

Background



Back of divider

INTRODUCTION

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3 Nearly thirty years ago the National Park Service adopted a plan outlining the future of
4 what was then a new and different unit of the national park system, bringing national
5 parks to urban areas. Because of the size and diversity of the Bay Area community and
6 the National Park Service's commitment to a pioneering public involvement process, it
7 took five years to prepare the plan. This diligence paid off and the final plan won the
8 unanimous support of the community. This plan, along with several amendments, has
9 firmly guided the preservation and enhancement of the park for three decades.

10 It is not unusual for many long-range plans to just sit on the shelf and gather dust—
11 usually as a result of inadequate funding to implement the dreams they offer, but also
12 because of changing conditions and fading public support. When the future of Crissy
13 Field was being discussed early in the planning process, one member of the park's
14 advisory commission confided that the National Park Service would never get the funds
15 to improve it, especially considering demolition and toxic cleanup costs. Today Crissy
16 Field stands as an international standard for waterfront restoration and is a top tourist
17 destination.

18 Success stories like Crissy Field happen here because of the appeal and popularity of the
19 park's resources, enhanced by the efforts of the Golden Gate National Parks
20 Conservancy, and the resultant financial support of generous members of the community.

21 When considering the transformational expectations offered by the 1980 general
22 management plan, it has been a remarkable success. The visions for Alcatraz, Fort
23 Mason, Crissy Field, the Cliff House, Fort Baker, and much of the Marin Headlands have
24 been achieved.

25 Today, Golden Gate National Recreation Area constitutes one of the largest urban
26 national parks in the world, extending north of the Golden Gate Bridge to Tomales Bay in
27 Marin County and south to Half Moon Bay in San Mateo County. These lands represent
28 coastal preserves that encompass bay and ocean shorelines.

29 The park contains an abundance of historical and cultural assets, including sites such as
30 Alcatraz Island, Marin Headlands, Fort Mason, as well as Muir Woods, Fort Point, and
31 the Presidio of San Francisco. These landmarks contain a variety of archeological assets,
32 military forts and other historic structures that present a rich account of 200 years of
33 United States history. Chronicles of Native American settlements, the Spanish Empire
34 frontier, the Mexican Republic, evolution of American coastal fortifications, maritime
35 history, 19th century and early 20th century agriculture and ranching, military history,
36 California Gold Rush, Buffalo Soldiers, and the growth of San Francisco are told in the
37 settings in which they occurred.

38 Golden Gate National Recreation Area is also rich in natural resources. The park is
39 comprised of 19 types of ecosystems in numerous distinct watersheds and is home to over
40 1,200 known plant and animal species. The park provides habitat for many sensitive, rare,
41 threatened, or endangered species, including the mission blue butterfly, northern spotted
42 owl, California red-legged frog, and Coho salmon.

PART 1: BACKGROUND

1 Each year 16-20 million visitors explore the park, with over 1.4 million touring Alcatraz
2 Island and approximately 750,000 visiting Muir Woods National Monument. Trips to the
3 park account for nearly 50% of all visits to the 29 national parks in California.

4 In looking back at the 1980 general management plan and where the park is today, there
5 appears to be only one major goal yet to be accomplished—the ambitious transportation
6 proposals contained in the document. Lack of operational funding and jurisdictional
7 issues have thwarted their accomplishment. However, one of the principal goals of this
8 element of the plan was to provide access to the park to under-represented populations—
9 other strategies have apparently made progress in reaching that goal.

10 General observations indicate that increasing numbers of young people—many of them
11 minorities—have been visiting the park. It can be safely assumed that this apparent trend
12 is strengthened by the many educational and volunteer programs managed by the park
13 and park partners.

14 It is our goal to continue this trend. Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir
15 Woods National Monument are situated in one of the most diverse regions in America. In
16 addition, demographic trends forecast a dramatic increase in the diversity of the statewide
17 population and in the number of residents who are less than 18 years of age. As a result,
18 the park is uniquely situated to “reconnect people with their parks,” with a goal of
19 reaching a 21st century audience—more diverse and younger than today’s national park
20 visitor—and sustaining their engagement.

21 Even before the 1980 plan was approved, the park was growing. Legislation for a
22 boundary expansion was passed by Congress in 1978 and since then [REDACTED] additional
23 acts of Congress have added more than [REDACTED] acres to the park. Research and
24 management activities have revealed new resource values, both cultural and natural.
25 Visitation has increased and new activities have put pressures on park resources not
26 anticipated in the original plan. In short, today’s park is quite different from the one
27 covered in the 1980 plan. The first plan served to shape a new park and reach a consensus
28 on the definition of its identity. This new document will serve to fine tune and expand the
29 vision for an already mature national park and will shape and define new areas coming
30 into the park. Although different in many ways, the new plan will follow the same basic
31 directive outlined for the 1980 plan by the park’s first Superintendent, Bill Whalen, “our
32 job is just to polish the jewels.”

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PURPOSE AND NEED

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3 The purpose of the general management plan is to guide planning and decision making at
4 Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument for the next
5 20 years. The first general management plan, completed in 1980, is now more than 30
6 years old. Since the completion of that first plan, the issues, opportunities, and challenges
7 associated with the park and monument have significantly changed. In addition, park
8 managers have had 30 years to better understand the natural and cultural resources of the
9 park and monument and the changing needs of park visitors.

10 This new general management plan will serve as a foundation and framework for the
11 management of these park lands. The plan articulates the desired future conditions for
12 park resources and visitor experiences that will best fulfill the legislative and presidential
13 mandates that established these units as part of the national park system.

14 This plan has been developed by an interdisciplinary team in consultation with NPS
15 offices; park partners; tribal, federal, state, and local agencies; and other interested
16 parties. There has been substantial input and participation from the general public. These
17 public involvement and consultation efforts helped to ensure that the decisions made
18 through this planning process are widely supported and sustainable over time. A
19 completed general management plan represents an agreement with the citizens of the
20 United States about how these lands will be managed. The plan will be a blue print for
21 the future.

22 The “Planning Issues” section of this general management plan provides details of these
23 issues, opportunities and challenges. Generally, the overall need for a new general
24 management plan includes the following:

- 25 • The park has significantly expanded in size and includes many new lands in San
26 Mateo County. This planning process is based on a comprehensive look at the
27 park as a whole versus, rather than its individual pieces. This comprehensive
28 parkwide approach will help ensure that the management of the natural and
29 cultural resources and visitor experiences are consistent and thorough across all
30 park areas.
- 31 • There is an increased public demand for access to and use of open spaces within
32 the ever-growing urban development of the San Francisco Bay region. The
33 general management plan provides a regional collaborative approach to open
34 space preservation.
- 35 • The changing demographics in the Bay Area are bringing notable shifts in park
36 visitation, uses, and trends. The general management plan will provide desired
37 conditions that will guide the decision making needed to accommodate the
38 anticipated visitation growth.
- 39 • Through research and park management that has occurred since the 1980 plan,
40 the park staff has gathered a considerable amount of new information and
41 knowledge regarding resources and visitor use. This new awareness is
42 incorporated into the desired conditions, proposed management actions, and
43 policies of this general management plan.

PART 1: BACKGROUND

- 1 • Since the 1980 plan, climate change has become better understood and its effects
2 more evident on both ecological systems and cultural resources. The general
3 management plan looks at the potential impacts of climate change to park
4 operations and visitor use, and identifies direction and management actions to
5 guide efforts to minimize the park’s carbon footprint.
- 6 • How visitors access the park continues to evolve as the local transportation
7 infrastructure changes. The strategies that were identified in 1980 continue to be
8 explored; new ideas and techniques are also identified to help address traffic
9 congestion within the park.

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11 This general management plan addresses the overall issues noted above and the detailed
12 issues identified in the “Planning Issues” section; the alternatives suggest ways to address
13 these issues over the next 20 years.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PARK MANAGEMENT

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3 In addition to the many laws, policies, and directives that govern management of all units
4 of the national park system, the leadership at Golden Gate National Recreation Area and
5 Muir Woods National Monument has highlighted some of the principles that are most
6 deeply rooted and distinctive at this park. These flow from the 1916 act that established
7 the National Park Service to “...*promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known*
8 *as national parks, monuments, and reservations...by such means and measures as to...*
9 *conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to*
10 *provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave*
11 *them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.*”

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14 **SUSTAINABILITY**

15 We will continue to learn about and use practices that help sustain the resources of our
16 park. Sustainability will be fundamental to the facilities, projects, programs, and
17 operations of the park, using sound environmental management practices. We will seek
18 opportunities to promote sustainability and stewardship to park visitors, neighboring
19 communities, and the stakeholders we serve.

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22 **COMMUNITY-BASED STEWARDSHIP**

23 We are committed to ongoing involvement of individuals and organizations in
24 understanding, caring for, and preserving the park’s natural habitats, historic places, and
25 trails. This community stewardship brings the commitment to preserve our common
26 heritage and public lands—national treasures that can best be sustained with the efforts of
27 many.

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30 **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

31 We are dedicated to ongoing, dynamic conversations about the contemporary relevance
32 of park resources. We will also provide opportunities for meaningful involvement to
33 promote better understanding and communication, discuss concerns, and express values
34 and preferences when park decisions and policies are being developed and implemented.

