

# DRAFT – 1/20/09

## Social Impacts Alcatraz Island

IMPACT TOPIC	Current Conditions and Management	Alternative 1: Connecting People with the Parks	Alternative 2: Preserving and Enjoying Coastal Ecosystems	Alternative 3: Focusing on National Treasures
<b>Visitor Use and Experience</b>				
<p><b>Summary Visitor Use and Experience</b></p>		<p><u>Diversity of recreation opportunities</u></p> <p>Alternative 1 would offer a wider range of visitor experiences. Aside from the infamous prison history, the Island would offer opportunities to deeply understand the other historic periods and the natural history, as well as enjoy scenic and recreational experiences on the island.</p> <p>More buildings and landscapes would be preserved and open for exploration, allowing visitors to better understand the lives of people who lived and worked in those buildings.</p> <p>Enhanced interpretation of the island's history would be available at many of the buildings, including Building 64, the prison building, the laundry building, and the lighthouse.</p> <p>Building 64 and the Laundry Building would be adaptively reused for events, meetings, exhibits, and classes providing diversity of educational opportunities, in particular community functions and involvement on the island.</p> <p>Overnight accommodations and food service at Building 64 would allow for visitor stays to be longer and provide for a more immersive experience.</p> <p>The diversity of experiences on the island may encourage return visits, especially from San Francisco area residents. This could increase the popularity of the island in the off-seasons.</p> <p><u>Access</u></p> <p>Access to the island would be enhanced with connection to the San Francisco Bay Water Trail. On the island, buildings would be restored to their historic appearance, rehabilitated for adaptive use, or stabilized as ruins. Many of the buildings and landscapes not previously accessible by visitors would become so. The opening of more buildings and landscapes to visitors would disperse people throughout the island, and perhaps reduce crowding. Boat touring around the island would be restricted in the sensitive resources zone. This is unlikely to cause a large impact because the zone is close to the rocky and dangerous shoreline.</p>	<p><u>Diversity of recreation opportunities</u></p> <p>Only features and buildings needed to preserve the island's historic landmark status would be preserved, while natural elements would reclaim other features as part of the wilding of Alcatraz. Visitors would be immersed in opportunities to showcase the island's isolation, natural systems, and layers of history. Opportunities for visitors to learn about the historic use of the many different buildings and landscapes on the island would be reduced. However, opportunities to learn about the natural history of the island would be increased.</p> <p><u>Access</u></p> <p>Visitors would be concentrated in the most iconic spaces on the island, which would make orientation easier, but would also adversely affect the visitor experience by possibly causing more crowding. Visitors have expressed interest in having access to closed buildings, that desire would be met even less well by this alternative.</p>	<p><u>Diversity of recreation opportunities</u></p> <p>The preferred alternative would enhance the diversity of recreation opportunities offered on Alcatraz Island. Immersion in all layers of the island's history would allow visitors and the general public a deeper understanding of not only the federal penitentiary period, but also the Civil War and Indian occupation periods. Visitors have expressed interest regarding the many layers of Alcatraz history in scoping and visitor studies.</p> <p>Many buildings would be restored to their historical appearance, allowing visitors to more fully experience the sights and feeling of the historic periods. Buildings and landscapes would be opened to the public for exploration and interpretation.</p> <p>Enhanced interpretive opportunities of the island's history would be available at many of the buildings, including Building 64, the prison building, the Laundry Building, the Officers' Club, and the lighthouse.</p> <p>Building 64 and the Laundry Building would be adaptively reused for events, meetings, exhibits, and classes providing diversity of educational opportunities, in particular community functions and involvement on the island.</p> <p>Overnight accommodations for stewardship programs and food service at Building 64 would allow for visitor stays to be longer and provide for a more immersive experience.</p> <p>The perimeter trail would be open year-round, providing increased exploration, hiking, and scenic viewing, while still protecting sensitive wildlife habitat. Bird watching from inside the building would be interpreted. Interpretation of the cultural and natural history would be enhanced on the perimeter trail.</p> <p>Boating around the island would be restricted within 1000 feet. This would reduce visitor opportunities to closely view the island from the bay.</p> <p><u>Access</u></p> <p>On the island, buildings would be restored to their historic appearance, rehabilitated for adaptive use, or stabilized as ruins. Many of the buildings and landscapes not previously accessible by visitors would become so. Many visitors have expressed interest in having access to some of the currently restricted buildings. The opening of more buildings and landscapes to visitors would disperse people throughout the island, and perhaps reduce crowding.</p> <p>Access to the perimeter of the island would be enhanced, changing from a seasonally closed trail, to a year-round trail</p>

