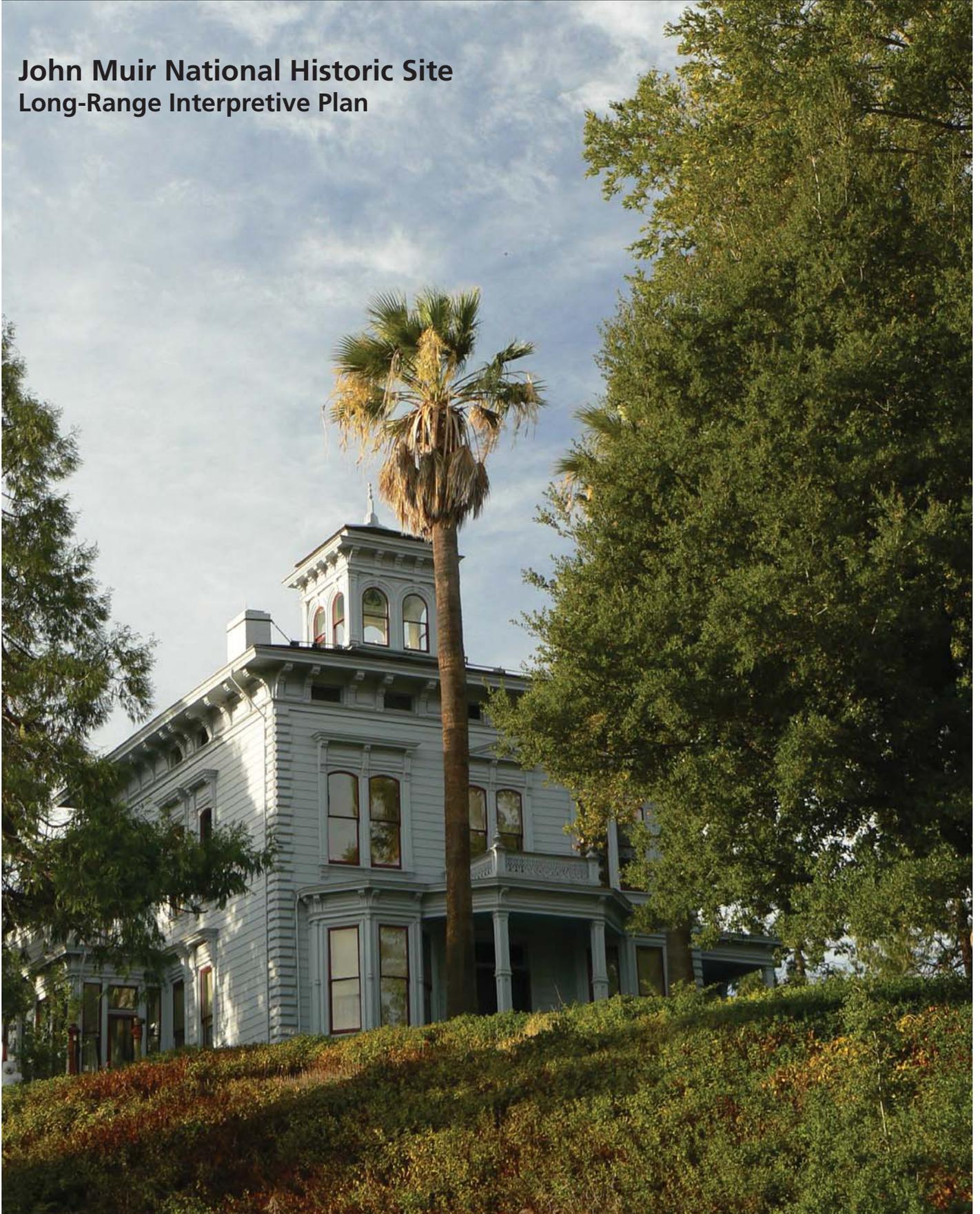




John Muir National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan



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Introduction

John Muir (1838-1914) stands as one of the galvanizing forces in the late 19th- and early 20th-century drive to conserve and protect America's wild lands from exploitation by a nation intent on "progress" and prosperity in a booming industrial age. In his writings and personal connections with national leaders, including President Theodore Roosevelt, Muir championed the stupendous beauty of such landscapes as Yosemite. Although Yosemite had been a California state park since 1864 (and Muir had first visited in 1868), Muir campaigned successfully to get Yosemite protected as one of the earliest national parks in the U.S.

Muir went on to co-found a local group called the Sierra Club, now recognized as one of the world's leading conservation organizations. In 1901, he published an influential book, *Our National Parks*, compiling articles he had written for the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine about Yellowstone, Yosemite, Sequoia, and General Grant (now part of Kings Canyon) National Parks – each set aside individually by special, hard-fought legislation. In 1916, two years after Muir's death, the U.S. formally created the National Park Service.

John Muir National Historic Site

At John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez, California, visitors can see the Victorian home, grounds, and a small portion of the 2,600 acres of fruit orchards and oak woodlands where Muir lived, wrote, farmed, and raised his family from 1890 until his death in 1914. Today the site consists of three separate parcels of land within an approximately one-mile radius:

- the 14-room house and 8.9 acres, including an 1849 adobe house (the Martinez Adobe) on the southwest edge of the property;
- Mt. Wanda, a steep, 326-acre grass and oak woodland open to hikers and horseback riders; and
- the small Muir family cemetery, situated in a residential neighborhood at the foot of Mt. Wanda.

The Long-Range Interpretive Plan

Within the planning hierarchy of the National Park Service, a Long-Range Interpretive Plan provides guidance for a site's interpretive programming – the site's key messages, stories, and desired visitor experiences – for the next seven to ten years. Together with an Annual Implementation Plan and an Interpretive Database, the Long-Range Interpretive Plan completes a park's Comprehensive Interpretive Plan.

Accordingly, this plan identifies park themes, describes visitor experience goals, and recommends a wide variety of personal and non-personal interpretive services and outreach activities that will best communicate the park's purpose, significance and themes.

Work on the plan began in February, 2006, when an interpretive planner from Harpers Ferry Center met with park staff and facilitated an initial community workshop. Subsequently, the park and Harpers Ferry Center sought additional services from a contracted consultant team to complete the plan. The consultant team conducted a stakeholder open house and workshop on November 19-20, 2008, followed by a recommendations workshop on August 5, 2009.

Barring legislative changes or major new revelations, the foundational elements expressed in this document – purpose, significance, themes, and visitor experience goals – are expected to remain constant over the life of the plan. Specific recommendations about media and programs may need to be updated as staffing, funding, technology, or resource conditions change. Further design documents must be produced to implement some of the goals and recommendations in this plan.