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1 **PARTNERSHIPS**

2 We will continue to build on the legacy of the many partnerships that have extended our
3 ability to protect resources and serve the public since the park was established. Through
4 mutual collaboration, shared values, and learning, these partnerships have created
5 outcomes beyond any one organization’s individual capacity. Partnerships will continue
6 to be an important way to accomplish the park’s mission and build a community of
7 stewardship.

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10 **REGIONAL COLLABORATION**

11 In working to preserve our park’s resources unimpaired for future generations, we will
12 establish and maintain cooperative relationships with managers of adjacent public lands
13 and watersheds; tribal, state, and local governments; community organizations; and
14 private landowners. We will collaborate with others to ensure that watersheds,
15 ecosystems, viewsheds, and trail and transportation systems that extend beyond park
16 boundaries are considered holistically, in order to best preserve important park resources,
17 provide equitable and sustainable access, and advance the goal of creating a seamless
18 network of protected lands.

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21 **INCLUSION**

22 Recognizing the special opportunities and obligations resulting from our location within a
23 region of great demographic and socioeconomic diversity, we will strive to assure that
24 Golden Gate is a “park for all.” Working *with*, rather than *for*, various community
25 partners, we will undertake proactive strategies that make the park welcoming and
26 accessible to those at every economic strata, people with disabilities, and ethnic and
27 cultural communities who have not traditionally visited national parks in numbers
28 proportionate to the changing demographics of California and the nation.

29

THE PLANNING AREA

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3 This new general management plan addresses the NPS-administered lands within the
4 legislative boundaries of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods
5 National Monument. Over the last 15 years, the park staff has completed numerous land
6 use and site plans for areas within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. These
7 plans and environmental documents are current and therefore are not included in the
8 planning area for this updated general management plan.

9 The new general management plan will provide park management guidance for the
10 following park sites: 1) those park lands that are not covered by recent land use
11 management plans and agreements; 2) those lands that are newly acquired or in the
12 process of acquisitions; 3) lands and waters that are leased to the National Park Service or
13 are under other management arrangements or easements (such as the San Francisco
14 Public Utilities Commission Peninsula Watershed).

15 Specifically these areas include the following:

- 16 • Alcatraz Island and the surrounding bay environment
- 17 • park lands in Marin County, including Stinson Beach to Bolinas-Fairfax Road;
18 Slide Ranch; Muir Beach; Lower Redwood Creek; Golden Gate Dairy;
19 Tennessee Valley; Marin Headlands; and the offshore ocean and bay
20 environment
- 21 • park lands in San Francisco, including Upper Fort Mason, China Beach, Lands
22 End, Fort Miley, Ocean Beach, Fort Funston, and offshore ocean and bay
23 environment
- 24 • park lands in San Mateo County, including the coastal area extending south from
25 Fort Funston to Mussel Rock; Milagra Ridge; Sheldance Nursery Area; Sweeney
26 Ridge, including Cattle Hill and Picardo Ranch; Mori Point; San Pedro Point;
27 Devil's Slide coastal area; Rancho Corral de Tierra; Montara Lighthouse; Phleger
28 Estate; San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) Watershed
29 Easements; and the offshore ocean environment
- 30 • all lands within Muir Woods National Monument

31

32 The following are the Golden Gate National Recreation Area sites that have recently
33 completed new land use management plans, and therefore are not included in the GMP
34 planning area. These park areas will not be revisited in this plan.

- 35 • Presidio of San Francisco and Crissy Field
- 36 • Baker Beach
- 37 • Lobos Creek Valley
- 38 • Fort Point National Historic Site
- 39 • Sutro Historic District, including the Cliff House, Sutro Heights Park, Sutro
40 Baths, and Lands End

PART 1: BACKGROUND

- 1 • Fort Baker
- 2 • Lower Fort Mason (Fort Mason Center)
- 3 • Golden Gate National Recreation Area Northern District, north of Bolinas-
- 4 Fairfax Road (These lands are managed by Point Reyes National Seashore and
- 5 are being addressed in the *Point Reyes National Seashore/ Golden Gate National*
- 6 *Recreation Area Northern District General Management Plan.*)
- 7

8 The park staff is currently working on a variety of detailed project and program
9 implementation plans. The implementation plans cover topics such as detailed actions for
10 natural and cultural resource restoration and preservation, visitor use, transportation, and
11 park operations. Below is a list of the major project and program implementation plans
12 that are in the process of being prepared or implemented. In the preparation of this
13 general management plan, the planning team coordinated with the development of these
14 plans to ensure consistency. Ongoing plans include

- 15 • Marin Headlands and Fort Baker Transportation Infrastructure and Management
16 Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement
- 17 • Wetland and Creek Restoration at Big Lagoon, Muir Beach Final Environmental
18 Impact Statement
- 19 • Marin Equestrian Plan/Environmental Assessment
- 20 • Headlands Institute Campus Improvement and Expansion Plan
- 21 • Dog Management Plan for Golden Gate National Recreation Area /
22 Environmental Impact Statement
- 23 • Doyle Drive – South Access to the Golden Gate Bridge
- 24 • Point Reyes National Seashore General Management Plan

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PART 1: BACKGROUND

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Foundation Statements: Guidance for Planning

In 1916, with the passage of the National Park Service Organic Act, Congress established the National Park Service to oversee and manage the national parks of the United States. Individual national parks continue to be established by Congress or by presidential proclamation. The legislation that authorizes a new national park area guides the management of that park. (See appendix A for legislation related to the National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and Muir Woods National Monument.)

The following pages present foundation statements first for Golden Gate National Recreation Area and then for Muir Woods National Monument; they are presented separately since they are two distinct units of the national park system. These foundation statements include the elements describe below.



PARK PURPOSE

The park purpose is a statement that summarizes why Congress and/or the president established the area as a unit of the national park system. It is based on the enabling legislation and the legislative history of the park unit. The purpose statement provides the most fundamental criteria against which the appropriateness of all plan recommendations, operational decisions, and actions are tested.

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

Statements of park significance define what is most important about a park's many resources and values. In developing these significance statements, the planning team was guided by the park's legislation and knowledge acquired through management, research, and civic engagement. The significance statements focus on the attributes that make the area's resources and values important enough to be included in the national park system. Each unit in the national park system contains many significant resources, but not all of these resources contribute to the purpose for which the park or monument was established as a unit of the national park system.

The park purpose and significance statements are used to guide all planning and management decisions. This ensures that the resources and values that Congress and the president wanted preserved are understood and are the park's first priority.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

The National Park Service works to ensure the conservation and public enjoyment of those resources and values that are fundamental to the park significance. Fundamental resources and values are those resources and values that directly contribute to the significance for which the park was established.

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

Primary interpretive themes describe the key stories and concepts of the park that help visitors understand and appreciate the park purpose and significance. The development and interpretation of primary interpretive themes provide the foundation on which the park's educational and interpretive program is based.

Foundation Statements for Golden Gate National Recreation Area

The founders of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, established in 1972, intended to bring national park experiences to urban populations. The park's extensive collection of natural, historic, and scenic resources and diverse recreational opportunities fulfill that purpose of bringing "parks to the people"—particularly to the 7 million people who live in the San Francisco Bay Area. Today, however, the resources of Golden Gate National Recreation Area are nationally and internationally recognized as well; extending their value to all of America and beyond.

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 the park's outstanding natural, historic, scenic, and recreational values.

Recreational and Educational Opportunities

SIGNIFICANCE

The continuum of park resources at the doorstep of the San Francisco Bay Area provides an abundance of recreational and educational opportunities.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- **Diverse Park Settings** – The diversity of settings, from remote to urban, provides visitors with active and passive recreational and educational opportunities, including participation in park stewardship.
- **Park Access** – A system of designated trails and scenic park roads supports access to settings that provide visitors with a broad range of activities and varied experiences.

INTERPRETIVE THEME

The park provides for diverse recreational and educational opportunities from contemplative to active pursuits, including participation in stewardship and volunteer activities. Its proximity allows an urban population to connect with nature and history.