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		<p><u>Park Setting</u></p> <p>The park setting would be enhanced through the preservation of the buildings on Alcatraz. The current condition for many of the buildings is extremely poor.</p> <p>The visitor experience would also be improved with increased bird management in visitor areas. Conflicts between birds and humans would be reduced as would bird droppings and the powerful and unpleasant smell caused by the birds.</p> <p>User capacity indicators and standards for Alcatraz Island will help the NPS maintain desired conditions, including minimizing impacts associated with bird disturbance; vandalism, disturbance, and wear of cultural resources; and crowding and congestion.</p> <p><u>Understanding</u></p> <p>Visitor understanding, education, and interpretation would be greatly enhanced with a focus on a diversity of stories, including the layers of history, the natural resources, the scenic qualities, and the energy history. Programming including stewardship activities and classes would also allow visitors to more deeply understand the island's stories. More modes of interpretation would engage a wider audience and increase their understanding.</p> <p><u>Safety</u></p> <p>Visitor safety would be benefited through the preservation of the buildings as well as through increased bird management. Some buildings are currently falling apart and cracking, causing significant visitor safety issues.</p> <p>While reduced crowding could increase safety in some areas, such as conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles, allowing visitors to explore more areas could allow for more incidents. Participation in stewardship activities, such as trail building, could result in more incidents as well.</p>	<p><u>Park Setting</u></p> <p>This alternative proposes that more of the habitat be devoted to birds, reducing the area that visitors may visit, as well as making the park setting less like the historic period, and potentially causing more conflict between birds and humans. The unpleasant smells of the birds and the presence of flies would also adversely affect the visitor experience for most visitors.</p> <p>Some visitors would have enjoy the natural setting of the island more than they would the historic setting. The wilding of Alcatraz would benefit their view of the setting. Views of the island would also benefit some while adversely affect others, depending on whether they would prefer to see a more natural island or one that appeared more as it did during its historic periods.</p> <p>User capacity indicators and standards for Alcatraz Island will help the NPS maintain desired conditions, including minimizing impacts associated with bird disturbance; vandalism, disturbance, and wear of cultural resources; and crowding and congestion.</p> <p><u>Understanding</u></p> <p>Ecotourism, outdoor learning, natural and cultural resource stewardship programming would be focuses of this alternative, deepening the visitor's understanding of these topics as they relate to the island. This would benefit visitors interested in these topics and would encourage all visitors to take away with them more than just the federal penitentiary story.</p> <p><u>Safety</u></p> <p>Keeping visitors confined to fewer areas would make for a reduced range of safety concerns. However, crowding in these spots could also reduce the safety level. Preservation of the buildings and spaces where visitors would be allowed would also result in greater levels of visitor safety, as some of the buildings are literally falling down. There is a potential for greater conflict with birds under this alternative 2, reducing visitor safety.</p>	<p>that goes inside the Laundry Building. This would give people greater access to the entire island and scenic views from all sides of the island.</p> <p><u>Park Setting</u></p> <p>The park setting would be enhanced through the high level of restoration of the buildings on Alcatraz. The current condition for many of the buildings is extremely poor.</p> <p>The viewsheds from the island would also be enhanced through enforcement of the 1000 foot historic demarcation line. Only approved boats would be allowed within 1000 feet of the island, enhancing the immersion experience.</p> <p>The visitor experience would also be improved with increased bird management in visitor areas. Conflicts between birds and humans would be reduced as would bird droppings and the powerful and unpleasant smell caused by the birds. This is one of the most frequently mentioned problems from visitors on the island.</p> <p>User capacity indicators and standards for Alcatraz Island will help the NPS maintain desired conditions, including minimizing impacts associated with bird disturbance; vandalism, disturbance, and wear of cultural resources; and crowding and congestion.</p> <p><u>Understanding</u></p> <p>Visitor understanding, education, and interpretation would be deeply enhanced via a more authentic and immersive experience. The prison-like experience starting from boarding of the ferry would likely make an unforgettable impression on visitors. Stories highlighting the layers of history, natural resources, and the energy history would also be told. Programming including stewardship activities and classes would allow visitors to more deeply understand the island's stories. More modes of interpretation would engage a wider audience and increase their understanding.</p> <p><u>Safety</u></p> <p>Visitor safety would be benefited through the preservation of the buildings as well as through increased bird management. Some buildings are currently falling apart and cracking, causing significant visitor safety issues.</p> <p>While reduced crowding could increase safety in some areas, such as conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles, allowing visitors to explore more areas could allow for more incidents. Participation in stewardship activities, such as trail building, could result in more incidents as well.</p>
<p><b>Diversity of Recreation Opportunities</b> (including opportunities for</p>	<p>-</p> <p><b>Tentative conclusion: long-term, minor beneficial impacts</b></p>	<p>Building 64 would provide expanded services, which would include hospitality (food service and overnight accommodations), interpretation and exhibit space, and an audiovisual site.</p>	<p>Building 64 rehabilitated for overnight space, food service, and stewardship programs.</p> <p>Main prison building and recreation yard would be rehabilitated or restored.</p>	<p>Bldg 64</p> <p>Visitors have a chance to experience the federal penitentiary period in parts of the building. Modest overnight accommodations for participation in stewardship programs.</p>