Executive Summary

Since 1964, when the historic Alhambra Valley estate and orchards once operated by John Muir came under the protection of the National Park Service, this small, moderately attended site has had notable success in preserving historic structures and re-assembling important parcels of land, including the Muir family cemetery and the undeveloped 326-acre expanse of Mt. Wanda.

But the site has also suffered some disappointments. A busy freeway bisects the property, separating the Victorian mansion from the pastoral heights of Mt. Wanda. The property entrance and parking lot on Alhambra Avenue remain inadequate. An ambitious plan to fund an environmental education and interpretive center has been unsuccessful. Perhaps most significantly, interpretation and visitor experiences have been adversely impacted over the years by inadequate space for visitors, limited staff, and the inherent contradictions of using a Victorian house with period furnishings as the primary vehicle for interpreting the extraordinary life and accomplishments of John Muir.

This Long-Range Interpretive Plan offers guidance for enriching interpretive programming and improving visitor experiences with John Muir National Historic Site over the next ten years. The plan proposes short-, mid- and long-term strategies, including rethinking the current historic house approach and refurbishing the existing visitor center, to revitalize the site's interpretive program in support of three primary interpretive themes.

In a series of workshops with stakeholders, including volunteers, donors, educators, community leaders, and members of the Muir family, the planning team identified the following themes as central to the visitor experience at John Muir National Historic Site.

Primary Themes

- John Muir, a self-educated immigrant from Scotland, became an eloquent, persuasive writer who championed the emerging conservation movement in late 19th- and early 20th-century America. His life story, including both its successes and conflicts, offers inspiring evidence that one individual can make a difference through thoughtful, determined actions over time.
- We can better understand how John Muir achieved national stature as an influential writer and conservationist by examining and understanding his home and family life in Martinez.
- The Strentzel-Muir estate and its surroundings illustrate the immigrant history and changing landscape of the Alhambra Valley.

Recommendations for Interpretation

Short-term (1-3 years) recommendations include:

- Making a series of interior improvements to the visitor center, including possibly moving the park offices elsewhere, to expand the bookstore and public areas and create a less cluttered, more welcoming space for visitor use;
- Initiating consistent outreach efforts to the community and the region through local supporters and organizations such as the John Muir Association, the Sierra Club, and other Muir-focused NPS units (Yosemite National Park, Muir Woods National Monument);
- Increasing the frequency and variety of ranger-led interpretation;
- Updating all park publications, creating site bulletins on specific locations, and upgrading the park website; and
- Adding Student Temporary Employment Program and Teacher-Ranger-Teacher employees to assist in interpretation, education, and outreach

Mid-term (4-6 years) recommendations include:

- De-accessioning many of the generic period pieces in the Strentzel-Muir house and repurposing some of the rooms into display spaces or reading areas, so that visitors and interpreters alike focus less on a traditional historic house tour and more on theme-driven interpretation about John Muir's philosophy and accomplishments;
- Developing grade-appropriate, standards-based K-12 curriculum guides;
- Creating interpretive waysides on the park grounds, using creative approaches that respect the cultural landscape;
- Creating self-guided, web-accessible tour materials for use on visitors' personal devices; and
- Increasing staff capacity to enable the site to be open seven days a week.

Long-term (7-10 years) recommendations include:

- Expanding educational offerings and hiring an education specialist;
- Continuing the strategy of repurposing of spaces on the site to support theme-based interpretation;
- Exploring the creation of John Muir National Historic Site exhibit space and kiosk in downtown Martinez; and
- Working with the John Muir Association to explore possibilities for a future education/interpretation center on Strain Ranch property.



Foundation for Planning

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play and pray in, where Nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul alike."

- John Muir
"The Yosemite"

The foundation for interpretive planning includes the enabling legislation creating a park, park purpose and significance statements, previous interpretive planning and comprehensive management plan documents, primary interpretive themes, visitor uses, desired visitor experiences, issues and influences affecting interpretation, existing interpretive conditions, public input, and other relevant information from park resources, friends groups and other supporters, and the larger community.

Legislative Background

John Muir National Historic Site was established as a result of Public Law 88-547, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson in August 1964:

The property acquired under this Act shall be designated as the John Muir National Historic Site and shall be set aside as a public national memorial to John Muir in recognition of his efforts as a conservationist and a crusader for national parks and reservations.

The legislation was amended by Public Law 100-563 in October 1988, authorizing the expansion of the park by approximately 340 additional acres, including two parcels of land on Mt. Wanda, a small tract previously owned by the city of Martinez, and the nearby Strentzel-Muir family grave site.

Park Purpose and Significance

Park Purpose statements describe why an area was set aside as a unit of the national park system and what specific purpose exists for the area today. Purpose statements may reflect traditional purposes of preservation and enjoyment, linkages between the management unit and its cultural

and natural resources, connections with groups and areas external to the park, and the language of the enabling legislation.

The following Purpose Statement draws on the statement developed for the most recent Strategic Plan for John National Historic Site (October 1, 2007 – September 30, 2011), with amendments based on input obtained from stakeholders during the foundation workshops held for this Long-Range Interpretive Plan.

Purpose Statement:

John Muir National Historic Site preserves and protects the Martinez, California, house and grounds where John Muir lived from 1890 until his death in 1914, as a public national memorial in recognition of Muir's legacy as a conservationist and a crusader for national parks and reservations.

Park Significance statements describe the distinctiveness of the combined resources of a particular park unit. These statements can reflect upon natural, cultural, scientific, recreational, inspirational, and other resources. The statements embody the power of the place through a factual representation of what makes this place special, and summarize the essence of the importance of this park's resources to the nation's natural and cultural heritage. Significances may evolve over time as a result of discoveries and updates to our knowledge about this place.

The following Park Significance statements, derived in part from the interpretive planning workshops held in 2006, were redrafted and refined based on input obtained during the 2008 workshops for this plan.

Significance Statements:

John Muir National Historic Site has national significance for the following reasons:

- This national historic site preserves the home and a portion of the land holdings where John Muir, one of America’s most prominent naturalists and conservationists, lived for 24 years and wrote many of his most persuasive and important literary works to encourage U.S. policies protecting wilderness and creating a national park system.
- Through his founding of the Sierra Club and his influence in protecting Yosemite and other national parks, John Muir’s leadership and accomplishments continue to influence public perception and political action on wilderness areas and other environmental issues today.
- The contrasting landscapes of the John Muir National Historic Site – 19th-century vernacular adobe to high-style Victorian home, the manipulated mosaic of Mt Wanda, managed agricultural lands, and the streamside setting of the Muir gravesite – express the continuum of California land use and settlement from Native American times to the present.