Coastal Corridor

SIGNIFICANCE

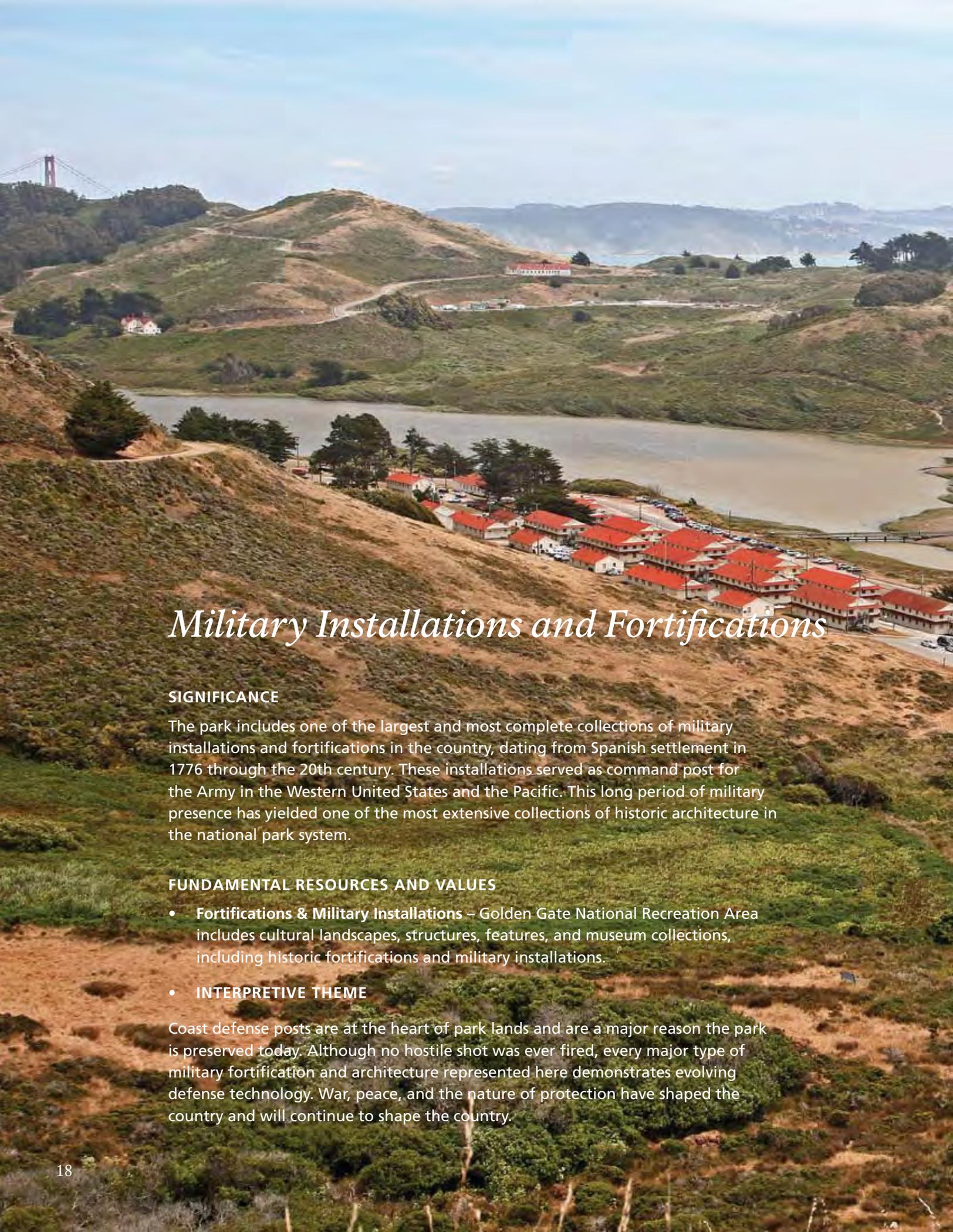
The remnant undeveloped coastal corridor of marine, estuarine, and terrestrial ecosystems supports exceptional native biodiversity and provides refuge for one of the largest concentrations of rare, threatened, and endangered species in the national park system.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- **Ocean and Bay Environment** – Oceanic conditions, such as tides, currents, waves, surf, upwelling, and sea level, influence Golden Gate National Recreation Area’s coastal environment, including climate and the land.
- **Coastal Ecosystems** – Golden Gate National Recreation Area contains a rich assemblage of coastal native plant and animal habitat that includes forests, coastal scrub, grassland, freshwater, estuarine and marine habitats, beaches, coastal cliffs, and islands.
- **Threatened and Endangered Species** – Golden Gate National Recreation Area supports one of the largest numbers of federally listed threatened and endangered species in the national park system. This island of refuge is due to the protected confluence of unique and diverse habitats adjacent to the urban San Francisco Bay region.
- **Water Resources** – Golden Gate National Recreation Area’s water resources support coastal corridor ecosystems and these consist of groundwater sources (aquifers and springs); freshwater systems (streams, lakes, and ponds); coastal, estuarine, and marine water resources (the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay); and other wetlands.

INTERPRETIVE THEME

In a world of diminishing biological diversity and threatened natural resources, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area preserves islands of biodiversity within and near a large urban area. The accelerating rate of global climate change threatens even these remnants.



Military Installations and Fortifications

SIGNIFICANCE

The park includes one of the largest and most complete collections 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.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- **Fortifications & Military Installations** – Golden Gate National Recreation Area includes cultural landscapes, structures, features, and museum collections, including historic fortifications and military installations.

- **INTERPRETIVE THEME**

Coast defense posts are at the heart of park lands and are a major reason the park is preserved today. Although no hostile shot was ever fired, every major type of military fortification and architecture represented here demonstrates evolving defense technology. War, peace, and the nature of protection have shaped the country and will continue to shape the country.

Alcatraz Island

SIGNIFICANCE

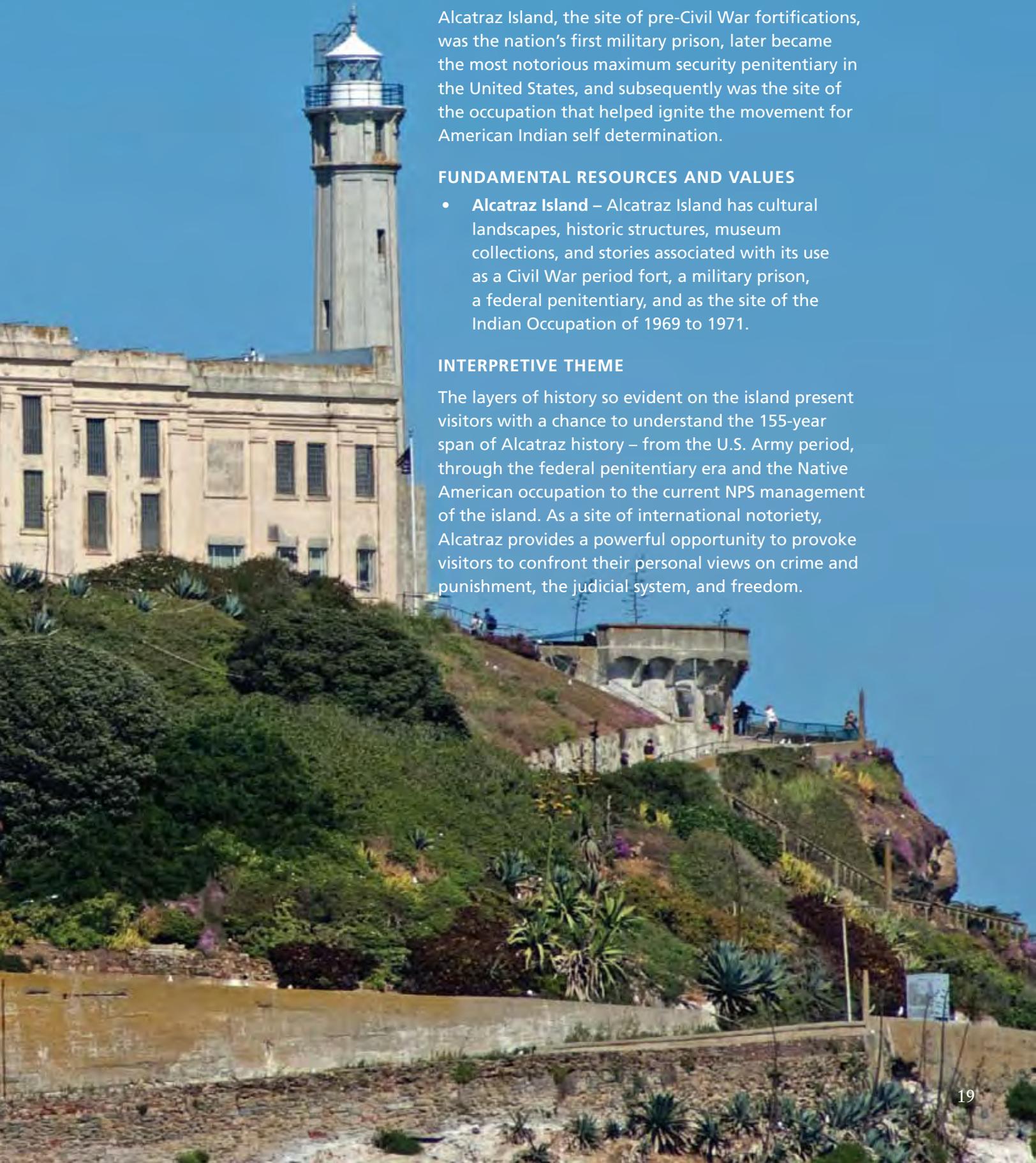
Alcatraz Island, the site of pre-Civil War fortifications, was the nation's first military prison, later became the most notorious maximum security penitentiary in the United States, and subsequently was the site of the occupation that helped ignite the movement for American Indian self determination.

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 period fort, a military prison, a federal penitentiary, and as the site of the Indian Occupation of 1969 to 1971.

INTERPRETIVE THEME

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. 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.



Scenic Beauty

SIGNIFICANCE

The headlands of the Golden Gate have long been recognized for their outstanding scenic qualities. The remarkable convergence of land and sea and of bay and ocean—combined with the palpable energy of 16 major rivers merging—create a spectacle that is truly unique.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- **Dramatic Settings** – In concert with the open lands that frame it, the Golden Gate serves as the backdrop to the San Francisco metropolitan area. The dynamic contrasts between urban environments and undeveloped spaces—ranging from the open waters of the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay to beaches, estuaries, headlands, and valleys—contribute greatly to the scenic experience enjoyed by area residents and visitors alike.
- **Compelling Historical Stage** – With its exceptional diversity of natural settings and central role in many significant chapters from America’s past, the Golden Gate promotes a continuous sense of wonder and appreciation in the viewer. The integrity of this open space contributes significantly to the ability to recount the epic stream of history that flowed between the headlands.

