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Foundation Statement

The Foundation Statement is used to guide current and future planning and management of Golden Gate National Recreation Area in its entirety, including Muir Woods National Monument and Fort Point National Historic Site. The foundation is grounded in the park's legislation and from knowledge acquired since the park was originally established. It provides a shared understanding of what is most important about the park. This Foundation Statement describes the park's purpose, significance, fundamental resources and values, primary interpretive themes, and special mandates.

ELEMENTS OF A FOUNDATION STATEMENT

The park's legislation guided the staff in understanding and documenting why Congress and the president created these parks. The Foundation Statement defines each of the following elements:

- **Park Purpose**

The park purpose is a specific reason for why Congress and/or the president established the park as a unit of the national park system. The purpose statement provides the most fundamental criteria against which the appropriateness of all planning recommendations, operational decisions, and actions are tested. The purpose of each park is based in the enabling legislation and legislative history.

- **Park Significance**

Guided by legislation and the knowledge acquired through management, research, and civic engagement, statements of significance define what is *most important* about the park's resources and values. In defining the park significance statements, the staff focused on the attributes that make the park's resources or values important enough to be included in the national park system. Each of these parks contains many significant resources, but not all these resources contribute to why the park was designated.

The purpose and significance statements are used to guide planning and management decisions to ensure that the resources and values that Congress and the president wanted preserved are the first priority.

- **Fundamental Resources and Values**

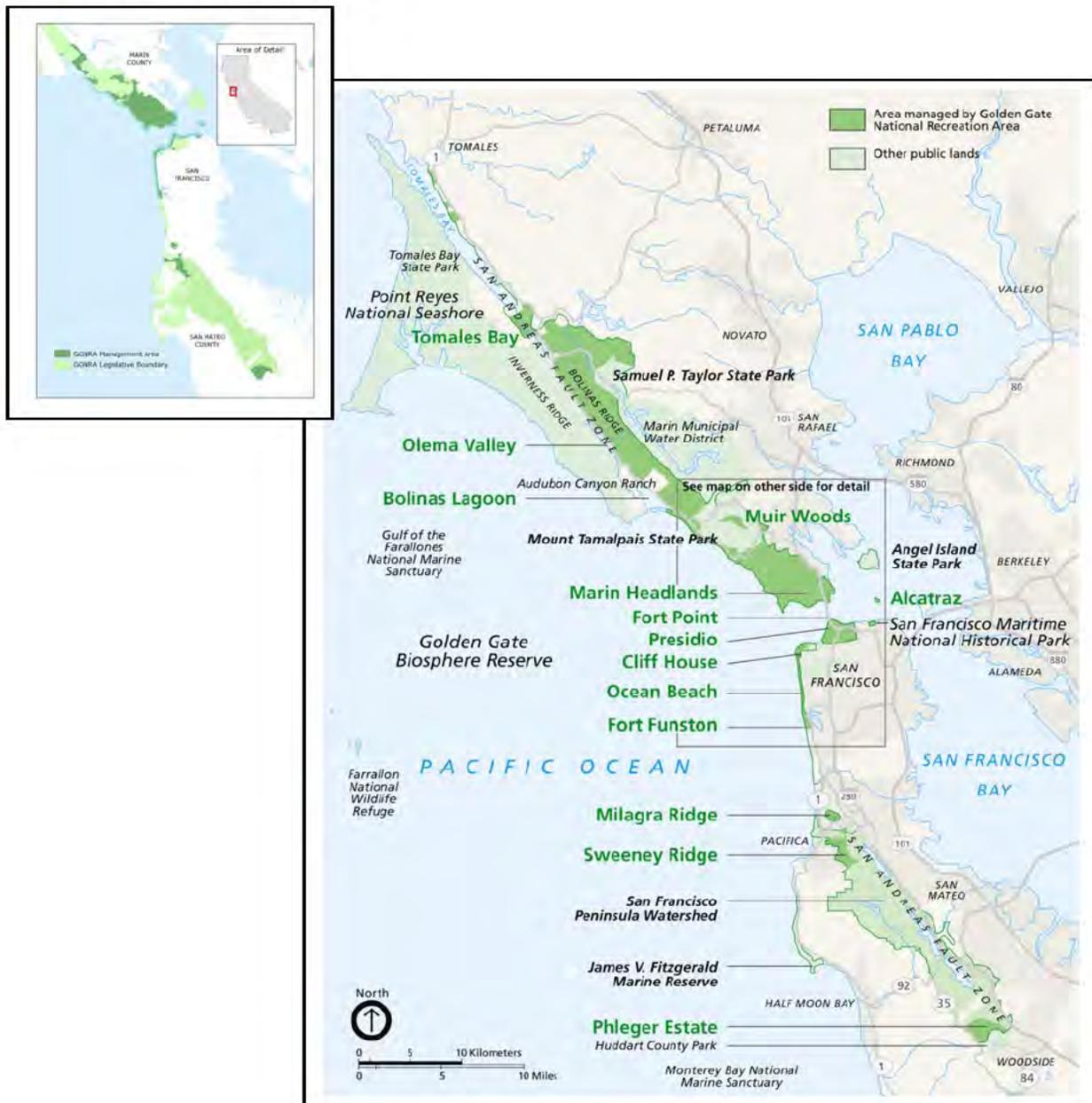
The National Park Service works to ensure that those resources and values that are fundamental to maintaining the park's significance are preserved for public enjoyment. Understanding the fundamental resources and values that support each significance statement will provide managers and their staff with a focus on what is truly most important about each park. If the fundamental resources and values are degraded, then the significance of what is **most important** about may be jeopardized.