Primary Interpretive Themes

Primary interpretive themes are the key stories, concepts, and ideas of a park that relate to the park’s purpose and significance. These themes create a foundation for educating visitors about the park and encouraging them to form intellectual and emotional connections with park resources. A park’s primary themes are all of equal importance and form the backbone of the interpretive program.

The following interpretive themes for John Muir National Historic Site were initiated following a workshop in the spring of 2006 and further refined after stakeholder workshops held in November 2008.

Primary Theme:

John Muir, a self-educated immigrant from Scotland, became an eloquent, persuasive writer who championed the emerging conservation movement in late 19th- and early 20th-century America. His life story, including both its successes and conflicts, offers inspiring evidence that one individual can make a difference through thoughtful, determined actions over time.

Subthemes:

- John Muir’s views were a guiding force behind the creation of the



Strentzel-Muir House and grounds in the Alhambra Valley



Muir in the scribble den

National Park Service as well as the Sierra Club.

- Muir’s conservation legacy is a continuum extending from the creation of our nation’s first national parks to the environmental and conservation movements of today.
- Muir’s views about protecting wild areas were shaped by his own “tramping” (his description) and camping experiences in Yosemite and other wild places, and by his witnessing first-hand the destruction of natural areas in the name of progress: damming rivers, logging old-growth forests, mining, and other activities aimed at extracting natural resources for human use.
- Muir’s scientific study and writings on nature and the environment inspires people at all levels of society to see what he saw and unite in a common purpose to protect America’s wild places.

Primary Theme:

We can better understand how John Muir achieved national stature as an influential writer and conservationist by examining and understanding his home and family life in Martinez.

Subthemes:

- Through visiting John Muir’s home and gravesite, we can better understand the complex, multi-faceted personality – family man, business man, writer, horticulturalist, community activist, adventurer, friend, and more – behind the legend.

- Muir’s hard work on his father-in-law’s ranch brought him the financial independence he needed to pursue his goals, and his frequent absences from home, though accepted and supported by his wife and family, were quite unusual for the time.
- The interconnected stories of John Muir and his father-in-law, Dr. Strentzel, and their descendents are revealing examples of the American immigrant experience.
- Muir’s younger years in Scotland are also pivotal to understanding the man he became.

Primary Theme:

The Strentzel-Muir estate and its surroundings illustrate the immigrant history and changing landscape of the Alhambra Valley.

Subthemes:

- The Martinez Adobe, built in 1849, offers a historic window into Spanish American history.
- The grounds and gardens surrounding Muir’s home offer a unique glimpse into the Alhambra Valley’s agricultural past, juxtaposed against the modern suburban landscape surrounding the estate.
- The landscape of Mt. Wanda, named for John Muir’s daughter, remains a natural landscape for recreation and contemplation just as in Muir’s day.
- The Muir estate contains old olive groves and other distinctive trees and plants cultivated and/or planted by John Muir.

Visitor Experience Goals

When visitors come to this historic site, interpretive programming and materials should enable each visitor to experience some level of physical, intellectual, and emotional connection with the meanings and resources here. This connecting experience should be available to visitors of all abilities and backgrounds, including those with visual, auditory, mobility, or cognitive challenges.

The following visitor experience goals were developed during workshops held in 2006 and 2008, with analysis and grouping by the current interpretive planning consultant team.

Visitors to John Muir National Historic Site should have these opportunities:

- Discover and appreciate John Muir’s intense and passionate views, as expressed in his writings, about the value of wild lands and nature’s beauty.
- See where and what John Muir wrote (including purchasing copies of these materials), as well as authentic artifacts from his life.
- Learn basic information about John Muir’s life journey and his most significant conservation accomplishments.
- Explore how John Muir and his family lived (sit where he sat, see the vista he saw, hear readings of his works), and from this experience, imagine how Muir’s home environment in Martinez supported his wide-ranging conservation activities.
- View the Strentzel-Muir estate and Mt. Wanda in a historical context as part of a northern California landscape that has changed dramatically.

- Gain insight and inspiration about the power of individual and collective actions and beliefs from the worldwide conservation legacy left to us by John Muir.
- Advance their knowledge of local, national, contemporary, and international conservation issues today, while gaining inspiration to become good stewards of natural and wilderness areas for future generations.
- Feel a sense of awe and inspiration about the natural world and Muir’s role in protecting and preserving spectacular places.
- Find a place of quiet and solitude to connect to the natural world as John Muir did.

Visitor Data

John Muir National Historic Site logged a total of 34,516 recreational visits in FY2009. During some 15,675 of these encounters, visitors used the trails on Mt. Wanda, compared to 18,841 visits to the main park site. About 3,240 of the FY2009 visitors came to the site during special events, in particular the John Muir Earth Day Birthday celebration (by far the largest event) and two smaller festivals. Almost 4,000 students visited as part of school tour groups.

According to previous reports, on-site visitors fluctuated from 23,000 to 39,000 people per year during the 1990s (Interpretive Prospectus, 1996, page 8); including 29,000 people each year for 1976 and 1977; and averaged approximately 28,000 per year for calendar years 2004, 2005, and 2006 (IP Foundation Draft, September 2007).

Some 3,500 school children visit the site annually as part of formal school groups. The majority of the students are third- and fourth-grade students studying California history. Teachers



Ranger led tour of Mt. Wanda

and students come to the site seeking a connection between what they are learning in the classroom and the historic site. Although specific child-friendly programs are offered to the groups, the site lacks a curriculum-based program that connects directly to California state Board of Education standards.

According to NPS Monthly Public Use Reports for the site, peak visitation occurs in April most years, with visitors (including school groups) totaling 4,676 in April 2008, 4,461 in April 2007, and 3,626 in April 2006. However, visitation fluctuates quite significantly throughout the other months; for example, January 2007 showed 1,684 visitors, while March 2007 had 2,914 – but July 2007 showed only 1,737.

Other visitor data come from a Visitor Study from the Park Studies Unit (University of Idaho) in Spring-Summer 2007, with survey information obtained in a systematic random sample of 248 visitor groups between May 28 and August 5. In this study, 81% of the visitors were from California, 47% of the groups were local residents, and 62% were visiting for the first time. Slightly more than half were family

groups, and 62% of all the survey participants were over 46 years old. A key limitation of this study was that survey participation was voluntary and self-administered, with surveys returned by mail several weeks after their on-site distribution.

Both the formal Park Studies Unit survey and informal observations from park staff confirm that, aside from regular hikers and equestrians using Mt. Wanda, many local visitors are often spurred to come when they have friends or relatives visiting from out of town.