INTERPRETIVE THEME

The powerful positive influences that park land and undisturbed open space can exert on urban settings—and residents—constitute a critical interpretive message. The scenic beauty of the park’s historic and natural undeveloped landscapes inspired a grassroots movement that led to their protection. Proposed development that would have destroyed these lands sparked Bay Area community members to organize and ultimately preserve the open spaces that contribute so much to their quality of life.



Physical Landforms

SIGNIFICANCE

The convergence of the San Andreas Fault, San Francisco Bay at the Golden Gate, and the California coastline creates a dynamic environment of exceptional scientific value.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- Geologic Resources – Golden Gate National Recreation Area’s geologic resources include faults, plate margins, and a subduction zone; a diversity of rock types and deposits representing more than 100 million years of the earth’s history; and complex geologic processes that continue to shape the landscape.

INTERPRETIVE THEME

The park’s underlying natural geologic systems and processes, and the resulting effects on people and the environment, link the park to the highly visible and significant geologic forces around the world.



Ohlone and Miwok

SIGNIFICANCE

Park lands are within the traditional homelands of Coast Miwok and Ohlone people. They contain indigenous archeological sites with native heritage, historic, and scientific values.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- Archeological Sites – Sites in the park document the traditional homelands of the Coast Miwok and Ohlone people.

INTERPRETIVE THEME

The natural features and resources of the park, along with its location on the San Francisco Bay estuary, sustained the Ohlone and Miwok people who lived on the lands now comprising the park for thousands of years before Europeans arrived. Archeological sites in the park link to these pre-European inhabitants and to their descendants who retain a vibrant culture to this day.

Foundation Statements for Muir Woods National Monument

Until the 19th century, redwood trees were in abundance in the many coastal valleys of northern California; however, logging soon removed most of them to supply the building materials for a growing population. In 1905, when William Kent and his wife, Elizabeth Thacher Kent, realized that Redwood Canyon, a popular hiking and recreation destination, contained one of the San Francisco Bay Area's last uncut stands of old-growth redwood, they bought 612 acres there for \$45,000. To protect the trees, the Kents donated 298 acres containing the core of the forest to the United States government. President Theodore Roosevelt declared the area a national monument in 1908. The proclamation states that the tract contains "an extensive growth of redwood trees (*Sequoia sempervirens*)" that was "of extraordinary scientific interest and importance because of the primeval character of the forest in which it is located, and of the character, age and size of trees." At Kent's suggestion, the monument was named for conservationist John Muir. Due to circumstances surrounding its founding, Muir Woods National Monument holds a significant place in conservation history. It was the tenth national monument to be designated under the Antiquities Act, the first to be located in proximity to a major city, and the first to consist of formerly privately owned lands.

PARK PURPOSE

The purpose of Muir Woods National Monument is to preserve the primeval character and ecological integrity of the old-growth redwood forest for scientific values and inspiration.

Muir Woods National Monument

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

Muir Woods National Monument preserves the last remnant old-growth forest close to metropolitan San Francisco that retains its primeval character.

The establishment of the monument is an important manifestation of early 20th century conservation history.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- **Old Growth** – Muir Woods National Monument preserves plant and animal species and the natural processes associated with the once abundant coastal redwoods ecosystem.
- **Conservation Movement** – The efforts of the people who ensured the preservation of this old-growth redwood forest continue to inspire conservation and stewardship actions today.

INTERPRETIVE THEME

The majestic, primeval old-growth redwoods of Muir Woods invite visitors, in the words of namesake John Muir, to “come to the woods, for here is rest.” The forest ecosystem of these towering trees and the creek beneath them supports an abundance of life. This remnant of the Bay Area’s once abundant redwood forests inspires visitors through its seminal conservation story, today welcoming travelers from around the world to have what is, for many, their first wildlands experience.

SPECIAL MANDATES AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITMENTS RELATED TO GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

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5 Special mandates are park-specific requirements that expand on the park’s legislated
6 purpose. These mandates generally require the National Park Service to perform some
7 particular action as directed through congressional legislation. Administrative
8 commitments are agreements that have been reached through formal, documented
9 processes, and include agreements such as a conservation easement. The ongoing
10 mandates and commitments for Golden Gate National Recreation Area are described in
11 this section.

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14 LAND ACQUISITION

15 Several pieces of legislation specify how Golden Gate National Recreation Area will
16 conduct land acquisition activities:

- 17 • PL 92-589, Golden Gate National Recreation Area’s enabling legislation,
18 specifies that “any lands or interests owned by the State of California, or any
19 political subdivision thereof, may only be acquired by donation” (see appendix
20 A).
- 21 • Public Law 95-625, Sec. 317(e), specifies that Golden Gate National Recreation
22 Area (through the secretary of interior) “shall accept and manage any land and
23 improvements adjacent to the recreation area which are donated by the State of
24 California or its political subdivisions.”
- 25 • Public Law 96-199, Sec. 103(b), specifies spending limits on land acquisition.

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28 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

- 29 • Public Law 95-625, Sec. 317(f), specifies that “no fees or admissions shall be
30 charged, except to portions under lease or permit for a specific purpose. The
31 Secretary [of the Interior] may authorize reasonable charges for public
32 transportation.”
- 33 • Public Law 106-291, Sec. 140, gives the park authority for fee-based education,
34 interpretive and visitor service functions within the Crissy Field and Fort Point
35 areas of the Presidio.
- 36 • Public Law 96-199, Sec. 103(b), specifies spending limits on park development.
- 37 • Golden Gate National Recreation Area signed a Memorandum of Understanding
38 (MOU) for the UNESCO Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve that requires the

1 recreation area to cooperate with the reserve partners and promote reserve
2 activities.

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5 **PENINSULA WATERSHED CONSERVATION EASEMENT**

6 The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission’s Peninsula Watershed is home to three
7 drinking water reservoirs. Located in San Mateo County, 13 miles south of San
8 Francisco, the Peninsula Watershed consists of 23,000 acres of forested hills, coastal
9 scrub, and grasslands.

10 On January 15, 1969, the United States of America was granted conservation easements
11 on 23,000 acres of watershed lands owned by the City/County of San Francisco. Two
12 separate easements, a scenic easement and a scenic & recreation easement, were granted
13 by San Francisco and accepted by the secretary of the interior. In 1972, Golden Gate
14 National Recreation Area was charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the
15 conditions of the easements are upheld.

16 The scenic easement generally includes the area within the watershed west of the Crystal
17 Springs and San Andreas reservoirs. The primary purpose of this easement is to preserve
18 the property in its natural state while permitting “the collection, storage, and transmission
19 of water and protection of water quality for human consumption.”

20 The scenic & recreation easement generally includes the area within the watershed east of
21 the Crystal Springs and San Andreas reservoirs. The primary purpose of this easement is
22 to preserve the property in its natural state while permitting “the collection, storage, and
23 transmission of water and protection of water quality for human consumption; outdoor
24 recreation; and other [compatible] uses.”

25 Both easements contain numerous restrictions on use or modifications of the property.
26 The scenic & recreation easement also grants the public “the right, subject to rules and
27 regulations as may be imposed and published by [the Public Utilities Commission], to
28 enter the premises for recreational purposes.” Golden Gate National Recreation Area has
29 the right and obligation to monitor use of the land for consistency with the terms of the
30 two easements.

31
32

33 **OTHER EASEMENTS**

34 Golden Gate National Recreation Area is required to recognize numerous title
35 encumbrances, including easement rights for access, utilities, and other purposes. These
36 publicly and privately held rights can affect park operations and resources. Park
37 managers cooperate with easement holders to protect park resources and provide visitor
38 access.

39
40

1 **TIDELANDS AND SUBMERGED LANDS LEASE**

2 Golden Gate National Recreation Area leases tidelands and submerged lands from the
3 California State Lands Commission. The term of the lease began August 1, 1987 and
4 extends through July 31, 2036. Under the conditions of the lease, public access to and use
5 of the existing beaches and strands shall remain open and available for public use subject
6 to reasonable regulation. The recreation area is required to notify the state within 10 days
7 in the event that the public is charged any direct or indirect fee for the use and enjoyment
8 of the leased areas. The lease also specifies that hunting on leased lands is prohibited.

9 Five primary management purposes are identified in the lease:

- 10 1. To enhance public safety, use, and enjoyment of the subject lands and waters.
- 11 2. To protect and conserve the environment and any cultural and historical
12 resources that may be present.
- 13 3. To preserve the subject lands in their natural state and protect them from
14 development and uses that would destroy their scenic beauty and natural
15 character.
- 16 4. To provide for recreation and educational opportunities.
- 17 5. Management of the subject lands shall be consistent with the administration and
18 management of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, so long as it is not
19 inconsistent with California state law.

