the significance of what is most important about the park may be jeopardized.

Resources

- Beach and dune systems at Bergen Beach, Breezy Point Tip, Great Kills, Jacob Riis Park, Plumb Beach and Sandy Hook
- Natural Areas at Breezy Point Tip, Crooke's Point, Floyd Bennett Field, Great Kills, Hoffman & Swinburne Islands, Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge and Sandy Hook
- Jamaica Bay waters including inlets, submerged lands, and Dead Horse Bay
- Sandy Hook Maritime Forest
- Sandy Hook Lighthouse
- Coastal defense resources including earthworks, associated structures, collections and archeological sites for:
- Fort Hancock
  - Endicott/Taft Era Batteries
  - Parade Grounds
  - Nike Launch Area
  - Nike Radar Site
- Fort Tilden
  - Battery Harris East
  - Battery Harris West
  - Nike Launch Site
- Fort Wadsworth
  - Battery Weed
  - Endicott/Taft Era Batteries
  - Fort Tompkins
  - Torpedo Building

Values

- Recreation experience including:
  - Nature observation such as bird watching, contemplation of physical environment, astronomy
  - Water-based such as surfing, boating, fishing and swimming
  - Walking/hiking, bicycling and horseback riding on trails
  - Picnicking
  - Visiting historic sites
- Feelings associated with open space in high density area
- Views of New York Outer Harbor and ocean horizon
- Connections to national history
- Direct sensory experience with natural elements
- Public access to bay and ocean shorelines
- Darkness and night sky

Other Important Resources and Values

Many resources and values are determined to be important in their own right even though they are not related to the park's purpose and significance. These resources are particularly important to park management and planning and will be considered during the GMP process.

- Civil and military aviation history resources at Floyd Bennett Field
- Historic landscape at Jacob Riis Park, including boardwalk and bathhouse
- Archeological resources

Primary Interpretive Themes

The most important ideas or concepts about Gateway are communicated through the park's primary interpretive themes. These themes are based on the park's purpose and significance and connect resources to relevant ideas, meanings, beliefs and values. They describe the key stories and concepts on which the park's educational and interpretive program are based. Themes inspire connections to the park and link universal human experiences that transcend time and culture.

The Natural Wonders, Dynamics & Challenges of an Urban Estuary

The natural resources of Gateway are remarkably diverse given their location in the nation's most densely populated urban area. The mosaic of coastal habitats is refuge for both rich and rare plant and animal life intrinsically governed by the rhythms, processes and cycles of nature, yet continually shaped by people and the surrounding built environment. These resources provide unique and surprising opportunities for experiencing the wildness of the natural world while within the nation's largest metropolitan region, and a model for studying, managing and restoring urban ecosystems.

Two Centuries of National Defense

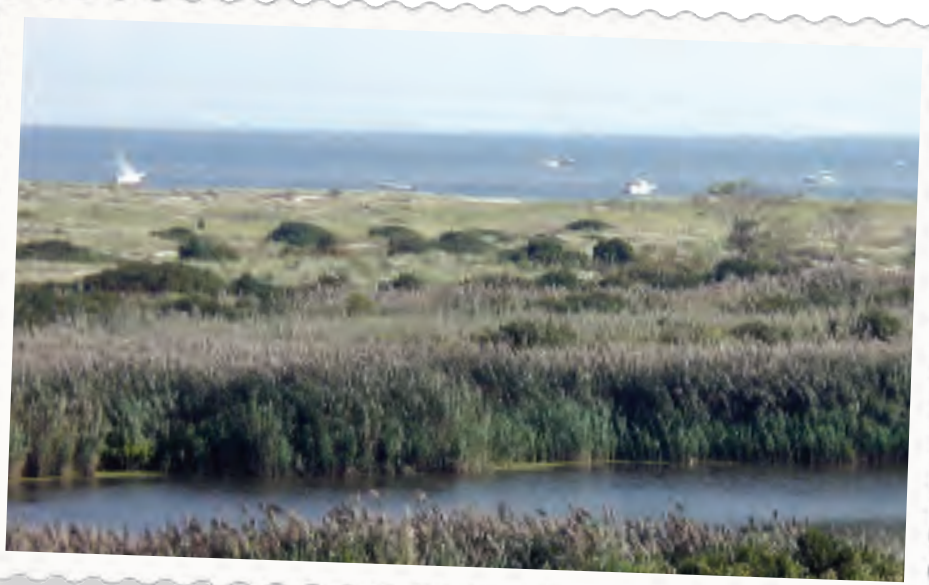
For over 200 years, places in Gateway were critical to the defense of New York Harbor and played a significant role in the development of the military technologies and strategies used to protect our nation. The changing nature of our national defense reveals stories of triumph, struggle, and everyday life as well as the contrast of innovation and obsolescence. Today, the remaining fortifications, structures and historic landscapes are a visible reminder of the importance of preparedness and defense then and now.