Furthermore, the formal survey’s findings about visitors’ ages also conform to park staff observations: The younger cohort of visitors constitute the smallest segment of visitors to John Muir National Historic Site. Making connections with 9- to 46-year-old visitors is a primary goal of this site, as younger visitors will provide future stewardship and community engagement.

Anecdotal and survey data confirm that visitors typically spend up to two hours visiting the site, and weekends draw fewer visitors than weekdays.

2009 VISITATION STATISTICS			
	2009	2008	% Change
Overall Visitation			
Total Recreation Visits	34,516	28,770	20
Main Park Site Visitors	18,841	15,027	25.4
Mt. Wanda Visitors	15,675	13,743	14.1
Non-recreation Visitors	2,132	1,797	18.6
Visitation Types			
Special Events Visitors	3,240	2,752	17.7
School Group Tour Students	3,998	3,196	25.1
Other Group Tour Visitors	2,422	2,134	13.5
Gravesite Visitors	55	9	511.1
Nature Walk Attendees	404	257	57.2
Environmental Living Program Attendees	223	222	0.5
Buses	44	45	2.2
Visitors Viewing Film	10,785	8,299	30
Junior Ranger Attendance	304	169	79.9
Age 18 and Under Visitors	6,146	4,770	28.8
Off-Site Programs	6	0	100
Off-Site Program Attendance	944	0	100

Management Goals

Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Management Goals

The 1993 Government Performance and Results Act requires that federal agencies establish standards for measuring performance and effectiveness. The law requires federal agencies to develop strategic plans describing their overall goals and objectives, annual performance plans containing quantifiable measures of their progress, and performance reports describing their success in meeting those standards and measures.

The mission goals for John Muir National Historic Site were prepared in 2008 as part of the planning process required by the Government Performance and Results Act. In addition to goals related to resource and visitor protection, some goals relate specifically to interpretation and visitor services.

John Muir National Historic Site Mission Goals 11a1 and 11b1 relate to interpretation and visitor services:

Mission Goal IIa1:

By September 30, 2012, 88% of visitors to John Muir National Historic Site will be satisfied with appropriate park facilities, services, and recreational opportunities.

In FY2008, 92% of visitors surveyed were satisfied.

Mission Goal IIb1:

By September 30, 2012, 90% of John Muir National Historic Site visitors will understand the significance of the park.

In FY2008, 84% of visitors surveyed understood the significance of the park.

According to the 2008 data, John Muir National Historic Site is currently exceeding the goal projection for visitor satisfaction and has not yet met the goal for visitor understanding.

Other Planning Considerations

Muir Descendents

In addition to input from a wide range of community stakeholders, John Muir National Historic Site enjoys a unique relationship with several Muir family members who are direct descendents of John Muir. These family members are highly respected and valued partners with the John Muir National Historic Site, and their advice is sought on any significant or long-term plans or changes involving the Muir site. The surviving Muir descendents also own many family heirlooms, and their Hanna-Muir Trust retains the copyright to all unpublished works by John Muir, including those held by the University of the Pacific.

The John Muir Association

The John Muir Association, founded as the John Muir Memorial Association in 1956 to preserve the John Muir home, now functions as the friends group for John Muir National Historic Site.

In the late 1990s, the John Muir Association launched a \$2.2 million fundraising campaign to build a new visitor education center at John Muir National Historic Site, including a repository for its recently acquired Kimes collection.

Unfortunately, this fundraising effort has fallen short of its goal to date. As of December 2009, campaign solicitation materials remained on the John Muir Association website.

The Western National Parks Association

The Western National Parks Association, the cooperating association that runs the bookstore at John Muir National Historic Site, also supports staffing and interpretive projects.

John Muir National Historic Site General Management Plan

A General Management Plan was prepared for John Muir National Historic Site in 1991. The site is currently on a waiting list to create an updated plan.

The Muir Heritage Land Trust

The Muir Heritage Land Trust, founded in 1988, is a membership organization focusing on land preservation and environmental education in Contra Costa County. The trust was pivotal in helping the NPS obtain the Mt. Wanda addition to John Muir National Historic Site. The trust also sponsors projects of an alternative-school program for high-school students, The New Leaf: A Sustainable Living Collaborative, an expansion of the local school district's Environmental Studies Academy. New Leaf program leaders and participants have expressed strong interest in service learning projects for its students at John Muir National Historic Site.

Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail

The Anza National Historic Trail auto tour route follows Highway 4 and passes near the site. Through a cooperative arrangement with the historic trail, the first floor of the Martinez Adobe at John Muir National Historic Site has been converted to serve as an exhibit space for the Trail. An extensive exhibit that presents the story of the settling of California by Spanish colonists will be placed in the adobe in 2010. The completed exhibit will enrich the visitor experience for followers of the Anza Trail, add a new dimension to visitors' understanding of the history of the Strentzel-Muir ranch, and provide opportunities to complement California history as studied by third- and fourth-grade students in California schools.



Existing Conditions

"But in every walk with Nature one receives far more than he seeks."

- John Muir
"Steep Trails"

In the first decade of the 21st century, John Muir National Historic Site exists within a densely developed, cluttered landscape of low-rise commercial enterprises (gas stations, main post office, Class B office space) along a heavily traveled four-lane commuter road (Alhambra Avenue). The site is divided by Highway 4, which separates the house and grounds from the family cemetery and the oak woodlands of Mt. Wanda. A pedestrian tunnel under the highway connects Mt. Wanda to the house site; this tunnel emerges near a gate at the rear of the site just beyond the Martinez Adobe. Above-ground connections for an underground petroleum pipeline are visible just outside this gate.

Due to budget and staffing limitations, John Muir National Historic Site is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Pre-visit and Arrival Information

Media Outreach

Before special events and Mt. Wanda walks are held, John Muir National Historic Site staff send out public service announcements to local radio and television stations and news

releases to area print media. Fliers are distributed at libraries, senior centers, and schools throughout central and south Contra Costa County and southern Solano County.

Personal Services

On request, park staff provides potential visitors with a trip planner packet including park information, area lodging, dining and other community services and points of interest. Visitors request packets by email, letter, or phone call.

Directional and Wayfinding Signs

Two brown NPS signs direct visitors to the site from Highway 4 near the Alhambra Avenue exit.

Website

The park website (www.nps.gov/jomu) provides general park information for potential visitors (i.e. directions, park hours, types of activities, facilities). Selections from the museum collections are also included in the website, providing a virtual exhibit for those interested in further details and images of Muir and his life (www.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/jomu). Other links connect visitors to the John Muir Papers held in the Holt-Atherton Special Collections at the University of the Pacific (<http://library.pacific.edu/ha/digital/index.asp>) and to the John Muir Exhibit on the Sierra Club website (http://www.sierraclub.org/JOHN_MUIR_EXHIBIT/).