20

21

22 **LIGHTHOUSES**

23 In September 2006, the United States Coast Guard notified the park of their plan to
24 excess and transfer five lighthouses and navigational aids to the Department of the
25 Interior in compliance with the park's enabling legislation (P. L. 92 as amended under
26 P. L. 96-607) and the 2000 National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act. The properties
27 include Point Bonita Lighthouse, Point Diablo, and Lime Point in Marin County; the
28 Montara lighthouse in San Mateo County; and the Alcatraz lighthouse in San Francisco
29 County.

30 Following transfer to the park, U. S. Coast Guard will continue to use the five sites as
31 navigational aids under an NPS permit. The properties require substantial environmental
32 cleanup and structure safety improvements to ensure public safety and visitor access at
33 these sites in the future. The Park Service and the Coast Guard are cooperating to
34 complete due diligence reports including environmental testing and analysis, building
35 condition assessments, and cost estimates to determine remediation and structural safety
36 requirement.

37 The park staff anticipates additional planning for the long-term preservation and use of
38 the five lighthouses and is seeking funding prior to transfer. At the times of this writing,
39 the timeframe and milestones for the property excess and transfer from the Coast Guard
40 have not been established.

PLANNING ISSUES

2

3 Just as citizens helped to establish Golden Gate National Recreation Area, citizens helped
4 identify the needs and opportunities that will shape the future management of the parks.
5 In 2006, more than 4,000 copies of the first GMP newsletter were distributed in a variety
6 of ways: through a mailing list; at park visitor centers, at popular park destinations and
7 park events; and through park partners. That newsletter asked people for their opinions on
8 what they value and enjoy most about the parks, their concerns and suggestions for
9 management, their ideas for the future of the parks, and for any other comments they
10 wanted to provide to the planning team. The park staff held six public open houses in
11 April 2006 to gather additional input from the public. A scoping roundtable was attended
12 by representatives of many local and regional jurisdictions, resource and regulatory
13 agencies, and other public land managers. Discussion groups with environmental,
14 historic, and community organizations, and meetings with American Indian tribal
15 representatives, park partners, and park founders were held to gather information. In
16 addition, meetings with NPS staff were conducted as part of the scoping process.

17 The information gathered during these activities was used to develop and clarify the
18 important planning issues. The planning issues are summarized below. Exploring
19 different ways to address the issues was the basis for developing the range of
20 management concepts and the creation of the different management alternatives.

21

22

23 ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

24 **Visitor Access: Transportation and Trails**

25 The current systems of access to the park and monument do not fully address the needs of
26 some park visitors or adequately protect park resources. The high reliance on cars and the
27 lack of affordable transit options excludes some visitors, adds to roadway congestion, and
28 increases emissions, resulting in a greater carbon footprint. This also creates problems
29 with informal parking, public safety, visitor experience, and access for the park's
30 neighbors. In some places, the condition of trails and their lack of connectivity to desired
31 destinations do not meet all visitor and resource protection needs. Connections from
32 communities within the region to the park are not adequate. There is a need for improved,
33 safe trail connections between park sites and between communities and park sites to
34 provide seamless, safe, direct access alternatives. Visitor information and directional
35 signs are inadequate; this leads to visitor frustration and the underutilization of park
36 resources. The general management plan will address visitor access to and within the
37 park in order to improve visitor experiences, improve connections among park sites and
38 the larger community, and protect resources.

39

40

1 **Recreation Opportunities and Conflicts**

2 Park use has increased in recent years, especially by traditional recreational users such as
 3 hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians. New activities such as boardsailing and mountain
 4 biking continue to develop and evolve since the 1980 GMP was completed. There is interest in
 5 expanding current uses, including bicycling, hang gliding, dog walking, individual and
 6 group camping, group day-use/picnicking, and hiking, and introducing new and different
 7 types of recreation. Requests to use the park and monument as venues for special events
 8 continue to increase. Conflicts between users—primarily between equestrians, mountain
 9 bikers, dog walkers, and hikers—have increased as overall park use has increased. There
 10 is concern about resource impacts associated with existing recreation activities, including
 11 habitat fragmentation, eroding trails, wildlife disturbance and harassment, litter,
 12 vandalism and graffiti, and vegetation trampling. The general management plan will
 13 address recreational opportunities by identifying the types of use, desired experiences,
 14 and support facilities that are appropriate for different park areas and sites in response to
 15 visitor demand and resource sensitivity.

16

17 **Sustainable Natural Resource Preservation and Management**

18 Gate National Recreation Area is rich in natural resources: it comprises 19 types of
 19 ecosystems in numerous distinct watersheds and is home to rare, threatened, and
 20 endangered plant and animal species. The park is incorporated into the UNESCO Golden
 21 Gate Biosphere Reserve, designated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and
 22 Cultural Organization’s Man and the Biosphere Program—a program that provides a
 23 global network of sites representing the world’s major ecosystem types. Historically, the
 24 lands within the park have been used for ranching, dairy farming, and military activities;
 25 this use has resulted in the modification of many of the area’s natural ecosystems. Fire
 26 suppression and other management activities have also influenced natural ecosystems.
 27 Invasive plants from adjacent urban communities have taken root within the park.

28 The general management plan will address how park staff can preserve fundamental
 29 natural resources, as the fragility of those resources becomes better understood at the
 30 same time that visitation is increasing. The plan will provide direction for preserving and
 31 managing fundamental natural resources of the park in a sustainable manner and will
 32 provide direction for encouraging ongoing public stewardship.

33 Ocean resources, including natural marine resources and submerged cultural resources,
 34 are at risk due to a variety of threats. Global climate change has begun to cause sea level
 35 rise, change storm patterns, and affect ocean acidification. Natural sediment transport,
 36 which affects shoreline and beach dynamics, is affected by activities outside of park
 37 boundaries, including sand mining, dredging, dredge disposal, shoreline stabilization
 38 structures, and altered flow regimes. Overflights, boating, and other uses of marine
 39 habitats cause disturbance to marine species. Invasive exotic species inhabit the park’s
 40 ocean and estuarine waters, displacing native species. Recreational and commercial
 41 fisheries may impact nearshore fish populations and ecosystem dynamics. Water quality
 42 is threatened by pollution from runoff, landslides, shoreline development, sewage
 43 outfalls, vessel traffic, oil spills, and contaminants exposed from dredging. Potential
 44 wave and tidal energy developments may alter habitat and disrupt physical processes.

1 Numerous aquatic environments are in need of restoration. Currently the park has limited
2 enforcement capacity for marine and estuarine resource protection.

3 Alcatraz Island is a unique part of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Accounts of
4 early explorers describe the island as having little plant life and being covered with bird
5 guano. Construction of fortifications during the Civil War and later the federal
6 penitentiary changed the landscape significantly, sharpening the incline of the shoreline
7 cliffs and flattening the slopes. Most of the existing plants on Alcatraz Island are a result
8 of prison gardens or other means of importation, including soils brought from Angel
9 Island during the fort construction. Since the closure of the prison, many bird species
10 have made the island home. Waterbirds and terrestrial landbirds (songbirds) have taken
11 advantage of planted and unmanaged vegetation on the island. The seabirds and
12 waterbirds are colonial nesting species that are highly susceptible to disturbance. Coupled
13 with limited preservation of historic landscape features, the extent of sea bird habitat has
14 grown sharply since 1972. The result is a tension between habitat protection and visitor
15 access to many of the island’s historic points.

16
17 Muir Woods National Monument preserves one of the last remaining ancient redwood
18 forests in the Bay Area. From its inception, Muir Woods National Monument was
19 designed to protect the “primeval character” of the redwood forests, and today, ecological
20 integrity is a major driving force behind the management of the monument . Surrounding
21 Muir Woods National Monument are mostly protected lands, including other units of the
22 Golden Gate National Recreation Area and lands managed by California State Parks
23 (Mount Tamalpais State Park) and Marin Municipal Water District.

24
25 Muir Woods National Monument is located entirely within the watershed of Redwood
26 Creek, which originates on Mount Tamalpais (over 2,400 feet in elevation), flows
27 through the heart of the national monument, bisects Frank Valley, and discharges into the
28 Pacific Ocean at Muir Beach, approximately three miles below Muir Woods National
29 Monument. The Redwood Creek watershed—extending from Mount Tamalpais to Muir
30 Beach—is a delicate ecosystem that includes the Northern Spotted Owl, Coho Salmon,
31 and Steelhead Trout, and demands utmost care and vigilance. The Civilian Conservation
32 Corp implemented projects to harden the banks of the creek in order to direct the flow of
33 water away from Redwood groves. The stream stabilization on Redwood Creek impacted
34 the natural functions of the creek.

35

36 **Sustainable Cultural Resource Preservation and Management**

37 The park has a large collection of historic structures and archeological sites within a
38 mosaic of cultural and natural landscapes. The majority of these cultural resources are
39 nationally significant; however, their condition varies. The identification of appropriate
40 preservation treatments, including sustainable adaptive uses of these resources, poses a
41 substantial challenge. Cultural resources and archeological sites are impacted in a variety
42 of ways such as through weathering, increases in visitor use, erosion, vandalism, and
43 deferred maintenance. There is a continued need for developing baseline documentation
44 of historic structures, cultural landscapes, and archeological inventories throughout the
45 park. The park staff continues to work to balance the preservation needs of the park’s
46 natural and cultural resources. Still, there is a need to identify priorities when such

1 balance is not very clear. The general management plan will address how the park staff
2 should work to preserve fundamental cultural resources where visitation is increasing at
3 the same time the fragility and significance of those resources are better understood. The
4 general management plan will provide direction for preserving and managing
5 fundamental cultural resources of the park in a sustainable manner and will provide
6 direction for encouraging ongoing public stewardship.

