

THE
FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Golden Spike National Historic Site

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: GOSP

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

By the National Park Service centennial in 2016, the vision of a country united by transcontinental rails will have new relevance to a public that enjoys, supports, and understands the resources and values of Golden Spike National Historic Site. Fresh opportunities to experience and discover meaning in heritage resources will engage new audiences, young people, and partners. As stewards of an American legacy, Golden Spike NHS will advance resource preservation efforts, arrive at recreation and tourism destinations, and connect people with exceptional experiences that enrich their lives. The NPS will operate Golden Spike NHS with an excellence worthy of the resources entrusted to its care.

The desire to link the east and west coasts grew out of a belief in American ingenuity and Manifest Destiny. Dreams of expanding America's world influence culminated at Promontory Summit on May 10, 1869, with the completion of the first transcontinental railroad. A nation anxious to heal from the Civil War celebrated the "Golden Spike" as the symbol of a unified continent. The transcontinental rails propelled the industrial revolution across the West, transforming the United States forever. People and products could safely cross the country in five days rather than five months. The railroad rushed passengers and goods westward, and fed eastern appetites for raw material. The Union Pacific and Central Pacific were the harbingers of both the "Gilded Age," where money not birth-right drove social standing, and the class conflict of later decades.

Partners, familiar and new, will find active and meaningful engagement in centennial projects. Along 15 miles of well maintained grades, the marvels of 19th century railroad engineering, construction, and operation will be accessible, interpreted, and preserved with 21st century expertise. A multi-grade "Crossroads of the West" curriculum will drive students to new educational summits. Adding 1.5 miles of rails, raising the "hell on wheels" tent city, and running the locomotives will draw visitors back to the time of opportunity that raced across Promontory Summit in 1869. Land acquisitions and a new General Management Plan will help protect the historic scene and National Register listed cultural landscape. Acting on these Centennial goals, employees at Golden Spike NHS will set an example in resource stewardship, connect with more diverse audiences, and manage the resources entrusted to the National Park Service with excellenc

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Margaret A. Johnston - Superintendent

Site: GOSP

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Rehabilitate high-priority historic buildings to good condition, and help communities to preserve their history through programs like Preserve America.

Golden Spike National Historic Site will be a model for the preservation and maintenance of historic resources and cultural landscapes. Along 15 miles of railroad grades there are 55 sites and over 700 structures; most of which are associated with the construction and operation of the nation's first transcontinental railroad, and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The condition of the cultural landscape and associated structures will improve by adding about 2 miles of rails to the historic railroad grade. Maintenance of the restored roadbed, rails, culverts, and trestles will be more sustainable than currently possible. The project will also enhance the experience for visitors who will see the replica locomotives operate on additional track away from the developed visitor center.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: GOSP

RECREATION

Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

Rehabilitate over 2,000 miles of trails within or connected to national parks, including trails accessible to those with disabilities.

The National Park Service will maintain 2 auto tours and a 1/2 mile trail on segments of the historic railroad grade at Golden Spike NHS in good condition. On the West Auto Tour a stronger connection with the BLM managed Scenic By-Way could expand recreational opportunities.

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RECREATION

Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

Increase visitation by 25 percent at lesser-known parks through a national tourism effort aimed at helping people to discover the breadth of parks and experiences.

The National Park Service will continue collaborative efforts with the Box Elder County Tourism Office, Crossroads of the West National Historic District in Ogden, and the state designated Bear River Heritage Area to promote the Golden Spike NHS, increase visitation, and encourage economic development in local communities.

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Site: GOSP

EDUCATION

Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Golden Spike NHS will develop a multi-grade curriculum with partners from local schools, universities, and the Crossroads of the West National Historic District in Ogden, Utah, to tell the story behind the image selected for the Utah twenty-five cent piece. The "Crossroads" curriculum will help children appreciate the history and significance of the transcontinental railroad and why this vital story is relevant to their American heritage. Interactive links to web-based activities will promote distance learning opportunities and enhance the direct experiences at Golden Spike NHS and the Crossroads NHD.

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Site: GOSP

EDUCATION

Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

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EDUCATION

Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.

Enroll an additional two million children in the Junior Ranger program.

Golden Spike NHS will work with the Western National Parks Association on an expanded "Junior Ranger" program to replace the existing "Junior Engineer" program. The new program will link with servicewide promotional efforts, and assure that more children are exposed to a breadth of conservation, preservation, and stewardship values.

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Site: GOSP

EDUCATION

Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.

Golden Spike NHS will rehabilitate visitor center exhibits and media to increase access and enjoyment of park facilities. The construction and operation of the nation's first transcontinental railroad is a complex collection of experience and hardships. Many stories have been told to varying levels and professional backgrounds. Golden Spike National Historic site strives to present a well rounded interpretation of history that tells the stories of an important part of the American experience.

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