Strentzel-Muir Home

Sites and Facilities for Interpretation

The Strentzel-Muir Home

First and foremost among the site's interpretive facilities is the historic Strentzel-Muir house itself. Built in 1882 by Dr. John Strentzel, whose daughter Louie married John Muir, this elaborate Victorian mansion is not at all what visitors might expect as the residence of America's best-known

naturalist. The disconnect between Muir’s elegant middle-class home and his life’s work presents unique interpretive challenges.

Between the time of Muir’s death in 1914 and the creation of the John Muir National Historic Site in 1964, the Strentzel-Muir house had several different owners, and the Muir family survivors (daughters Wanda and Helen) had long since removed all family furnishings. Beginning in the 1960s, NPS curatorial personnel furnished

the house using period pieces from 1906 to 1914. With the exception of the upstairs “Scribble Den,” Muir’s name for his study, and documented knowledge of certain family artworks, no photographic or inventory records exist to guide this effort. Therefore, the appearance and furnishings of all rooms except Muir’s study are speculative, based on what might have been typical in homes of the time.

The Grounds

The landscape immediately surrounding the Strentzel-Muir house offers visitors a microcosm of the family’s extended fruit orchards 100 years ago. Based on the Cultural Landscape Report completed in 2005, park employees have planted representational orchard trees and explored ways to rehabilitate the orchard landscape in a manageable, self-sustaining way. Accordingly, the site’s small orchards now include heritage species of almond, apricot, cherry, orange, peach, pear, plum, prune, and walnut trees, as well as a small vineyard of wine grapes.

In addition to the fruit plants, the site contains several individual trees that Muir may have planted himself, including a giant sequoia and three different types of cedar, as well as Washington and Canary Island palm trees that may have been planted by Dr. Strentzel.

A small carriage house sits on the grounds to the northwest facing the front of the house. In 2009, this structure housed an ornate horse-drawn carriage donated by a local family, an assortment of period farm implements, and a small interpretive sign. These artifacts are confined behind a barrier that allows visitors to look but not touch.

A reconstructed windmill (now powered by an electric pump) stands behind the carriage house to represent



Park Grounds



Martinez Adobe

the former windmill-powered water pumping system that irrigated the orchards during Muir's day.

The Martinez Adobe

This two-story adobe brick house sits near the back property line of the present-day historic site. Built by Don Vicente Martinez, son of the commandante of the Presidio of San Francisco, in 1849, the adobe and surrounding acreage passed through several owners before Dr. John Strentzel (who would become

Muir's father-in-law) bought it in 1874. Dr. Strentzel used the adobe as a storeroom and a residence for his orchard foreman. Although John Muir and his wife never lived in the adobe, their daughter Wanda and her husband, Thomas Hanna, lived in the adobe with their children for many years.

In 2009, the Martinez Adobe held a small number of panel exhibits and artifacts related to the Martinez family and describing the chronological history of the Muir property through the Native American, Spanish and Mexican periods, as well as several large pictorial panels featuring Muir quotations and photographs of places most closely associated with Muir's conservation efforts.

However, an agreement with the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail will result in the installation of Anza Trail exhibits in the Martinez Adobe in the spring of 2010.

The Visitor Center

A small, architecturally undistinguished one-story former veterinary clinic alongside busy Alhambra Avenue has served as the visitor center for John Muir National Historic Site since the site first opened to the public in the 1960s. The building has a small parking lot that will accommodate one bus and fewer than 20 cars. A tall, forbidding fence separates the Muir grounds from the parking lot and the front entrance to the visitor center. Traffic noise is loud and constant.

In an effort to improve visitors' initial impressions of the visitor center and entrance walkway, the California Native Plant Society and a consortium of supporters recently installed a California native plant garden on three sides of the visitor center.

The site is a U.S. fee area. Entrance fees are \$3 per adult, and children under age 15 are free.



John Muir NHS Visitor Center



Mt. Wanda

Inside the building, a cramped, low-ceilinged, poorly lit space houses staff offices; the main information desk and visitor information, including printed tour materials and brochures; bookstore/gift shop racks; and a very small display area. A larger room in the rear of the building serves as a meeting space, a gallery for local artworks, and a viewing space where visitors can watch a 22-minute interpretive video before exiting the back door to tour the site.

The 1991 General Management Plan recommended construction of a new, 5,000-square-foot visitor center, and the 1996 Interpretive Prospectus offered suggestions about what the new visitor center's interpretive media might entail. As previously mentioned, the John Muir Association began a capital campaign on behalf of a new visitor education center in the late 1990s, but the effort has not raised sufficient funds.

Mt. Wanda

Located across Highway 4 from the Strentzel-Muir house, Mt. Wanda (named for one of Muir's two daughters) is a 326-acre preserve of oak woodlands and grassland where Muir and his family once enjoyed family hikes. Moderately steep trails open to hikers and horseback riders lead to the top of the 660-foot-high expanse. From the top, visitors can see an almost unobstructed 360-degree view of the surrounding area.

Mt. Wanda is open from sunrise to sunset seven days a week.

Recreational Facilities

John Muir National Historic Site is designated for day-use only, with no overnight camping either at the house site or on Mt. Wanda. The site includes several picnic areas on the house grounds, as well as a picnic area at Mt. Wanda (but no bathrooms). Day-use visitors can enjoy hiking, bird watching, and horseback riding on the trails leading up and around Mt. Wanda.

Interpretive Programming

Interpretive programming at John Muir National Historic Site currently depends almost entirely on personal services provided by rangers and docents, self-guided tours, and one 22-minute interpretive film.

Personal Services

Interpretive staffing for FY2009 included two permanent positions and four temporary positions (a part-time visitor use assistant and three seasonal employee), with staff duties supplemented by volunteers.

The interpretive division was reorganized in FY2007. Today, management support for John Muir National Historic Site is shared with three other NPS sites in the area: Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park, Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site, and the Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial.

For All Audiences

Most visitors enter at the visitor center, spend time watching the interpretive film, and then explore the house and grounds using the self-guided tour brochure. Typically, at least one volunteer is on duty at the house, but visitors are free to walk through its rooms unsupervised.

Interpretive rangers and some volunteers offer regularly scheduled tours of the house and grounds for non-educational groups on Wednesday and Friday at 2:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.; tours are typically 30 minutes long. (Groups of more than 10 are advised to call ahead for reservations.) However, adequate staff coverage for the visitor center, house, and grounds is always a concern.



NPS Ranger guiding park visitors

Rangers also offer guided wildflower walks, bird walks, and full-moon walks on Mt. Wanda during the spring and early summer months by reservation only (maximum 60 attendees per walk).