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emerging audiences)	(increases) in visitation (more from regional than national visitors)	<p>The prison building would be restored and rehabilitated; programming would immerse the visitor in the historic period.</p> <p>Hospital wing, recreation yard, parade ground, and laundry building would be rehabilitated for adaptive reuse.</p> <p>The laundry building would be available for events, interpretation, classrooms, and meeting space. It would include a kitchen.</p> <p>Lighthouse – enhance access and interpretation</p> <p>Island’s energy history interpreted.</p> <p>Water trail access</p>	<p>Laundry building, parade ground, model industries building would be left as habitat for birds. Visitor access could be provided for wildlife viewing.</p> <p>Lighthouse – enhance access and interpretation</p> <p>Reduced access around the perimeter of the island.</p>	<p>Prison building – restore to federal penitentiary period. Expose visitor to tangible artifacts from each era of history. Rehabilitation to restoration. Increase access and interpretation of structure’s history.</p> <p>Garden/warden’s house/parade grounds – brought back to historic period. Outdoor museum. Support year round exploration of parade ground. Rubble piles removed.</p> <p>Visitors may explore the Officers’ club structure.</p> <p>The laundry building would be rehabilitated for a flexible space for events, restroom, and kitchen.</p> <p>Discovery trail connects through the laundry room to provide bird viewing from inside. New opportunity for visitors year round. Perimeter trail in bird habitat is permanently closed.</p> <p>Lighthouse – enhance access and interpretation</p> <p>Island’s energy history interpreted.</p> <p>Greater interpretation of the cultural and natural history on the perimeter of the island.</p> <p>Reduced boating access near the island. <b>How close do boats come now?</b></p>
<b>Visitor Access</b>		<p>Access to more buildings and grounds. Disperse visitors over the island, perhaps reducing crowding in some areas.</p> <p>Boat access reduced within sensitive zone.</p> <p>Water trail increased access</p>	<p>Concentrate visitor access in iconic areas, perhaps increasing crowding.</p> <p>Boat access reduced within sensitive zone.</p>	<p>Access to more buildings and grounds. Disperse visitors over the island, perhaps reducing crowding in some areas.</p> <p>Bird viewing access from discovery trail and inside laundry building.</p> <p>Boat access reduced around the island.</p>
<b>Experience of the Park Setting</b> (including viewsheds and soundscapes)		<p>Park setting – more restoration and rehabilitation</p> <p>Birds managed to reduce conflicts in visitor areas.</p>	<p>Park setting – some restoration and rehabilitation, some wilding of the island.</p> <p>Model industries building allowed to fall into ocean; would change the historic view.</p> <p>Birds may impact the visitor experience even more as more of the island would allow for bird habitat.</p>	<p>Park setting – historic buoys – boat restrictions as in historic era.</p> <p>Park setting – more restoration and rehabilitation</p> <p>Birds managed to reduce conflicts in visitor areas.</p>
<b>Visitor Understanding, Education, and Interpretation</b>		<p>Stewardship activities</p> <p>More interpretation of the history</p>	<p>Showcase the isolation, the natural resources, and the layers of history.</p>	<p>Be immersed in the historic experience. Learn about natural history of SF bay. More rehab and restoration – more interpretation.</p>
<b>Visitor Safety</b>		<p>Rehabilitated and restored buildings would enhance visitor safety.</p> <p>Visitors dispersed over more of the island may be cause for more visitor safety incidences</p> <p>Gulls managed to reduce conflict with humans.</p>	<p>Managing visitor use could improve safety on the island. Preservation at the buildings and sites where visitors would be provided access would improve safety.</p>	<p>Rehabilitated and restored buildings would enhance visitor safety.</p> <p>Visitors dispersed over more of the island may be cause for more visitor safety incidences</p> <p>Gulls managed to reduce conflict with humans.</p>
<b>Transportation</b>				
<b>Visitor</b>				

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<b>Connections to Park Sites and Communities</b> (including ease and availability of access; connectivity, and multi-modalism)				
<b>Functionality of the Transportation System</b> (including circulation and condition; level of service)				
<b>Social and Economic Environment</b>				
<b>Surrounding Communities</b>				
<b>Park Partners</b> (including long-term leaseholders, concessionaires, commercial use authorizations)				
<b>Local Economy</b>				