Maritime Heritage

Since the days of European exploration and colonization, Sandy Hook has played an important role in facilitating navigation and commerce in and out of New York Harbor. Its maritime resources illustrate the evolution of navigation aids and coastal rescue, in part via the oldest lighthouse in the US, one of the original life-saving stations built by the federal government, historic United States Coast Guard structures, and a relatively safe natural harbor that has provided refuge to generations of mariners. Dedicated and heroic individuals ensured that this beacon served to guide ships in all seasons and under all conditions.

Recreation & Education: Quality of Urban Life for All Visitors

The human need for recreation and renewal has resulted in an evolving history of traditional and innovative uses of the park's lands and waters to improve the quality of urban life. Intrinsically connected to the diverse population of the New York metropolitan area, Gateway's resources provide unique opportunities for outdoor recreation and rejuvenation in a densely populated and largely impacted metropolitan area. It is an outdoor laboratory for learning and discovery, where academic facts and knowledge can be observed in real settings. The park's open spaces and wide horizons offer opportunities for resource-based recreation as well as contemplation and reflection.



Planning Challenges

In the Summer 2009 newsletter, we introduced a series of "Planning Challenges" that described issues and concerns that NPS staff raised through internal workshops and meetings during the early stages of the GMP process. These concerns represented observations of experts such as scientists, biologists, and historic preservation specialists about the condition of the resources. These concerns were voiced by rangers, recreation specialists and park police who interact daily with visitors, volunteers and partners. Truck operators, carpenters, administrative assistants and others charged with the day-to-day operations and maintenance of the park also expressed their views.

In addition, certain key topics were explored with academic partners at Columbia University, Pennsylvania State University and Rutgers University to further define issues around climate change, visitor use and shifting shorelines. NPS scientists and resource experts also explored issues and potential recommendations for the park's natural resources and Jamaica Bay.

In that same newsletter and at the public open houses, we asked people what they valued and enjoyed most about Gateway. We also wanted to know about their concerns and suggestions for the future management of the park. Following analysis of all the comments, the most relevant planning issues and opportunities were identified. The planning team also developed decision points—the major questions that the planning team must address through general management planning and alternative development.

Water Quality

Two-thirds of Gateway National Recreation Area is covered by water—more than 17,000 acres. The beaches and bays are prime habitats for birds, shellfish, and plants as well as the most popular visitor areas for all types of water-based recreation. Despite many years of efforts to improve conditions, water quality is still threatened in all units, especially Jamaica Bay. The deterioration of the salt marsh at Jamaica Bay is severe and the rate of replacement of salt marsh can't keep up with the rate of loss. Many activities in adjacent communities contribute to the problem and result in contaminated runoff from streets and sewers. Degraded water quality hurts fish and wildlife and results in beach closures, shellfish consumption bans, and unsafe conditions for water activities.

Wildlife and People Conflicts

Gateway includes 270 acres of shoreline with 16 miles of ocean beaches, dunes and water that support habitat and nesting areas for birds, plants, fish, and crabs. The park is required by federal law to protect beach areas for nesting bird populations. Sometimes these protected areas are also favorite "sunbathing beaches" and places for fishing, surfing, and boating that result in conflicts between people and wildlife.

Disappearing Sand, Changing Climate

Throughout Gateway, the amounts of beach sand have been shifting due to man-made influences and natural forces, like hurricanes and normal currents. Recent changes in frequency and intensity of storm events is contributing to greater levels of shoreline and dune erosion. Roads, trails, paved paths and bird habitat have already been impacted. Future predictions suggest rising sea levels and greater storm events will further endanger these places.

