

Golden Gate National Recreation Area

Summary

PARK PURPOSE

The purpose of Golden Gate National Recreation Area is to offer national park experiences to a large and diverse urban population while preserving and interpreting its outstanding natural, historic, scenic, and recreational values.

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

1. The convergence of the San Andreas Fault, San Francisco Bay at the Golden Gate, and the California coastline creates a dynamic landscape and environment of exceptional scientific value.
2. The undeveloped remnant coastal corridor of marine, estuarine, and terrestrial ecosystems supports exceptional native biodiversity and provides a refuge for one of the largest concentrations of rare, threatened, and endangered species in the national park system.
3. The park includes the largest and most complete collection of military installations and fortifications in the country, dating from Spanish settlement in 1776 through the 20th century. These installations served as command post for the Army in the Western United States and the Pacific. This long period of military presence has yielded one of the most extensive collections of historic architecture in the national park system.
4. Alcatraz Island, the site of pre-Civil War fortification, was the nation's first military prison, later became the most notorious maximum security penitentiary in the United States, and subsequently, was the site of the occupation that helped ignite the movement for American Indian self-determination.
5. The headlands of the Golden Gate and its scenic landscape, vistas, and coastal environment are internationally recognized as the panoramic backdrop to the metropolitan San Francisco Bay Area and contribute to the quality of life of the people who live in the region.
6. The continuum of park resources at the doorstep of the San Francisco Bay Area provides an abundance of recreational and educational opportunities.
7. Parklands are within the traditional homelands of Coast Miwok and Ohlone people. They contain indigenous archeological sites with native heritage, historic, and scientific values.

Park Significance Golden Gate National Recreation Area

Alcatraz Island

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

Alcatraz Island, the site of pre-Civil War fortification, was the nation's first military prison, later became the most notorious maximum security penitentiary in the United States, and subsequently, was the site of the occupation that helped ignite the movement for American Indian self-determination.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- **Alcatraz Island**
Alcatraz Island has cultural landscapes, historic structures, museum collections, and stories associated with its use as a Civil War fort, military prison, federal penitentiary, and the Indian Occupation of 1969 to 1971.
- **Museum Collections**
The documents and artifacts that tell the stories, events and describe the architecture, and use of Alcatraz Island.



Alcatraz Island.



Park visitors exploring the federal penitentiary era prison cells on Alcatraz Island.

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEME

As a site of international notoriety, Alcatraz provides a powerful opportunity to provoke visitors to confront their personal views on crime and punishment, the judicial system, and freedom. The layers of history so evident on the island present visitors with a chance to understand the 155-year span of Alcatraz history from the U.S. Army period through the federal penitentiary era and the Native American occupation to the current NPS management of the island.