- **Primary Interpretive Themes**

Primary interpretive themes describe what needs to be interpreted to provide visitors with opportunities to understand and appreciate the purpose and significance of the park. The themes describe the key stories and concepts related to the park significance. The development of primary interpretive themes provide the foundation on which the park's educational and interpretive program is based.

Location

Golden Gate National Recreation Area's lands and waters extend north of the Golden Gate Bridge to Tomales Bay in Marin County and south to San Mateo County, encompassing approximately 60 miles of bay and ocean shoreline. These lands represent one of the nation's largest coastal preserves and contain numerous natural, historical, and cultural resources. Included in this land area are Muir Woods National Monument and Fort Point National Historic Site. Muir Woods National Monument, a primeval stand of old-growth coastal redwoods, is north of the Golden Gate Bridge in Marin County. Fort Point National Historic Site, a Civil-war era casemated fort, is on the water's edge directly below the southern abutment of the Golden Gate Bridge. Golden Gate National Recreation Area has administrative and management responsibilities for both Muir Woods National Monument and Fort Point National Historic Site.



Preface

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ORGANIC ACT OF 1916

Each unit of the National Park System was established by a specific law or presidential proclamation, in addition to being governed by the National Park Service Organic Act of 1916 which created the Park Service and defined its mission -

..... The service this [Act of 1916] established shall promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations herein after specified by such means and measures as conform to the fundamental purpose of the said parks, monuments, and reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

GOLDEN GATE BIOSPHERE RESERVE

Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Muir Woods National Monument, and Fort Point National Historic Site contribute to the lands and waters that comprise the internationally recognized Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve. Designated in 1988 as part of the United Nations – Man and the Biosphere Program, the Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve is the only one in the world to span marine, coastal, and upland resources adjacent to a major metropolitan area. Golden Gate National Recreation Area connects designated international, national, state and local environments of importance.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Park managers must follow many laws, policies, and directives when managing national parks. In addition, we have identified some fundamental principles that will help guide the management of the park.

• Sustainability

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

• Civic Engagement

We are dedicated to ongoing, dynamic conversations with the communities we serve. We will provide opportunities for meaningful involvement to promote better understanding and communication, discuss concerns, and express values and preferences when park decisions and policies are being developed and implemented.

- **Community Based Stewardship**

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

- **Regional Collaboration**

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

- **Partnerships**

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



Trail stewardship project at Golden Gate National Recreation Area

Golden Gate National Recreation Area Foundation Statement



Golden Gate National Recreation Area Summary

PARK PURPOSE

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

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

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

Park Purpose Golden Gate National Recreation Area

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

The National Park Service Organic Act of 1916 states that units of the national park system are established “to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.” This statement represents the most basic mission of Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Golden Gate National Recreation Area was created during an era of growing environmental awareness and rapid disappearance of open lands and historic sites. In the late 1960s a remarkable convergence of events highlighted the vulnerability of widely beloved landscapes and landmarks surrounding the Golden Gate; these events spurred the government to respond with a study and the citizens to organize a political vehicle to preserve these natural settings. Based on the study and the urgings of the organized public, the federal government supported a new national park and adopted the slogan “parks to the people.” Congress and the president were motivated by the fact that most Americans resided in urban areas and were

ordinary people who seldom, if ever, went to national parks. The national recreation area preserves nationally significant resources in and adjacent to the City of San Francisco and thereby offers an exceptional opportunity to provide national park experiences to a large and diverse urban population. This concept is clearly reflected in the legislative history of the national recreation area, congressional records, and the memories of the people who were involved.