7 Golden Gate National Recreation Area houses its museum collections in 15 separate
8 facilities throughout the park that function as visitor centers, interpretive exhibits, or
9 dedicated storage areas. Of the four largest storage repositories, three are located in
10 buildings owned by the Presidio Trust with no lease agreements in place. One of these
11 structures, which is being removed in 2010 to make way for the Doyle Drive Project,
12 houses the park's archeology lab. The park museum collections are in a vulnerable
13 position due to temporary space and deteriorating structural conditions. The current
14 conditions for museum collections in the park do not meet National Park Service
15 standards for the long-term preservation, protection, and use of museum collections.
16 Staffing for the museum collections has not been stable, thus precluding reliable access
17 for researchers, the public, and park staff. Although planning has been underway, a
18 suitable location for the park's museum collections has yet to be finally determined.

19 Alcatraz Island is a designated national historic landmark because of its national
20 significance in the areas of military history and social history (penology: the study of
21 incarceration). Although Alcatraz is a highly visible and popular site in San Francisco
22 Bay, many of its buildings, archaeological features, and landscape features are
23 deteriorating, and sections of its shoreline are eroding. The park lacks the funding and
24 personnel to protect and preserve all of the island's historic resources. In addition, some
25 conflict has arisen over management strategies for protecting the island's cultural and
26 natural resources (e.g., protecting important bird nesting habitat), since nesting habitat
27 can inhibit historic preservation. The general management plan will provide direction for
28 preserving and managing historic structures, archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, and
29 museum collections.

30

31 **Climate Change**

32 Climate change has begun to affect both park resources and visitors. The effects are
33 predicted to include changes in temperature, precipitation, evaporation rate, ocean and
34 atmospheric chemistry, local weather patterns and increase storm intensities, and sea
35 level rise. These effects will likely have direct implications for resource management and
36 park operations and will likely influence the way visitors experience the park. Sustaining
37 and restoring park resources will require the National Park Service to address many
38 challenges, including fiscal and ecological threats and threats to the integrity of cultural
39 and natural resources. Proactive planning and management actions will allow the park to
40 avoid, mitigate, adapt to, and interpret these effects.

41 The general management plan will provide guidance on how to assess, respond to, and
42 interpret the impacts of global climate change on park resources, and will identify
43 objectives for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

44

1 **Land Acquisition Strategy**

2 The 1978 National Parks and Recreation Act (16 USC 1a-7) requires general
3 management plans to address potential modifications to the park boundaries. Current or
4 potential changes in adjacent land uses could pose threats to the fundamental resources of
5 the park and could limit the park’s ability to protect the resources that support the park
6 purpose and significance.

7 The diversity of park lands presents challenges for land and boundary management. The
8 park needs to strengthen its strategic approach to land acquisition and park boundary
9 changes and management in coordination with agencies and owners of property within
10 the park boundary. A reassessment of guidelines and priorities is needed.

11 Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument are portions
12 of a larger area of protected open space in the Bay Area. The natural and cultural
13 resources of the park would face a greater threat if not for the many other open space
14 areas that contribute to the integrity of coastal ecosystems, scenic beauty, recreational
15 opportunities, and the preservation of historic resources. The general management plan
16 will address future land protection and boundary changes that support both the
17 preservation of the park’s fundamental resources and regional conservation priorities.

18

19 **Reaching New Audiences**

20 Visitation at many park sites does not reflect changing regional or state demographics.
21 Some groups may not be aware of the park, feel a direct connection to it, or view the park
22 as a recreational opportunity or a resource to be protected. Changing technology can also
23 influence the park’s relevancy to future generations. Reaching these audiences is essential
24 to effective park management and to achieving civic engagement and community-based
25 stewardship goals. The general management plan will include strategies to help engage
26 new audiences.

27

28 **Operational Facilities**

29 Park resources, visitor safety, and visitor experience have suffered because of the lack of
30 adequate operational facilities in appropriate locations. Golden Gate National Recreation
31 Area has expanded in size in recent years, especially to the south in San Mateo County;
32 the current distribution of facilities is no longer effective or efficient for day-to-day
33 operations. Park maintenance and public safety functions are scattered throughout the
34 park and are often located at sites and facilities that were not intended for such uses.
35 Often, these functions operate out of makeshift facilities because they have been
36 displaced by other park uses or outside forces, or have outgrown previous spaces. These
37 operations have been forced to adapt to conditions that do not adequately meet their
38 space, size, function, mobility, and security requirements. The general management plan
39 will identify a strategy and actions for locating operational facilities.

40

41

1 **Scenic Beauty and Natural Character**

2 The park’s scenic beauty and natural character provide opportunities for visitors to
3 experience dramatic settings. The park’s varied landscapes are the stage for multisensory
4 experiences that are a hallmark of the Bay Area. Preserving these important scenic
5 resources and making them available to the public are primary reasons the park was
6 established. The National Park Service needs to protect these resources from degradation
7 that can result from modern intrusions, including new development on the surrounding
8 lands and waters. The general management plan will provide guidance in the preservation
9 and enhancement of scenic resources.

10

11 **Regional Cooperation**

12 Visitor experience and resource protection in the park are affected by a variety of outside
13 influences. Watersheds, viewsheds, soundscapes, ecosystems, and trail and transportation
14 systems all extend beyond park boundaries; their management and preservation require
15 cooperation with other adjacent public land managers, local jurisdictions, and private
16 landowners. The park is located in an urban/suburban setting, which places demands on
17 park lands and resources (especially by local public utility needs). The park staff cannot
18 successfully manage the natural and cultural resources and visitor experiences by looking
19 only within the park boundary. The general management plan will provide guidance on
20 improving communication, coordination, and participation with public and private
21 stakeholders with a goal of protecting ecosystems, watersheds, viewsheds, and visitor
22 opportunities that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

23

24 **National Park Service Identity**

25 For a variety of reasons, the park does not have an easily recognized identity as part of
26 the national park system. These reasons include the large number of points of entry with
27 minimal or no identifying entry features; the lack of NPS staff presence in many
28 locations; the close juxtaposition of city, county, and state lands with NPS lands; and the
29 lack of clearly marked park boundaries. The general management plan will provide
30 guidance on improving and promoting the recognition of Golden Gate National
31 Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument as national park units and as areas
32 where many visitors are first introduced to the concept and values of the national park
33 system.

34

35 **Partnerships**

36 Partners are fundamental to long-term sustainability of the park. They help the park
37 manage natural and cultural resources, deliver public programs, reach new audiences, and
38 remain relevant and inclusive. They also help the park innovate and build community
39 support. The park cannot fully accomplish parts of its mission without partners. Despite
40 the many commonalities and objectives shared by the park and its partners, the current set
41 of partners creates a diversity of goals and interests that may not be compatible with park
42 goals. Partners’ needs cannot always be accommodated in the park. The general
43 management plan will provide guidance on partnership development and management

1 that enables the NPS managers to make effective decisions and foster flexible, productive
2 relationships that strengthen the purpose and mission of the park.

3

4 **American Indian Values**

5 Since the late 1990s, the park staff has worked with American Indian groups, including
6 the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (the federally recognized tribe comprised of
7 park-associated Coast Miwoks and Southern Pomo), the many Ohlone tribes seeking
8 federal recognition, and Ohlone individuals who partake in the stewardship of Ohlone
9 heritage. Park lands in Marin County are the aboriginal homelands of Coast Miwoks.
10 Park lands in San Francisco and San Mateo counties are the aboriginal homelands of
11 Ohlones. The park staff desires to build on the relationship and civic engagement with
12 American Indians in three broad activity areas: cultural resource management,
13 interpretation and education, and revitalization of community and tradition. The general
14 management plan will provide guidance for integrating American Indian values with the
15 management of resources and visitor experiences.

16

17

18 **ISSUES THAT WILL NOT BE ADDRESSED**

19 **Dog Management**

20 This general management plan does not make decisions about dog walking in the park.
21 The National Park Service is conducting a separate planning process to develop a dog
22 management plan that will decide how best to manage dog walking. The dog
23 management plan will identify a range of alternatives, evaluate them, solicit public
24 review, and make decisions. The planning team for the general management plan
25 continues to coordinate with the dog management planning team to ensure consistency
26 between the plans. The National Park Service could make minor changes to the preferred
27 alternative in the general management plan to make the plan consistent with the final dog
28 management plan.

29

30

RELATIONSHIP OF THIS PLAN TO OTHER PLANS

2

3 Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Muir Woods National Monument do not exist
4 separately from surroundings neighbors. Adjacent to the park, there are a variety of
5 public and private open spaces. These lands and waters combine to form a large and
6 comprehensive natural open space corridor. Within Golden Gate National Recreation
7 Area, there are sites that are being managed with guidance from recently completed land
8 use or site management plans.

