

DRAFT TALKING POINTS – v2

PWRO Briefing: March 26, 2008

NATIONAL TREASURES – Preliminary Alternative 3

Muir Woods

Overview

This alternative presents Muir Woods as an outdoor museum where visitors can discover the primeval redwood forest and the Monument's place in the early US conservation movement. A system of thematic trails would lead visitors into the forest to touch, see, and learn about the essential qualities of the forest, like its giant trees, the ecology of Redwood Creek, William Kent's generous donation, and his bumpy friendship with John Muir. Rather than continue to concentrate visitation along a main trail, visitors would be encouraged to take different interpretive trails to experience the different parts of the park. Some trails would start in a restored meadow where the upper parking lot now exists, and highlight the main redwood groves along the creek. Others would bring visitors down into the woods from higher in the canyon along historic traces, pausing at the old Superintendent's residence to learn about rustic architecture and how Muir Woods has been shaped by more than a century of park managers. The historic *Dipsea* trail and other trails from Mount Tam State Park would also be highlighted, offering opportunities for self-discovery. Visitors would continue to be drawn to the Woods to see the trees, but they would leave with a richer understanding of this precious ecosystem and how these few acres helped spark conservation across the United States. They would be motivated to return and learn more of the story.

- Protects principal features of ecosystem: creek, trees... watershed; esp. concentration of redwoods on north facing slope (Sensitive resources)
- Concession becomes education/visitor center, other services (rustic overnight accommodations, parking & shuttle stop) are outside forest in the Addition

- Preserves cultural resources that represent the conservation movement: Supt Residence (early rustic architecture), historic trails, stream stabilization rock work, monuments, groves (Cathedral, Bohemian, Pinchot)

Marin County

Overview

This alternative welcomes visitors to a vast network of open space that protects natural resources and offers international visitors and nearby residents many forms of recreation. The alternative highlights several national icons: Muir Woods, the Golden Gate (including the GG Bridge), Highway One (which is a National Scenic Byway), and several former Army posts. Although this alternative shares many characteristics of alternatives #1 and #2, the management of the southern headlands is very different. The historic military resources in this area have very high integrity. They include structures and landscape preserved for visitor use, such as the restored Nike Missile Launch Site and Point Bonita Lighthouse; and resources preserved for partners uses such as the barracks at Fort Cronkhite. This alternative takes advantage of these national treasures to immerse visitors in the military history of the headlands. Additional resources could be restored, such as the massive Observation Balloon Hangar in Rodeo Valley, but much of the immersion would be interpretive rather than literal. Interpretive themes would address the various military periods: "Spanish Outpost", "Gold Fever", "December **8th**, 1941: Defending the Beach" – as well as "post to park" – the transition from military uses to land conservation and public recreation. Preservation of the military resources is consistent with natural resource protection: for example, the Mission Blue Butterfly and other habitat is a result of the military's long management of the area. This alternative also proposes a visitor center at the western end of the Baker-Barry tunnel, the site of existing park housing.

Stinson:

Visitor Experience – Diverse opps. = support visitor enjoyment of one of the best recreational beaches in the region...

Cultural Resources – sim. to #1 & 2, but include preservation of one of the most intact WW2 period fire-control stations (White Horse Ranch = Historic immersion)...

Natural Resources – maintain the wild character and scenic quality of the landscape, with improvements to Easkoot Creek (Natural)...

Tennessee Valley:

Visitor Experience – Support recreation through large natural area, especially the trail to Tennessee Cove. Scenic corridor zone reflects intent to further improve the multiuse trail, make more like a promenade with Warming Hut®, outdoor furnishings; possible camping. Improves trailhead. Retains equestrian uses at stables (Ranch __).

Cultural Resources – No nationally significant cultural resources, but existing structures in lower valley (stables) could be adapted to support public uses...

