



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
Fort Mason, San Francisco, California 94123

February 15, 2006

IN REPLY REFER TO:

D18 (GOGA-PLAN)

SUBJECT: Scoping Announcement and Invitation to Agency Roundtable Meeting for Preparation of General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Agency Partner:

The National Park Service is initiating a planning process to prepare a new General Management Plan (GMP) for Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA). This process will begin with public and agency scoping, leading to preparation of a draft GMP and Environmental Impact Statement.

The GMP provides the "big picture" long-range vision for the park. It sets forth the basic management philosophy, management concepts and operational guidelines for the next 20 years. The current GMP was completed in 1980. A new plan is needed to address lands added to the park since then and to reflect the current understanding of the park's resources and regional context.

We invite you to participate as an agency partner in this effort. We are beginning with a roundtable meeting of interested and affected agencies, including resource and regulatory agencies, other public land managers and representatives from all levels of government.

The purpose of the roundtable is to exchange information about the GMP planning process, to understand your agency's interests, and to facilitate your agency's scoping comments.

Date/Time: Tuesday, March 14, 2006, 12-2:30pm

Location: Fort Mason Officer's Club in San Francisco

Details: Lunch will be provided.

RSVP: So that we may confirm the number of lunches, please respond by February 28, 2006 by sending an email to thomas_barron@nps.gov or calling (415)561-4941.

Directions: The entrance to Fort Mason is located at the intersection of Bay and Franklin Streets, just one block west of Van Ness Avenue. Proceed north on Franklin through the entrance. The Officer's Club is the first building on the right after the stop sign. Free parking is available onsite. Several SF Muni lines serve the site.

Website: <http://planning.nps.gov/goga>

If you, or a representative of your organization, are unable to attend, please fill out the enclosed form and return it to us. We have included additional background information for your reference and look forward to your participation.

Sincerely,

Brian O'Neill
General Superintendent

Enclosure

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Scoping

The GMP and EIS will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1508.9), the 2001 NPS Management Policies, NPS Director's Order No. 12: Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-Making and NPS Director's Order 2: Park Planning.

The primary goal of scoping is to determine the range of issues and alternatives to be addressed and gather information on resources within or adjacent to this area that your agency has jurisdiction over or any regulatory requirement of your agency that we need to consider.

In the scoping process, we are reaching out to elected officials; federal, state, county, and municipal agencies; tribes; businesses and other private sector groups; special interest groups; residents, and the visiting public. Through one-on-one meetings, surveys, group presentations, focus groups, public open houses, websites, newsletters, and comment forms, we will be asking people to share their hopes, concerns, and vision for the park, its resources, and the experiences park visitors should expect and enjoy.

As part of this public involvement effort, we will convene an agency partners' group to communicate with the GMP team throughout the planning process. We greatly appreciate your continued participation.

Background

Established in 1972, GGNRA is one of the largest urban national park areas in the world and one of the most highly visited units in the National Park System. The Golden Gate National Recreation Area spans 80 miles both north and south of the Golden Gate Bridge, forming an expansive green belt across over 100 square miles of public open space. From Tomales Bay in the north to the Phleger Estate in the south, the 79,378 acres that comprise the park include ancient redwoods, historic landmarks, miles of trails, rocky shorelines, rare and endangered species, rugged coastal lands, and breathtaking vistas.

Since the last General Management Plan (GMP) was approved in 1980, new planning is needed to address changed conditions and current understanding of park resources and values. Significant changes have occurred in public and National Park Service understanding and attitudes toward natural, cultural, and recreational resources that are managed by GGNRA. In 1980, the park was viewed primarily as an urban recreation area, and the emphasis of natural resource management was to preserve open space and natural character for the purpose of enhancing recreational opportunities within an aesthetic setting. Lands and water bodies that are within GGNRA are now also highly regarded for their ecological and scientific value. Since 1980, 32 species known to occur in the park have been listed as threatened or endangered under provisions of the Endangered Species Act.

Similarly, awareness of the park's cultural resources has expanded significantly since 1980. Additional structures have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places, some of which were initially proposed for demolition in the 1980 GMP. The National Park Service better understands and recognizes the importance of the park's cultural landscapes. Cultural landscape inventories have identified 44 potential cultural landscapes within park boundaries that were not addressed in the 1980 GMP, and 11 cultural landscapes have been listed or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The GMP will focus on lands managed by the NPS or expected to be under NPS management in the near term and that have not been addressed in recent planning.