Special Programs for Youth/ Educational Groups

- School Groups:** Approximately 12% of the park's visitation is school children, primarily third- and fourth-graders. Due to limited staff and room capacities in the Muir House and visitor center, school group tours are by reservation only. Upon their arrival, the class receives a welcome and orientation from a ranger or volunteer, sees the 22-minute orientation film, and then receives a ranger- or volunteer-guided tour of the Muir home. Rangers may also lead school groups in walks up Mt. Wanda. School programs are informal in nature; there is no formal or overt connection made by the park to California State Curriculum Standards. One problem cited repeatedly in conversations with staff is that there is no interior gathering space, other than the visitor center film venue, that is large enough to accommodate groups with more than 35 people.
- Environmental Education Program:** A curriculum-based environmental education program is offered one day a week from mid-April through early June to a total of approximately 300 third- and fourth- grade students (20 to 30 students per group) from Martinez, Concord, Walnut Creek, and other surrounding communities. Learning stations are set up in designated areas throughout the historic site, with students rotating to each location for hands-on activities designed to encourage an appreciation for the accomplishments, life, and legacy of John Muir at his Martinez home.



NPS Ranger making Solar S'Mores with Jr. Rangers

- Junior Ranger Program:** John Muir National Historic Site also offers a self-guided brochure for young visitors. The materials invite young visitors (ages eight to 13) to participate in the NPS-wide Junior Ranger program. Some 225 to 230 children participate in the site's Junior Ranger activities each year. Participants engage in up to 10 learning activities, including starting a Muir Ranger Journal, taking a Muir Ranger Pledge, and providing three ways to help the park in a section called "Whose Job Is It?" Other activities include looking for specific objects in the Muir house and the park; drawing park trees, birds and flowers; doing a word search; and answering questions based on exhibits. Two of the activities take place on Mt. Wanda, where children are encouraged to explore the surroundings with their families. While no formal assessments have been performed to evaluate the program's effectiveness, the response from individual participants and their parents seems to be extremely positive.

Interpretive/Educational Outreach

- John Muir Mountain Day Camp:** Now in its eighth year, this summer day camp for elementary school students (co-sponsored by the John Muir Association and the NPS) has been conducted at the John Muir National Historic Site since 2004. The camp runs for two weeks each summer for a fee of \$250 per child, which covers the cost of running the camp (supplies and staff). The camp does not report any net income.
- Park staff members also provide off-site programs to schools and community organizations on request.



John Muir Earth Day/
Birthday

Special Events

John Muir National Historic Site has hosted several special events annually over the years. Today the NPS staff focuses primarily on the John Muir Earth Day Birthday event.

- **The John Muir Earth Day Birthday** event, hosted cooperatively with the John Muir Association, is by far the largest event at the site. Held each year on Earth Day Saturday (which coincides with John Muir's birthday), this event attracted more than 40 exhibitors and 2,300 attendees in 2009. Visitors enjoy music, food, a John Muir living history character, and exhibit tents staffed by non-profit organizations, community groups, and other National Park Service units. The park provides a ranger-led nature walk for the public, as well as volunteer- or ranger-led tours of the Muir home throughout the day. In 2007, the festival expanded from having activities solely on the grounds of the historic site to staging events throughout the community.
- **Muir Heritage Ranch Day**, sponsored in past years by the John Muir Association, celebrated the fall harvest and the fruit ranching heritage of the Muir family. The event included demonstrations of crafts and activities from the period, food, music, and hands-on participation by audience members. The park provided ranger-led and volunteer-led tours of the Muir home, as well as ranger demonstrations of such activities as baking cornbread in the outdoor oven. The last Muir Heritage Ranch Day occurred in 2006.
- **The Muir Family Christmas** in early December honored a holiday tradition originating with the Muir family, with a branch of California

bay laurel decorated with period ornaments and standing in for a Christmas tree. Holiday tours were offered to the community.

Volunteer Program

John Muir National Historic Site maintains a Volunteer-In-Parks program to enhance the interpretive mission of the park. Typically, 20 to 30 volunteers help staff the Muir House throughout the year. A few volunteers (fewer than five) conduct formal interpretive programs to school or other scheduled groups. The site has an annual \$3,000 Volunteer-In-Parks program allotment from the region to cover uniform costs, supplies, and VIP recognition awards and gifts.

Interpretive Media

As of December 2009, interpretive media offerings at John Muir National Historic Site consist of one interpretive video, several wayside signs, an assortment of encased artifacts and small displays, a site brochure, a self-guided tour booklet, trail maps for Mt. Wanda, and a number of loose-leaf one-page handouts that are also distributed online and by mail as curriculum guides for teachers.

Audiovisual Media

The site's 22-minute interpretive film, produced in 2005, sets a new standard for the site with an engrossing, humanizing portrayal of Muir, as well as high-definition video, captions, assisted hearing devices, and audio for the visually impaired.

Wayside Exhibits

In early 2008, four older wooden-framed exterior wayside exhibit panels describing 19th-century farming practices in the Alhambra Valley were removed from their longstanding position at back exit of the visitor center.



Muir's Scribble Den in the Strentzel-Muir Home

Interior Exhibits

Exhibits at John Muir National Historic Site are small, limited installations divided among the visitor center, the house, and the Martinez Adobe.

In the visitor center, a poorly lit, multi-purpose, crowded space, the existing display consists of these objects and brief accompanying text:

- several historic photos
- three first editions of Muir's books,
- an assortment of "touch" items such as animal bones and a piece of redwood,
- taxidermy, and
- a few small artifacts (notably, four pieces of carved Alaskan ivory) collected by Muir.

Unfortunately, the cluttered interior of the visitor center, with its office-style lighting, window glare, and multiple uses as retail and office space, pass-through corridor, and restroom access, makes the small collection of exhibited items far less impressive than they could be in a more visible and expansive setting.

In the Muir house, a photo exhibit is displayed in an upstairs bedroom. Based on the book *Nature's Beloved Son: Rediscovering John Muir's Botanical Legacy* by Bonnie Gisel and Stephen Joseph, the exhibit focuses on Muir's life-long interest in botany and features photos of plants he collected in various locations throughout North America. Some of these plant specimens are in the museum collections at the site.

The Martinez Adobe houses a few exhibit panels and small displays. These exhibits will be removed in 2010 as the first-floor space is equipped with new exhibits intended to tell the story of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail as well as the Martinez Adobe.

Website

In addition to its on-site media, John Muir National Historic Site offers interpretive resources online through its NPS website. Among these resources are bird and plant inventories for the site, a Museum Management Program link showing digitized selections from the site collections, and other links to the Sierra Club and an off-site university library collection of Muir's works.

Media Assets

Media assets include park collections and museum resources such as documents and artifacts that are available to support personal services programs or interpretive media.