9 The complex physical and political landscape of the San Francisco Bay Area has
10 produced an environment where a multitude of planning takes place regarding
11 transportation, conservation, recreation, growth and development, and coastal and ocean
12 resources. Most of these public and private land and marine areas are covered by
13 approved plans prepared by a whole host of federal, state, regional, and local agencies.
14 Management of these lands and waters could influence or be influenced by actions
15 presented in this *General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement*. The
16 following narrative briefly describes the various planning efforts and projects at the
17 federal, park, state, and county levels, and how they may be influenced by the general
18 management plan.

19

20

21 **NPS LAND USE PLANS FOR GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL** 22 **RECREATION AREA SITES NOT INCLUDED IN THE GENERAL** 23 **MANAGEMENT PLAN**

24 Many of the park sites within Golden Gate National Recreation Area have recent
25 management plans and environmental documents that provide updated guidance in how
26 the lands will be managed. The following NPS management plans and decisions were
27 reviewed in the preparation of the general management plan to ensure a coordinated
28 management of park lands. For a complete understanding of how all lands and marine
29 areas will be managed at Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the managers will be
30 guided by this new general management plan in addition to the plans that cover park sites
31 outside of this planning process. Each of these plans followed a prescribed planning
32 process that involved public participation in their development. Following is a description
33 of those management plans that together with this plan provide the guidance for
34 managing the park.

35

36 **Point Reyes National Seashore/Golden Gate National Recreation** 37 **Area Northern District Draft General Management Plan (draft)**

38 The current guiding document for Point Reyes National Seashore and Golden Gate
39 National Recreation Area is the 1980 *Golden Gate National Recreation Area/Point Reyes*
40 *National Seashore General Management Plan* and its subsequent amendments. Since the
41 1980 plan was approved, Point Reyes National Seashore has managed the lands of the

1 Northern District of Golden Gate National Recreation Area from the Bolinas/Fairfax road
2 and north. The 1980 GMP is being updated through the GMP/EIS planning process for
3 Point Reyes National Seashore and the North District of Golden Gate National
4 Recreation Area. The staff at Golden Gate National Recreation Area participated in the
5 planning process for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area Northern District and
6 worked to ensure consistency between the plans.

7

8 **Fort Baker Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement (2000)**

9 In 1995, the remaining military land at Fort Baker was determined to be excess to the
10 needs of the military by the Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure
11 Committee. As a requirement of that determination, the land was transferred to the
12 National Park Service, consistent with Public Law 92-589. The Fort Baker site includes a
13 historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places containing 45
14 contributing features (including post-Civil War era coastal fortifications), a marina and
15 waterfront area at Horseshoe Cove, and important open space and scenic and natural
16 areas including habitat for the federally listed endangered mission blue butterfly. The
17 purpose of the 2000 EIS was to identify the following:

- 18 • the program and types of uses that would be accommodated in historic buildings
19 and generate adequate revenue for building rehabilitation and preservation
- 20 • improvements to facilitate public uses, including new construction and removal
21 of buildings, landscape treatments, trails, parking, circulation, and locations and
22 patterns of use
- 23 • waterfront improvements
- 24 • opportunities for habitat restoration
- 25 • an approach to the protection, rehabilitation, and maintenance of the historic and
26 natural resources

27 The highlights of the plan included development of a conference and retreat center,
28 improvements to the Bay Area Discovery museum, and retention of the Coast Guard's
29 Golden Gate Station. The plan provided guidance for the restoration of the historic parade
30 ground, use of the historic boat shop as a public center; improvements to the marina;
31 restoration of the beach; protection of mission blue butterfly habitat; and preservation of
32 fortifications, batteries, and historic landscapes. Implementation of this plan contributes
33 to the diversity of recreational opportunities provided at Golden Gate National Recreation
34 Area and preserves military structures and landscapes that reflect the military history of
35 the site. Actions in the *General Management Plan* alternatives are consistent with the
36 Fort Baker Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement.

37

38 **Fort Mason Center Long-term Lease Environmental Assessment** 39 **(2004)**

40 Fort Mason is part of the San Francisco Port of Embarkation National Historic Landmark
41 District, historically serving as a major point of embarkation for American troops. In
42 1972, the U.S. Army transferred responsibility for its maintenance, restoration, and use of
43 the long-time military base to the National Park Service as part of the Golden Gate

1 National Recreation Area. In 1975, a nonprofit group expressed an interest in moving to
2 the lower part of Fort Mason, and the Fort Mason Foundation, a private nonprofit
3 organization, was created by San Francisco civic and business leaders to negotiate with
4 the National Park Service on behalf of the nonprofit community. In 2004, following an
5 Environmental Assessment and public review process, the National Park Service entered
6 into a long-term lease with the Fort Mason Center to continue its public programming
7 and management of Lower Fort Mason, and to invest in the capital improvements needed
8 for historic building preservation. The long-term lease accommodates continued use of
9 Building E by San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park. The alternatives in this
10 general management plan are consistent with this environmental assessment and long-
11 term lease.

12

13 **Presidio General Management Plan Amendment and** 14 **Environmental Impact Statement (1994)**

15 The Presidio of San Francisco's transition from military post to national park began in
16 1972 when, in the legislation creating the Golden Gate National Recreation Area,
17 Congress included a provision that the Presidio would become part of the national
18 recreation area if the military ever declared the base excess to its needs. After the Presidio
19 was designated for closure in 1989 by the Base Realignment and Closure Act, the U.S.
20 Army transferred the jurisdiction over the Presidio to the National Park Service in 1994.
21 As part of the transition, in July 1994, the National Park Service completed and issued a
22 final general management plan amendment (GMPA) for the Presidio laying out a vision
23 for its future use and management.

24 Once the general management plan amendment was created, difficult issues remained
25 regarding how to fund implementation of the plan. The National Park Service recognized
26 that implementing the amendment would require innovative approaches and unique
27 authorities to manage those aspects of the amendment. The National Park Service also
28 recognized that the costs associated with this unit were high and uncharacteristic for the
29 National Park Service. In 1996, Congress established the Presidio Trust (Trust) pursuant
30 to the Presidio Trust Act for the purpose of preserving, enhancing, and maintaining the
31 Presidio as a park, using the revenues from its leasable assets to fund that effort. In
32 response to competing public policy goals, Congress gave the Trust the unique
33 responsibility to reduce and eventually eliminate the costs of the Presidio to the federal
34 government while retaining the Presidio within Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

35 The Trust assumed jurisdiction over 80% of the Presidio of San Francisco (referred to as
36 Area B) on July 1, 1998 and the National Park Service retains jurisdiction over the
37 coastal areas and Lobos Creek and dunes (referred to as Area A). The general
38 management plan amendment remains the foundation plan that guides the Trust's
39 planning and decision making. In 2000, the Trust decided to develop a long-term
40 management plan that would set the parameters within which the Trust would balance its
41 preservation and financial responsibilities.

42 The general management plan amendment guidance for Area A, managed by the National
43 Park Service, provides for natural resource restoration, education, and outdoor recreation
44 along the coastal areas of San Francisco Bay and the Pacific Ocean. Major sites within

PART 1: BACKGROUND

1 Area A include Crissy Field, Fort Point National Historic Site, Baker Beach, and Lobos
2 Creek and dunes.

3 For Area A, the actions proposed in this general management plan are consistent with the
4 amendment that covers management of the lands within the Presidio of San Francisco.
5 The waters of the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay that are adjacent to the Presidio
6 have been zoned in the new general management plan.

7

8 **Figure 2: Areas A and B of the Presidio of San Francisco**



9

10

11 **Crissy Field Plan (1996)**

12 **Add narrative**

13

14

15 **Sutro Historic District Comprehensive Design and Environmental**
16 **Assessment (1993)**

17 The *Sutro Historic District Comprehensive Design and Environmental Assessment*
18 provides management guidance for the landscape rehabilitation of the Adolph Sutro
19 Historic District. The plan retains the historic character while making changes to the
20 property for new uses and interpretation for park visitors. The National Park Service
21 continues to manage the Sutro Historic District structures and landscape, including the

1 Cliff House, Sutro Baths, and the Sutro Heights Park. The landscape adjacent to the
2 historic district includes a visitor center, trails, and parking, and the extended area is
3 managed for natural and scenic values. The actions proposed in this general management
4 plan recognize that the natural attributes and biotic systems of the larger surrounding park
5 landscape contribute to the historical significance of the historic district. The alternatives
6 are consistent with this environmental assessment.