The enabling legislation establishing the park, recognizing that heavy use could impair its “outstanding natural, historic, scenic and recreational values,” reconfirmed the mandate of the Organic Act: “In the management of the recreation area, the Secretary of the Interior shall utilize the resources in a manner which will provide for recreation and educational opportunities consistent with sound principles of land use planning and management. ...the Secretary shall preserve the recreation area, as far as possible, in its natural setting, and protect it from development and uses which would destroy the scenic beauty and natural character of the area.”

Physical Landforms

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

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

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



A view of the Golden Gate.

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEME

The park's fundamental 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.

Coastal Corridor

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

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

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- **Marine 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 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.



The park includes coastal areas from ocean to mountain tops.

PRIMARY 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 islands.

Military Installation and Fortification

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

The park includes the largest and most complete collection of military installations and fortifications in the country, dating from Spanish settlement in 1776 through the 20th century. These installations served as command post for the Army in the Western United States and the Pacific. This long period of military presence has yielded one of the most extensive collections of historic architecture in the national park system.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- **Fortifications and Military Installations**

Golden Gate National Recreation Area includes cultural landscapes, structures, features, and museum collections, including historic fortifications and military installations.



Fort Cronkhite



Battery Chamberlain

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEME

Coast defense posts are at the heart of park lands, and 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

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

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

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

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



Alcatraz Island.



Alcatraz prison cells

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEME

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

Scenic Views

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

The headlands of the Golden Gate and its scenic landscape, vistas, and coastal environment are internationally recognized as the panoramic backdrop to the metropolitan San Francisco Bay area and contribute to the quality of life of the people who live in the region.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- **Dramatic Views**
Golden Gate National Recreation Area contains dramatic views of contrasting undeveloped and urban coastal environments.
- **Preserved Open Spaces**
The park preserves undeveloped open spaces and associated ecosystems ranging from beaches to promontories to open water, including both natural and historic settings.



View of San Francisco from the headlands of the Golden Gate.



Hang gliding at Fort Funston

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEME

Centered on the entrance to one of the world's great harbors, the lands of the park facing the Golden Gate are associated with and still convey the feelings of the epic stream of history that flowed between its headlands. The Gold Rush and mobilization for WWII are among the many rich periods of history that focused on this iconic spot. To envision and fully appreciate their impact, the visual integrity of Fort Mason and the Marin and San Francisco Headlands plays a key role.

Recreational and Educational Opportunities

PARK 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 the opportunity to participate in park stewardship.
- **Park Access**
A system of designated pathways supports access to settings that provide visitors with a broad range of activities and varied experiences.



The park provides a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities.



Guided ranger activities

PRIMARY 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.

Ohlone and Miwok

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

Parklands 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**
Archeological sites located within the park document the traditional homelands of the Coast Miwok and Ohlone people.



Needs Caption

Need image

PRIMARY 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.