Museum Collections

As of December 2009, John Muir National Historic Site has the following numbers of artifact and specimen collections divided into the following categories:

- Cultural Resources:

Archeology:	173
Archives:	204,815
Art:	146
Ethnology:	16
History:	4,994
- Natural resources:

Biology:	481
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The museum continues to collect items within a defined Scope of Collection Statement updated in 2009, dependent on its ability to exhibit or store the items accepted into the collection. All collection materials are cataloged in the NPS Interior Collection Management System (ICMS) database.



President Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir at Glacier Point, Yosemite National Park in 1903

Archeology:

These collections comprise artifacts recovered in the course of archeological surveys, excavations, construction work, and mitigation projects on the site, plus their associated records. These archeological collections document remnants of human habitation and activities within the park boundary from pre-historic and historical eras up through the Strentzel-Muir ownership of the land.

Archives:

The John Muir National Historic Site archival collections include a number of original photographs, including portraits, landscapes, and structures associated with John Muir and his family members. The collections also include copies of Muir photographs from the holdings of the Holt-Atherton Special Collections on the campus of the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. The university has authorized use of the collection for interpretation, education and exhibit by the NPS staff.

The archives collections also include original manuscripts, personal papers, correspondence and business papers written to and from John Muir and his family, friends and associates. A large body of legal correspondence includes estate settlements, deeds, land claims, and suits.

Oral histories in the collection include interviews conducted with Muir family members and people who had personal recollections of the Strentzel-Muir house during the Muirs' occupation.

Park records:

Permanent government records documenting the administrative and resource management activities of the park are also part of the archival collection. These include documents, reports, plans, maps, drawings, photographs, and correspondence.

Art:

A number of original art works including paintings, drawings, and sculpture comprise the art collections. The majority of these items were created by Mary Muir Hand, the sister of John Muir. Other works are framed portraits and paintings donated by the family. Several sketches and drawings by John Muir of his inventions are also in the collection.

Ethnology:

Ethnology holdings for the site include various baskets, southwestern pottery, and Alaskan ethnographic pieces that were gifts given to Muir or collected by him on his journeys.

History:

Many historical items are on display in the Strentzel-Muir house, including furniture, textiles, rugs, clothing, framed art, books, kitchen wares, and decorative arts. However, few of these items have a connection to the house or the Muir family; they are only period pieces. The current furnishing plan is based on recollections of family and friends who remembered visiting the house before Muir's death in 1914.

The collection also includes a large number of textiles and family belongings inherited and donated by successive generations of Muir family members. Muir's botanical collections from his 1,000-mile walk and world travels are also preserved in collection storage.

Building and architectural samples of the Strentzel-Muir house and the Martinez Adobe were collected during repair and restoration projects on the house and historic buildings on the property. A few artifacts from the Martinez family are also in the collection.

Contemporary artifacts and ephemera in the collection related to Muir include anniversary and commemorative U.S.

coins, postage stamps and covers, and special event and celebration memorabilia related to Muir's life and works.

Biology:

Biology holdings consist of a contemporary herbarium of type specimens documenting plant species found on Mt. Wanda, along with the field records of their collection.

Park Library

The park library includes a large collection of reference material specific to the park's natural, cultural, and human history. The materials are not cataloged in NPS Voyager. Subjects include:

- Muir's published works
- Muir biographies
- California history
- Muir bibliographies
- Spanish and Mexican history in California
- Archeology
- Geology
- Plants
- Animals
- Recreation (hiking, biking, birding, etc.)
- Project studies made at the site
- Children's books
- Interpretive resources
- NPS history and resources
- Local and regional magazines
- VHS and DVD Videos
- CDs
- Audio cassettes

In addition to these resources, the University of the Pacific's Holt-Atherton Library is the repository for most of the unpublished correspondence, manuscripts and drawings of John Muir; these materials remain the literary property of the Muir-Hanna Trust and are protected by copyright. The library offers many of these materials for viewing digitally online.



Issues and Influences

"The clearest way into the universe is through a forest wilderness."

- John Muir
"John of the Mountains"

The primary issues affecting the interpretation of John Muir National Historic Site are both philosophical and physical. In order to reinvigorate the interpretive programming, community relevance, and visitation at the site, the interpretive team must confront several key issues.

The Legacy – and the Competition

In the 46 years since John Muir National Historic Site was set aside and preserved as a unit of the National Park Service, a vigorous, exciting worldwide environmental movement has emerged. Far-reaching legislation and citizen action in dozens of countries have spurred governments to preserve wilderness, protect threatened plant and animal species, and clean up environmental pollution. Among many of the enthusiasts in this amorphous worldwide movement, the name “John Muir” evokes reverence and admiration.

Yet oddly, John Muir National Historic Site appears to have missed an opportunity to inspire and connect young hikers and wilderness lovers who come to the site with John Muir and his legacy. As the last previous interpretive planning document (Interpretive Prospectus, 1996, page 9) put it 14 years ago:

If parking, visitor center, and staffing deficiencies are not remedied, this historic site may receive more visitors in the future but the experience, not optimum now, will definitely be far below the standard that should be expected of a national park system site. This park has not received the funding and staffing levels required to provide visitors with a high-quality experience. . . .

With minor adjustments, this statement is as true today as it was in 1996.

A review of the site’s recent history illuminates the apparent stagnation: In 1991, the General Management Plan called for construction of a new 5,000-square-foot visitor center, complete with curatorial space, exhibits, and an auditorium. However, despite the combined efforts of the NPS and the John Muir Association, the fundraising drive has been unsuccessful.

A quick look at the number of environmental, preservation, and community groups co-opting the name “John Muir” shows vast competition for funding to support causes associated with John Muir. Unless the John Muir Association and the site can mount a more compelling case than they have so far, it is unlikely that the funding campaign will reach fruition. At this point, site management must create other opportunities to deliver the kind of experience that visitors to John Muir National Historic Site deserve.

Conventional Setting, Unconventional Occupants

Problems with the visitor center aside, the site’s most visible resource, the formally furnished Victorian home Muir lived in for 24 years, appears to many visitors as fundamentally contradictory to the ideals and mission Muir himself championed. That no records exist of how the house actually looked during his tenure (with the exception of the Scribble Den) compounds the problem. How can this quite conventional setting be interpreted so that it helps reveal the complex, unconventional figure that was John Muir?

It is clear that over the years, interpretive programming has sometimes vacillated between providing visitors with a traditional historic house tour and the more challenging task of using the house as a springboard to provide insight into the mind and

spirit of its most famous occupant. A rigorous insistence by some on period authenticity has contributed to this dilemma.