7
8 **Sweeney Ridge General Management Plan Amendment**

9 *TO BE ADDED. GOGA staff will be providing GMP Amendment information.*

10
11
12 **CURRENT PLANS FOR OTHER NATIONAL PARK AREAS NOT**
13 **MANAGED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

14 **Presidio Trust Management Plan: Land Use Policies for Area B of**
15 **the Presidio of San Francisco (2002)**

16 The Presidio Trust Management Plan (PTMP) is an update of the 1994 General
17 Management Plan Amendment (1994 GMP amendment) for the portion of the Presidio
18 transferred to the Trust’s jurisdiction in 1998. The Trust Act directs the Trust to manage
19 Area B in accordance with the park purposes identified in the enabling legislation for
20 Golden Gate National Recreation Area and the “general objectives” of the 1994 GMP
21 amendment, the latter were defined in Trust Board Resolution 99-11 (“General
22 Objectives”). The Presidio Trust Management Plan provides an updated land use policy
23 framework for Area B of the Presidio wholly consistent with the 1994 GMP
24 amendment’s general objectives, and which retains and builds on the 1994 GMP
25 amendment’s policies and principles. Since the time the 1994 GMP amendment was
26 adopted and the Presidio Trust Act was enacted, key land use and financial conditions
27 have changed. The Presidio Trust Management Plan is needed to take into account the
28 new Trust Act requirements, conditions that have changed since the 1994 GMP
29 amendment was adopted, new policies and management approaches, and to build in a
30 measure of flexibility not contemplated in the 1994 GMP amendment. The Presidio Trust
31 Management Plan is the plan that the Trust looks to in making future management and
32 implementation decisions in Area B, consistent with the purposes of the Golden Gate
33 National Recreation Area enabling legislation and the general objectives of the 1994
34 GMP amendment. The 1994 GMP amendment remains unaltered as the plan for NPS
35 management of Area A of the Presidio.

36 The actions proposed in this general management plan are consistent with the Presidio
37 Trust Management Plan.

1 **OTHER NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PLANS**

2 In addition to the overall vision and management plans described above, the National
3 Park Service develops detailed project and program implementation plans in order to
4 implement the goals and objectives of those broader plans. The implementation plans
5 cover topics such as natural and cultural resource restoration and preservation, visitor use,
6 transportation, and park operations. An overall description of each plan or program listed
7 below, along with its relationship to this general management plan, is provided in
8 Appendix B.

9

10 **NPS Trails and Transportation Plans and Programs**

- 11 • Marin Headlands and Fort Baker Transportation Infrastructure and Management
12 Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement
- 13 • Trails Forever

14

15 **NPS Restoration Plans**

- 16 • Alcatraz Island Historic Preservation and Safety Construction Program
17 Environmental Impact Statement
- 18 • Easkoot Creek restoration at Stinson Beach Environmental Assessment
- 19 • Lower Redwood Creek Floodplain and Salmonid Habitat Restoration, Banducci
20 Site – Environmental Assessment
- 21 • Lower Redwood Creek Interim Flood Reduction Measures and Floodplain /
22 Channel Restoration Environmental Assessment
- 23 • Mori Point Restoration and Trail Plan – Environmental Assessment
- 24 • Ocean Park Stewardship Action Plan, 2007-2008 National Park Service
- 25 • Pacific Ocean Park Strategic Plan, National Park Service
- 26 • Redwood Creek Watershed: Vision for the Future
- 27 • Wetland and Creek Restoration at Big Lagoon, Muir Beach Final Environmental
28 Impact Statement

29

30 **NPS Program Implementation Plans**

- 31 • Alcatraz Development Concept Plan and Environmental Assessment
- 32 • Climate Change Action Plan
- 33 • Comprehensive Interpretive Plan for the Golden Gate National Parks
- 34 • Fire Management Plan / Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for
35 Golden Gate National Recreation Area
- 36 • Golden Gate National Recreation Area – Park Asset Management Plan

37

38

1 **NPS Park Partner Plans**

- 2 • Headlands Center for the Arts Master Plan
3 • Headlands Institute Campus Improvement and Expansion Plan
4 • Marine Mammal Center Site and Facilities Improvements Project Environmental
5 Assessment
6 • Slide Ranch Master Plan and Environmental Assessment
7

8 **NPS Plans in the Process of Being Developed**

- 9 • DEIS/Dog Management Plan for Golden Gate National Recreation Area
10 • Golden Gate National Recreation Area – Long-Range Transportation Plan
11 • Southern Marin Equestrian Plan
12 • Alcatraz Embarkation Environmental Impact Statement
13

14 **Other NPS General Management Plans**

- 15 • San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park General Management Plan
16 Preparation of a new general management plan for the historical park is
17 anticipated to begin shortly and will require close coordination with the staff at
18 the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.”
19

20
21 **OTHER FEDERAL PLANS**

- 22 • National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)—Joint Management
23 Plan for Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones, and Monterey Bay National
24 Marine Sanctuaries 2004)
25
26

27 **STATE AND REGIONAL PLANS**

- 28 • Association of San Francisco Bay Area Governments: Bay Trail Plan
29 • California Department of Parks and Recreation – Angel Island State Park
30 Resource Management Plan/General Development Plan/Environmental Impact
31 Report
32 • California Department of Parks and Recreation – California Outdoor Recreation
33 Plan (2002)
34 • California Department of Parks and Recreation – Gray Whale Cove State Beach
35 General Plan Amendment
36 • California Department of Parks and Recreation – Pacifica State Beach General
37 Plan

PART 1: BACKGROUND

- 1 • California Department of Parks and Recreation – Mount Tamalpais State Park
- 2 General Plan
- 3 • Caltrans District 4 Devil's Slide Project
- 4 • Coastal Conservancy – Completing the California Coastal Trail (2003)
- 5 • Golden Lands, Golden Opportunity: Preserving vital Bay Area Lands for all
- 6 Californians (Greenbelt Alliance, Bay Area Open Space Council, Association of
- 7 Bay Area Governments
- 8 • San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)
- 9 • San Francisco Bay Plan
- 10 • San Francisco Bay Area Seaport Plan
- 11 • San Francisco Bay Area Water Transit Authority (2003) Final Program EIR:
- 12 Expansion of Ferry Transit Service in the San Francisco Bay Area
- 13 • South Access to the Golden Gate Bridge – Doyle Drive FEIS/R
- 14
- 15

16 COUNTY AND LOCAL PLANS

- 17 • Central Marin Ferry Connection Project
- 18 • Fitzgerald Marine Reserve Master Plan
- 19 • Huddart and Wunderlich Parks Master Plan
- 20 • Marin County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
- 21 • Marin County Local Coastal Program Unit 1
- 22 • Marin Countywide Plan (2007) and amended (2009)
- 23 • Midcoast Action Plan for Parks and Recreation: Planning Team Report
- 24 • City of Pacifica Pedro Point Headlands Coastal Trail Connection
- 25 • Peninsula Watershed Management Plan – San Francisco Public Utilities
- 26 Commission (SFPUC)
- 27 • PG&E Jefferson-Martin 230kV Transmission Line Proposed Settlement and
- 28 Environmental Assessment
- 29 • Regional Bicycle Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area
- 30 • San Francisco General Plan
- 31 • San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle Route Plan
- 32 • San Mateo County Trails Plan
- 33 • San Mateo Countywide Transportation 2010 Plan
- 34 • San Pedro County Park
- 35 • Sausalito General Plan
- 36 • Extension of San Francisco Municipal Railway's Historic Streetcar
- 37 Environmental Impact Statement
- 38

RELATED LAWS AND NATIONAL PARK SERVICE POLICIES

3

4 Many park management directives are specified in laws and policies guiding the National
5 Park Service and are not subject to alternative approaches. For example, there are laws
6 and policies about managing environmental quality (such as the Clean Air Act, the
7 Endangered Species Act; Executive Order 13112: “Invasive Species,” and Executive
8 Order 11990: “Protection of Wetlands”); laws governing the preservation of cultural
9 resources (such as the National Historic Preservation Act and the Native American
10 Graves Protection and Repatriation Act); and laws about providing public services (such
11 as the Americans with Disabilities Act)—to name only a few. In other words, a general
12 management plan is not needed to decide that it is appropriate to protect endangered
13 species, control exotic species, protect historic and archeological sites, conserve artifacts,
14 or provide for access for disabled persons. Laws and policies have already decided those
15 and many other things. Although attaining some conditions set forth in these laws and
16 policies may have been temporarily deferred in the park because of funding or staffing
17 limitations, the National Park Service will continue to strive to implement these
18 requirements with or without a new general management plan.

19 There are other laws and executive orders that are applicable solely or primarily to units
20 of the national park system. These include the 1916 Organic Act that created the National
21 Park Service; the General Authorities Act of 1970; the act of March 27, 1978, relating to
22 the management of the national park system; and the National Parks Omnibus
23 Management Act (1998).

24 The NPS Organic Act (16 *United States Code*, Section 1) provides the fundamental
25 management direction for all units of the national park system:

26 *[P]romote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks,*
27 *monuments, and reservations . . . by such means and measure as conform to the*
28 *fundamental purpose of said parks, monuments and reservations, which purpose is*
29 *to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life*
30 *therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such*
31 *means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.*

32 The National Park System General Authorities Act (16 *United States Code* [USC]
33 Section 1a-1 et seq.) affirms that while all national park system units remain “distinct in
34 character,” they are “united through their interrelated purposes and resources into one
35 national park system as cumulative expressions of a single national heritage.” The act
36 makes it clear that the NPS Organic Act and other protective mandates apply equally to
37 all units of the system. Further, amendments state that NPS management of park units
38 should not “derogate[e] . . . the purposes and values for which these various areas have
39 been established.”

40 The National Park Service also has established policies for all units under its stewardship.
41 These are identified and explained in a guidance manual entitled *NPS Management*
42 *Policies 2006*. The “action” alternatives considered in this document (alternatives 1, 2,
43 and 3), as well as the no-action alternative (current management), incorporate and comply

PART 1: BACKGROUND

1 with the provisions of these mandates and policies. Appendix C details key NPS policies
2 and their desired conditions and strategies.

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