- *What are the best management approaches to ensure the long-term viability of the park's fundamental natural resources?*
- *What should be the NPS' role in the restoration of Jamaica Bay given the complexity of the issues and the interests of other agencies and partners?*
- *How should Gateway staff work with its partners to improve ecological conditions and reduce the persistent threats and influences from adjacent urban development?*

Finding the Park

Gateway National Recreation Area does not have a strong identity as a unit of the National Park System. This makes it difficult to promote experiences consistent with other national parks and is often confused with city and state facilities. The many points of entry with minimal or no identifying entry features, the lack of National Park Service staff presence in many locations, and the lack of clearly marked boundaries present identification challenges. Gateway visitor centers and contact stations are typically "unit-specific" and the visitor is not oriented to the entire National Recreation Area. Visitors are sometimes unaware of all that Gateway encompasses—that it involves multiple units across two states, that it is a NPS site, and that it contains a collection of unique natural and historic resources.

Access to Gateway is predominantly auto dependent. Several areas of the park are not conveniently accessible by public transit. This poses a challenge to many visitors, especially lower-income and transit-dependent populations. Information on how to make connections between units or districts is unavailable or unclear. Visitors are interested in other options for reaching the park, but there are limited formal designated bike or water routes and few parking or docking facilities to support them.

- *Given multiple park units and many entrance points, how should visitors be oriented to the entire National Recreation Area?*
- *What are the most affordable and efficient ways to move and direct visitors to and throughout the park?*
- *How can Gateway enable and promote existing alternative modes of transportation in order to meet the needs of visitors, make the park more accessible, and reduce green house gas emissions?*
- *What is the park's role with partners to extend public transportation services, enhance greenway connections and assist in the promotion of alternative modes to and within Gateway?*

Preservation Challenge
Gateway possesses more than 400 historic buildings, structures and archeological sites. Some of these places like Battery Weed, Fort Tompkins, and the Floyd Bennett Field Hangars are elaborate stone and brick structures. When Gateway inherited these buildings and structures in 1972, many were already in poor condition. Repairing, painting and other maintenance today is a serious challenge given their numbers, current condition, and competing funding and staff priorities.

Rising Waters
The majority of the park's most well known and nationally significant historic sites such as the Riis Park Bath House and Officer's Row at Sandy Hook, are adjacent to the ocean and other water bodies. Some of these places have already experienced increases in storm flooding and climate change forecasts suggest that this pattern may continue impeding preservation efforts.

Scattered Collections
The stories of the people and events that are part of Gateway's rich history are represented in the park's museum collections. Currently the park has over 260,000 objects that are stored throughout the park in buildings that don't meet professional standards for climate control.

- *What are the best ways to manage the park's fundamental heritage resources and landscapes to ensure their preservation?*
- *What partnerships can the park leverage to encourage the long-term protection of Gateway's heritage assets?*
- *What are the best approaches to ensure that the park's collections are properly stored and provide access for research, interpretive and educational opportunities?*

New Audiences
Visitation at Gateway does not reflect the ethnic, racial, or socio-economic diversity that now characterizes the U.S. population and the communities outlying the park. A recent analysis of visitation at the park over the last 30 years revealed that many of the primary audiences Congress established the park for are not coming. In addition, the boom of electronic technology, especially with children and teens, is changing expectations for how the park should provide information and deliver programs.

- *How can Gateway attract visitors that better represents the diversity of the U.S. population, New York City, and surrounding communities?*
- *How should NPS shape a "national park experience" at Gateway in the midst of the country's largest metropolitan area that engages local, national and global audiences?*
- *What are the best ways to provide excellent interpretive experiences for all visitors recognizing a dynamic and changing technological world?*

Visitor Comforts
Over the years, many visitors have expressed concerns about park infrastructure being in a state of decline and inadequate areas for bathrooms, showers and food service. There is a park wide demand for more user comforts—shade, playgrounds, benches, bike racks, picnic areas, water fountains, facilities for large family groups, and good food. At the same time, there is a growing interest in water recreation opportunities, but there are limited facilities and a need for designated water trails, lockers, boat rentals, and launch sites.

- *What levels and kinds of visitor facilities are appropriate for NPS and others to manage?*
- *How should the park provide better visitor services and experiences?*

What kind of national park do you want Gateway to be?

This is the question that we have been considering as we plan for the park's future. Several different approaches are possible to preserve the park's collection of natural and cultural resources and create meaningful opportunities to learn, explore and recreate. These various approaches are called *Preliminary Alternative Concepts*.

