



Alcatraz Island

Energy Infrastructure Improvements



Planning Process

The NPS expects to have an Environmental Assessment available for public review in the spring of 2010. The EA would be available for public review and comment for 30 days. Written comments received on the EA will be reviewed to determine whether any important new issues or reasonable alternatives or mitigation measures have been suggested. If substantive issues are raised which point to the potential for significant impacts, an Environmental Impact Statement would be prepared, otherwise a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is expected.

For More Information

If you have questions about the project or would like more information, please visit www.parkplanning.nps.gov/goga or contact:

Liz Varnhagen
Environmental Protection Specialist
(415) 561-2888

Or send email to: goga_planning@nps.gov.



Energy Infrastructure Improvements on Alcatraz National Historic Landmark, PMIS 150682

The National Park Service (NPS) is soliciting public comments on a proposed project that would replace Alcatraz Island's diesel generators with renewable and grid-tied energy sources. Proposed improvements include re-installing a submarine power cable that would connect to the mainland electricity grid; and installing solar photovoltaic panels on the island that would generate renewable energy. Solar photovoltaic panels are being considered for both the Cellhouse and the New Industries Building roofs. A successful project would provide renewable and reliable energy to the island, substantially reduce Green House Gas (GHG) and other emissions, and meet current and future energy demands of operations and services on Alcatraz.

Since the previous electrical cable connecting Alcatraz with San Francisco power was severed in the 1950s, Alcatraz operations have relied on electrical power from diesel generators on the island. These generators are operated under a permit from the San Francisco Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), and are restricted by emissions thresholds established for the Region. NPS pays an elevated price per unit of electrical power due to the cost of handling and hauling fuel, and the labor-intensive cost of maintaining the diesel generators on the island.

Emissions of GHGs from the diesel generators on Alcatraz represent one of the largest point sources of GHGs in Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) and within the Pacific West Region of NPS.

NPS has made GHG reductions, energy conservation, and renewable energy a major focus in order to be consistent with Executive Order 13423, Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy and Transportation Management and NPS Pacific West Regional Director's Orders #48 and #69, both of which direct the NPS to maintain and operate parks in a sustainable manner. Moreover, GGNRA has adopted its own Climate Change Action Plan (2008) which identifies discontinuing use of diesel-generated power on Alcatraz as one of the main actions that should be undertaken to reduce emissions within the park. This, along with implementing conservation measures on the island, is a goal of GGNRA.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DENVER SERVICE CENTER - PHIL LAWRENCE, DSC-D&C
12795 WEST ALAMEDA PARKWAY
P.O. BOX 25287
DENVER, CO 80225-0287

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300



FIRST-CLASS MAIL
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
PERMIT NO. G-83

Purpose & Need for the Project

The purpose of this project is to substantially reduce GHG emissions from fossil-fuel based energy production on Alcatraz using renewable and grid-tied energy sources in order to meet current and future energy demands while minimizing cultural and natural resource impacts.

Improving Alcatraz Island's Energy Infrastructure is needed in order to:

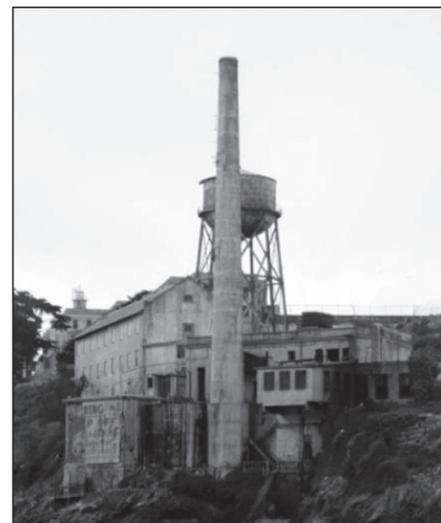
- Substantially reduce GHG and other emissions associated with the island's diesel power generators. The emissions from the diesel generators have approached the allowable thresholds regulated by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). Continued and future use of generators as the main source for power on Alcatraz would require strict regulation and oversight by the BAAQMD for emissions control.
- Reduce or eliminate the direct and indirect costs related to diesel generation and fuel management, including: expensive and reoccurring diesel generator retrofits that satisfy new, more stringent emission thresholds that go into effect in 2011; handling and hauling large quantities of diesel fuel over land and marine areas; labor-intensive maintenance practices required by diesel generators; hazardous fuel spill prevention and contingencies.
- More closely align the cost of electricity for Alcatraz Island to other managed areas of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), and substantially reduce GGNRA's role as a major energy provider for its managed lands.
- Allow GGNRA to be a leader in meeting NPS Directives, Policies, and Federal Executive Orders to conserve energy and reduce GHG emissions.

Objectives

- Provide reliable alternative sources of electricity to Alcatraz Island with the capacity to meet current and future energy demand on the island.
- Provide reliable alternative sources of electricity to Alcatraz Island that reduce demands on park operations and maintenance by no longer requiring regular transport and handling of diesel fuel on the island.
- Substantially reduce the amount of GHG emissions and criteria pollutants from existing generator-based electricity production.
- Provide back-up energy service that can meet a reduced, life/safety essential operations, electricity for power outage if the grid goes down.
- Reduce the long term energy costs for Alcatraz Island and encourage energy conservation measures.
- Minimize natural and cultural resource impacts.
- Minimize conflicts with visitor services and visitor experience.
- Provide the NPS with a Demonstration Project in which a park substantially reduces its greenhouse gas emissions.



Left: Cell Building Rooftop—Possible Solar Panel Location.



Right: Existing Power House—Possible Cable Landing Site



Example of Possible Photovoltaic Panels.

Public Comment (Comments due by October 19, 2009)

Also known as "Public Scoping," the NPS is inviting the public to provide input regarding this project. Issues and concerns from the public, government agencies, and organizations will assist NPS in preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA). Public comments will be accepted until October 19, 2009.

Comments may be submitted:

- Online at www.parkplanning.nps.gov/goga (click on project and follow instructions),
- In writing at the public meeting (see website for public meeting information),
- By e-mail to goga_planning@nps.gov,
- Or by mail to:
 Superintendent
 Fort Mason, Building 201
 San Francisco, CA 94123-1307
 Attn: Energy Infrastructure Improvements on Alcatraz Island/EA

Please be sure to include your full name and address with the comments so we may add you to our mailing list for information on the planning process. Please submit comments by October 19, 2009.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.