

----- Forwarded by Brian Aviles/GOGA/NPS on 12/07/2009 03:25 PM -----

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Shoulders/GOGA/NPS**

11/13/2009 05:13 PM

To Stephan Nofield/DENVER/NPS@NPS, Brian  
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cc

Subj my comment on draft GMP  
ect

Hi, you guys.

I didn't get a chance to comment formally on the draft GMP, although I had hoped to. I know it's not optimal to submit comments outside of the formal comment periods, but I thought I'd submit my 2 cents.

One of my primary comments is that I think Alcatraz needs to be more fully recognized by the National Park Service as a component of a larger estuary. In fact, the San Francisco Bay is one of the largest and most important estuaries on the entire west coast of the United States. The greater community of the San Francisco area - and very visible and powerful funders - have put great effort into restoring the natural function of the Bay (it reached a critical low point as a festering dump only a few decades ago.) It seems the NPS would be establishing itself as part of a greater effort by being willing to manage decidedly to protect whatever natural resource function is at Alcatraz. There's no need to do this to the detriment of cultural resource protection. Species which have no formal designation are still in need of protection on park land - the threats are significant to them and will only get worse. The GMP would do well to communicate to the larger Bay Area that GOGA will do its part to protect bird nesting and will not allow activities during bird nesting season that are disruptive. If the National Park Service is going to authorize big events at Alcatraz, it seems best if they are associated with and guided by NPS's clear commitment to do its part to protect and restore this magnificent estuary.

I also believe that there are multiple ways to connect people to parks. The connection doesn't have to be related only to trails or views or biking or similar activities, although our public certainly appreciates those things. I think one of the best messages for connecting people to parks would be to establish our long-term vision of protection and restoration that is based on an understanding of the future changes and threats to the land resources we are charged with protecting. We connect to people by establishing our leadership as conservationists. We connect to their longing to know that something is being done right and is based on a long-term view. Our role in the greater Bay Area community is enhanced by making it apparent that we have forward-thinking ideas that are focused on the reality of our future.

In other words, the theme of connecting people to parks is appropriate, but it could have a broader meaning. Sure, build overlooks and trails, but do it in the name of a guiding principle that goes deeper than enhancing visitor experience. Make it more relational to the broader context - the land and water resources that support enjoyment. In my recent experience in restoring only a small part of the natural ecosystem at Muir Beach, our public is appreciative and extremely supportive to see a park taking decided action to enhance natural resource function. They love it and are inspired by it. Imagine how they'd feel to see the park putting out a major document that recognizes the near-term and long-term threats and outlines a set of pro-active guidelines -- it seems like most locals would recognize this as an obvious task we need to tackle.

If we miss this opportunity in the GMP to lay out our guidelines as climate changes and threats increase, in the near term we could likely be backtracking and trying to replan and trying to refund and having to reidentify priorities. The preferred alternative seems to mostly codify GOGA's operative principles of the past decade. It would be stellar to be ahead of the game with a clear set of guiding principles to

address the future threats to our precious resources. It would be even more stellar to connect to our deeply caring Bay Area community by demonstrating we can articulate how it all fits together - how visitor enjoyment is enhanced as we clearly plan ahead to protect resources against ecological threats.

OK, maybe that's more than 2 cents. Take or leave it, as you wish.

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