Muir Woods National Monument Foundation Statement



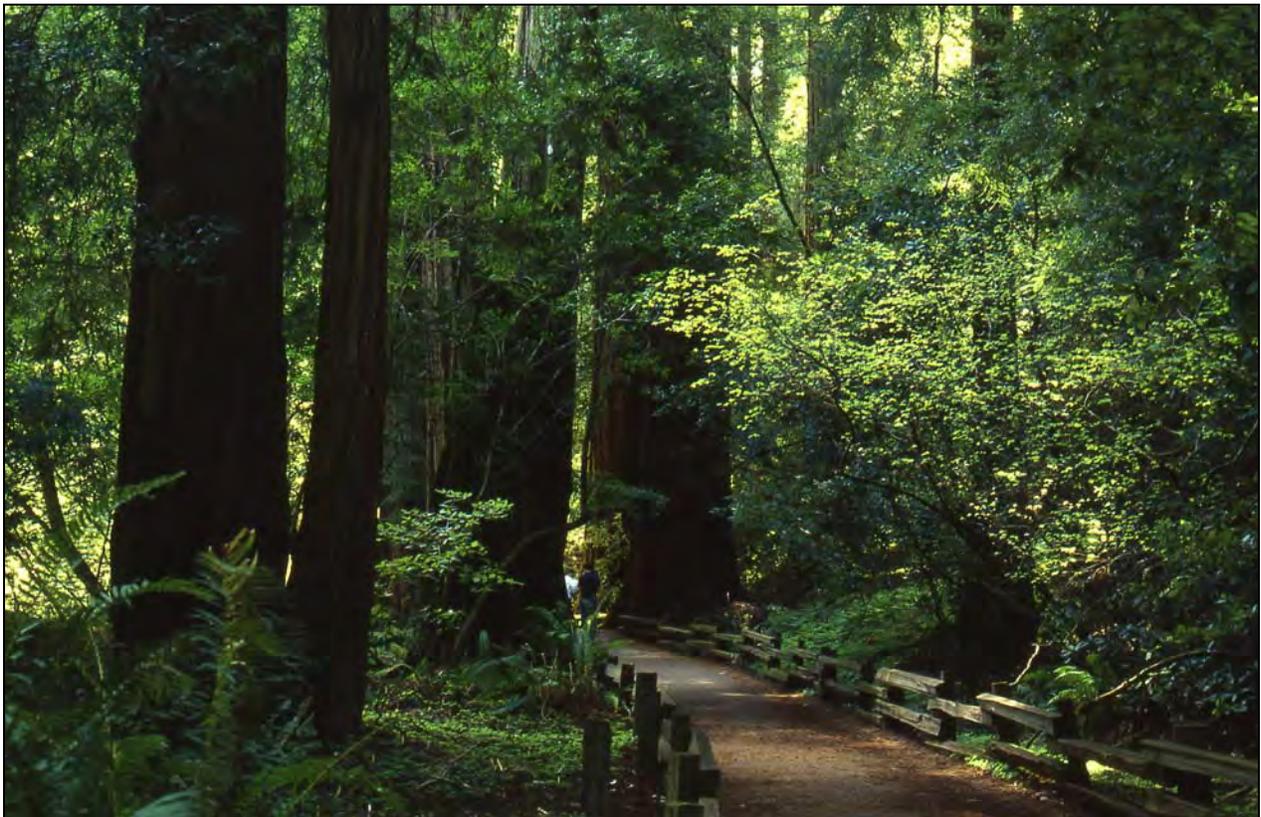
Muir Woods National Monument Summary

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.

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

1. Muir Woods National Monument preserves the last remnant old-growth forest close to an urban center that retains its primeval character. The establishment of the monument is an important manifestation of early 20th century conservation history.
2. The old growth forest ecosystem of the coastal redwoods.



Park Purpose

Muir Woods National Monument

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.

The great San Francisco earthquake of April 1906 became the catalyst for a gift of land that led to the Bay Area's first national park area. Water was in short supply, and a number of companies scurried to supply water sources to the city by creating new reservoirs.

James Newlands, president of the North Coast Water Company, saw the city's need as an opportunity for personal profit. Assessing potential reservoir sites, Newlands came across a grove of redwoods in Marin County that were owned by William Kent.

Kent was a wealthy Bay Area native who hailed from a family with a long tradition of progressive reform. Recognizing San Francisco's desperate situation and the potential of harvesting the redwood grove to create a reservoir, Newlands approached Kent to purchase the 47 acres. Kent declined the offer in order to retain the property for its beauty – especially since it was the last intact stand of redwoods in the Bay Area.

After Newlands filed a condemnation suit in state court, arguing that the public good of the reservoir exceeded Kent's right to keep the property, Kent devised a means to thwart the

lawsuit. On December 26, 1907, he mailed the deed to 295 acres of his land, including the 47-acre tract targeted by the lawsuit, to Secretary of the Interior James R. Garfield, requesting that the government accept the gift for establishment of a national monument in honor of John Muir under the provisions of the recently enacted Antiquities Act of 1906.

Kent urged quick federal action on his gift, and 12 days later, on January 9, 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt signed a proclamation establishing Muir Woods National Monument. The proclamation stated that the tract contained “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 the trees.”

The national monument was the tenth national monument to be so designated and the sixth to be placed under Department of the Interior administration. It was the first national monument to be located in proximity to a major city and the first to consist of former privately owned lands.

Park Significance Muir Woods National Monument

Old Growth Redwood Forest

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

Muir Woods National Monument preserves the last remnant old-growth redwood forest close to an urban center that retains its primeval character. The establishment of national monument is an important manifestation of early 20th century conservation history.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- **Old Growth Redwood Forest**
Muir Woods National Monument preserves a coastal redwood old-growth forest ecosystem.
- **Conservation Movement**
Muir Woods National Monument held a significant role in 20th century America's conservation movement. Muir Woods was among the first national monuments designated under the Antiquities Act, and the very first made up from privately-donated lands. In this, it set the precedent for the designation of other monuments and parks through private donation.



View of San Francisco from the headlands of the Golden Gate.



PRIMARY 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.