Each *Preliminary Alternative Concept* includes a set of ideas that would steer park management in a different direction over the next twenty years. These concepts reflect the input we received from you over the last year and respond to the decision points the GMP needs to address.

Creating *Preliminary Alternative Concepts* is just the first step in identifying different visions for Gateway's future. After we receive your ideas and comments this fall, the GMP planning team will incorporate your input and add more detail to the *Preliminary Alternative Concepts*. These details will define a set of ideal conditions and possible actions to improve the park's natural and cultural resources and ensure different and appropriate types of activities and facilities. Some new ideas might emerge and the concepts may change. All of this information will be shared with you sometime in 2011 as we continue the general management planning process.

Your ideas and suggestions for enhancing the *Preliminary Alternative Concepts* are important to us. As you read through the information, we'd like you to consider the following questions:

Do you think each concept helps Gateway carry out its purpose?

Will the park's natural and cultural resources that are important to you be adequately preserved under each concept?

What types of educational and recreational activities do you think are appropriate in each concept?

Do the concepts provide ways for people to reach Gateway and move around the different sites?

How could partnerships support the ideas in each concept?

Are there other ideas important to you that are missing from these concepts?

Concept 1:
Discovering Gateway

A variety of new educational, interpretive and recreational experiences foster enjoyment, appreciation of, and interaction with, the park's special places. This concept expands on connections for diverse audiences with the park's nationally important natural environments and historic sites.

Natural & Cultural Resources

Distinct types of natural areas such as woodlands, beaches and marshes are restored to provide more opportunities for outdoor learning.

Select historic buildings and structures are rehabilitated and adaptively reused to increase access to these places and support education and interpretive activities.

Recreation

Different recreational activities and programs are introduced and provided to promote interaction with the park's natural and historic sites.

Limited organized recreation.

Transportation

Affordable and convenient ways to reach the park's sites from nearby areas are promoted.

Partnerships

Partnerships focus on strengthening community connections and encourage outdoor learning, stewardship, and conservation to a variety of audiences.

Concept 2:
Experiencing Preserved Places

Natural systems, historic sites and landscapes receive the highest levels of preservation and restoration in this concept. Opportunities for independent exploration of the park's fundamental resources and values, and participation in environmental education and preservation programs provide for an outstanding national park experience.

Natural & Cultural Resources

Habitats, natural processes and water quality are protected and restored to the greatest degree possible to strengthen ecosystem integrity and resiliency.

The majority of the park's fundamental historic buildings, structures and landscapes are stabilized and preserved, as feasible.

Recreation

Recreational activities are centered on the park's fundamental values and promote exploration and connection to the natural world.

Limited organized recreation.

Transportation

Alternative transportation options including shuttle systems, bicycles and ferries are the primary way to reach and move around the park.

Partnerships

Partnerships that promote science, research and preservation are emphasized in order to protect park resources.

Concept 3:
Coastal Connections

The broad themes of coastal ecology, coastal defense and coastal recreation link the three park units and their varied resources together. A seamless coastal experience emphasizes education and interpretation centered on coastal defense and maritime sites and stories with opportunities for beach and water-related recreation.

Natural & Cultural Resources

Beach and dune ecosystems are preserved to support a variety of coastal activities and changing climatic conditions.

The buildings, landscapes and collections associated with maritime and coastal defense are preserved and selectively rehabilitated to enhance educational and interpretive opportunities.

Recreation

All types of coastal recreational activities that emphasize connections to the ocean, shorelines, bays and forts are encouraged.

Limited organized recreation.

Transportation

An integrated transportation system supports water-borne options to link the three park units and enhance the coastal experience.

Partnerships

Partnerships focus on expanding the maritime and coastal stories through a network of other sites outside the park.

US Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Gateway National Recreation Area
210 New York Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10305

This newsletter is a publication of the National Park Service, Gateway National Recreation Area. For additional information please contact:
Superintendent
Gateway National Recreation Area
210 New York Avenue
Staten Island, NY, 10305;
by email at *gate_gmp@nps.gov;*
or call 718.354.4628.
Visit us on the web at *www.nps.gov/gate*

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. Want to know when something new has been added? Join the electronic mailing list. Sign up on the website to receive e-blasts. Gateway is also on Twitter! You can follow us at *www.twitter.com/GatewayNPS*

- Stay connected to the project by visiting *http://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.

PRESORT STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Union, NJ
Permit No. 933

Charting a New Future for Gateway