Natural Resources – Maintain natural character along the trail and creek, as well as in the areas beyond the immediate valley

Alcatraz

Overview

This alternative focuses on restoring historic buildings and exterior areas on the island to immerse visitors in the penitentiary period. It recognizes the island as a National Historic Landmark and international icon. The immersion begins at the original dock at Fort Mason, where visitors (unshackled) file aboard prison-themed ferries. Passing a network of warning buoys, the experience continues at the island arrival pier, marching up to the cell house through a landscape of fences and guard towers. While other historic periods would be interpreted (Civil War citadel, American Indian occupation), the focus is on the federal penitentiary: The Rock. This alternative would require extensive restoration and rehabilitation of features such as the Laundry Building (an emblem of progressive prison reform thinking [?]) and the Parade Ground where the rubble pile would be removed to allow to visitors access to one of the central spaces used by prison staff. The large population of gulls would be managed in the primary visitor use areas; but outside those areas, bird habitat would be protected and enhanced.

- Associated artifacts are brought back to the island for display and storage.
- Overnight accommodations
- Special events track closely to park purpose: prison, NHL

San Francisco City/County

Overview

This alternative focuses on the collection of historic sites that stretch along San Francisco's waterfront, an almost continuous string from Ocean Beach to Fort Mason. These sites extend east to Aquatic Park and Hyde Street Pier, managed by San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park. Fort Mason would be re-imagined; replacing administrative uses with public uses. A new orientation and information center would serve visitors to all SF Bay Area National Parks, and permanent facilities would be developed on the Great Meadow to support large public events. In this alternative, tours to Alcatraz would leave from historic Pier 4 at the foot of Van Ness Avenue. These proposals anticipate the extension of the historic streetcar under Fort Mason and would require close collaboration with SAFR and the City of San Francisco. Like alternatives #1 and #3, this alternative would support the City of San Francisco's interest in a broad approach to redesigning the Ocean Beach corridor, and explore sustainable approaches to sea level rise.

Fort Mason:

Cultural Resources – Preserves historic structures and landscape that tell story of continuous military use of the fort – Fremont's squatter house, Earthquake HQ, Embarkation center for WW2 Pacific Theater...

Natural Resources – Not prominent, but rocky coast at Black Point would be protected

Fort Funston:

Visitor Experience – Offers recreation in a Natural area with limited support facilities at the edge of the site

Cultural Resources – Nonhistoric structures would be removed; battery would be stabilized within context of natural area.

Natural Resources – The bluffs are a significant feature (NT) and would be protected for the unique geology and as evidence of natural processes

San Mateo County

Overview

Like the other alternatives, National Treasures highlights the quilt of undeveloped land which has been protected by numerous organizations that, together, constitute an amazing recreational and natural resource. Several nationally significant historic sites are in the county, along with habitat for many endangered species. This alternative would focus on protecting resources while developing recreational and thematic connections among these sites. One of the key areas is Rancho Corral de Tierra which could support diverse recreational uses (including horseback riding) and give trail access to the protected lands along the ridge of the Santa Cruz mountains.

This alternative also looks beyond the immediate park lands to explore the potential to stimulate regional landscape management and enhance heritage tourism. The park would encourage local communities to highlight the designation of Hwy 1 (PCH) as a National Scenic Byway and explore National Heritage Area status for land between Pacifica and Santa Cruz: the rural Pacific coast characterized by forested hills and seaside communities.

Montara Lighthouse:

As the most intact lighthouse in the park, it offers opportunity for immersion in the life of lighthouse keepers. This alternative could restore historic structures and landscape features; demolish contemporary structures (Hostel); and develop new visitor programs.

Rancho :

Visitor Experience – Visitors enjoy multiuse trails linking the ridges of Montara Mountain to the beaches (which are managed by CA State Parks)... Extended trails (like the Bay Area Ridge Trail, CA Coastal Trail, De Anza NHT) connect the

site to larger network. Horseback riding would be retained as part of a NP experience and characteristic of the area's heritage...

Look for opportunity for multi-agency visitor center...

Cultural Resources – No presently considered nationally-significant, but some existing structures could be preserved to support public uses and park operations

Natural Resources – Maintain the open, natural setting of the largest NPS unit in the county, and enhance area ecology to protect sensitive species

"Common" (*with different emphases*)

Shelldance: Site shared by park operations and visitor/stewardship programs

Trails: Interconnect the sites managed by NPS and other organizations – emphasis on BART and enhancing extensive system that is a national (international) model

SFPUC Watershed Easements: No major change – continue to support recreation along 280/Sawyer Camp Trail (Scenic Corridor), and Natural zone across remainder.