Fort Point National Historic Site Foundation Statement



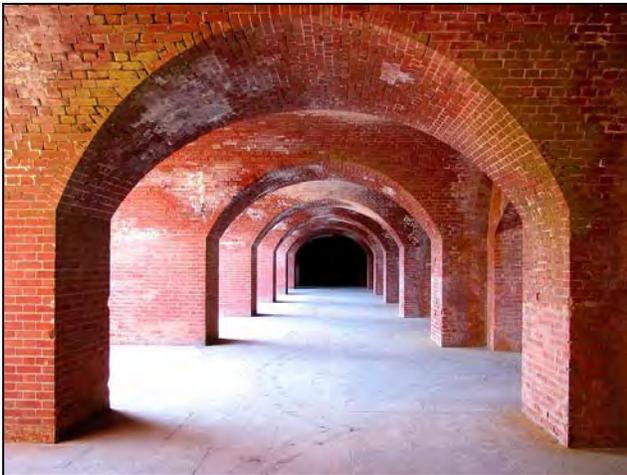
Fort Point National Historic Site Summary

PARK PURPOSE

The purpose of Fort Point National Historic Site is to preserve and interpret the Civil War-era fortifications at the Golden Gate.

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

1. Fort Point, one of only two remaining intact Third System forts in the United States, represents the culmination of American military technology, architecture, and construction during the first half of the 19th century—the most fundamental of which was the arrangement of guns in multiple tiers.



Park Purpose

Fort Point National Historic Site

The purpose of Fort Point National Historic Site is to preserve and interpret the Civil War-era fortifications at the Golden Gate.

Built on the site of a tiny Spanish gun battery, called Castillo de San Joaquin, Fort Point was one of the first major U.S. Army installations in the Bay Area. Constructed during the 1850s, the fort became the front line of American defense on the Pacific Ocean. Long regarded as an outstanding example of masonry fort construction, Fort Point, a classic brick and granite fortification that is the only one of its style on the west coast of the United States, had been the subject of preservation interests since the 1920s. In 1926 the barracks closed and the fort was abandoned.

During the design of the Golden Gate Bridge in the 1930s, serious discussion about Fort Point's demolition began. Only the intervention of Joseph Strauss, the powerful and authoritarian chief engineer of the Golden Gate Bridge project, prevented its destruction. Strauss initially thought that the site offered the best location for the caisson that would anchor the San Francisco end of the bridge, but a tour of the fort persuaded him that it was worth preserving. He redesigned the bridge and moved the caisson several hundred feet. During World

War II, soldiers were stationed at Fort Point, but after the end of the war the fort was abandoned again and stood vacant in the shadow of the bridge.

In 1959 a group of military retirees and civilian engineers — impressed with the structure — formed the Fort Point Museum Association. The association raised funds for preservation and lobbied for establishment of the fort as a national historic site. A decade-long grassroots movement to save the fort from decay took shape with the leadership and financial support of the Sixth Army and the local business community.

In 1968 local congressional representatives introduced bills to establish the national historic site, and on October 16, 1970, President Richard M. Nixon signed the bill that authorized Fort Point National Historic Site “to preserve and interpret for future generations the historical significance of Fort Point in the Presidio of San Francisco, California.”

Park Significance Fort Point National Historic Site

Third System Fort

PARK SIGNIFICANCE

Fort Point National Historic Site, one of only two remaining intact Third System forts in the United States, represents the culmination of American military technology, architecture, and construction during the first half of the 19th century—the most fundamental of which was the arrangement of guns in multiple tiers.

FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCES AND VALUES

- **Historic Fort Point**
The historic fort at Fort Point includes the masonry Third System fortification, the Fort Point Light mounted on the barbette tier, Batteries East and West, and associated structures and buildings within the legislated boundaries



View of San Francisco from the headlands of the Golden Gate.



Ranger led activity at Fort Point.

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEME

Fort Point, guardian of the Golden Gate, reflects the strategic importance of San Francisco Bay, starting from the establishment of the Presidio by the Spanish, through the Gold Rush and Civil War. The fort, a multi-tiered masonry Third System fortification¹, is the only example of its kind on the West Coast.

¹The Third System of American seacoast fortifications represents the nation's first comprehensive program of harbor defense that was planned and constructed with foresight during peacetime, and not cobbled together under emergency wartime conditions. Built largely between the 1830s and 1860, Third System fortifications characteristically consist of multi-tiered brick-and-masonry forts mounting large numbers of large-caliber cannon in a single structure at entrances to important harbors on the East and Gulf coasts. Fort Point is the only example of a Third System fortification on the West Coast