Yet staff and stakeholders alike recognize that John Muir’s home is much more than just another historic house, and that the grounds themselves are an intrinsic part of the visitor experience and the story. Judging from visitor responses to the 2007 survey, however, house-tour visitors may not be getting the message: a majority of visitors had little awareness of features such as the historic orchards before their visit (Question 8, page 24; and Question 10b, page 31), and only 53% of them (Question 10a, page 30) viewed the orchards when they were there.

beyond the scope of this interpretive planning process, as it delves into site planning and many other issues. However, from an interpretive standpoint, this kind of structural/physical change could essentially restructure the entire visitor experience at John Muir National Historic Site and improve that experience significantly. If visitors entered the property in its natural state at Mt. Wanda, progressed to the earlier dwelling (the adobe) and then moved forward through the landscape into the more modern Strentzel-Muir house (perhaps viewing the film there), they would experience the Muir legacy far differently. With appropriate interpretive guidance along the way, they could gain a stronger impression of Muir himself, with less focus on the historic house alone.

Connecting the Sites: Access between the Strentzel-Muir Home and Mt. Wanda

Many visitors coming to the site do not know that the park includes the house and grounds as well as Mt. Wanda and the Muir family gravesite. The connection between these geographically separated areas is not well understood even by local visitors. The park faces a distinct challenge in educating visitors about how to visit each of these discrete areas easily. A higher level of planning will need to be completed to determine the best methods for access. Some possible options that may be considered include using a vehicle to shuttle visitors between sites, creating a trail, or using the pedestrian tunnel under the expressway that leads to the back gate of the grounds near the Martinez Adobe.

Although the idea of using the tunnel was mentioned in the General Management Plan in 1991 and also surfaced in recent discussions with staff and stakeholders, its feasibility has not been analyzed. Such an analysis is



Recommendations

"Most people who travel look only at what they are directed to look at. Great is the power of the guidebook maker, however ignorant."

- John Muir
"Travels in Alaska"

Future Interpretive Program

The Recommendations Workshop for the John Muir National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan (held August 5-6, 2009) focused on interpretive concerns highlighted in the “Issues and Influences” section of this document. Discussions included ideas for repurposing key spaces within the site to align with desired interpretive themes, decentralizing some of the current functions of the visitor center, the potential offered by a land transfer occurring in 2016, and how to integrate interpretive messaging about John Muir and 19th-century agriculture into the restored historic landscape. The team also considered the need to improve community outreach, relationships with partners, education and youth involvement, and staff and volunteer resources.

The planning group sought to incorporate flexibility into this Long-Range Interpretive Plan to accommodate several future scenarios:

- Funding for a proposed new visitor center complex;
- Possible repurposing of the existing visitor center and the interior spaces of the Strentzel-Muir Home, the carriage house, and portions of the Martinez Adobe; and
- The 2016 addition of adjacent property along the southwestern base of Mt. Wanda, through a land transfer signifying the end of a long-term lease. This property, identified as the Strain Ranch and currently occupied, includes a farmhouse and several other buildings of undetermined structural soundness for future visitor use.

In making these recommendations, the planners acknowledge a recent history of conflicting approaches, some of which still need to be resolved:

- The last interpretive planning document (1996) recommended installing 12 interpretive wayside exhibits on the property and outfitting 12 rooms in the Strentzel-Muir house with period furnishings, but advised against incorporating modern interpretive media into the historic house.
- A Cultural Landscape Report (2005) provided plans for restoring portions of the orchards and advised against installing any interpretive waysides within the historic landscape.
- A Historic Furnishings Report (2005) recommended fully furnishing only four rooms in the house (Scribble Den, study annex, Helen’s girlhood bedroom, and kitchen) and installing numerous interpretive exhibit panels in the other rooms.¹

This plan presents the following recommendations for the future interpretive program at John Muir National Historic Site.

Outreach Activities

Community Outreach

Over time, a well-developed community outreach program at John Muir National Historic Site will build connections with a large but relatively untapped target audience for the site: residents in the local Martinez community, Contra Costa County, and the greater San Francisco Bay Area. Hundreds of school children visit the site on school trips, and many local and regional visitors enthusiastically attend the John Muir Earth Day Birthday spring festival. However, visitor data indicates that few people living within an easy drive come to the site spontaneously at other times unless they have out-of-town visitors.

- In all personal and non-personal interpretive services (including news releases to local media), seek to reposition John Muir National Historic Site as the first stop in a continuum of exploration of John Muir's life and influence in California and throughout the National Park System – and indeed, as a first stop in exploring our national parks.
- Move forward with plans to open the site seven days a week. (Currently, the park is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.) Adding two weekdays to the schedule would give the park more time and flexibility in accommodating school groups and home-schoolers during the week, while also improving visitation options for Bay Area tourists and local visitors. In addition, having the site open every day of the week can improve its visibility and accessibility among key constituencies such as Bay Area environmental groups and the Martinez community. Once this change is made, the park should take steps to publicize the expanded hours locally as well as on the website for non-local audiences.
- Assess the feasibility of discontinuing the \$3 fee for entrance into the site. If the fee is eliminated, publicize this decision and the free admission widely among local partners and the Martinez community.
- Equip the visitor center with several simple but engaging communications devices emphasizing John Muir's relevancy to current events and issues:
 - a bulletin board on current local environmental issues, such as the latest news about the Alhambra Creek watershed, seasonal bird migration updates, and other ecological events of note;
 - a white board seeking questions and comments from visitors; and
 - an interactive calendar listing current ranger-led tours, special programs, and other upcoming events, displayed on a flat-panel screen at the visitor center and also available online to the public.
- Explore immediate ways to improve the overall visitor experience within the visitor center, just as the landscaping with native plants improved the exterior approach. Many relatively minor changes could greatly improve visitors' impressions and feelings within the building.
 - Sky lights could brighten the interior and create an impression of greater spaciousness.
 - Relocating the small exhibits to the Strentzel-Muir house, moving the offices out of the building entirely (perhaps to leased space nearby), reconfiguring the reception desk, adding comfortable seating, and installing some very dramatic, oversized graphic images of Yosemite and other landscapes associated with Muir might also be considered.
 - Re-establish the primary function of the visitor center as a welcoming place that sets the tone for one's visitor experience at a National Park Service site. At present, this small, cramped visitor center has too many functions (office, fee booth, theater, exhibit, bookstore, and conference space) and does not provide a good orientation and welcome to the site.
- Establish a community engagement program to engage diverse individuals and communities through programs, publications,

educational materials, and partnerships. (Centennial Strategy Recommendation)

- Develop and issue regular news releases on upcoming events, new partnerships or volunteer activities, meetings hosted at the site, and other items of interest.
- Plan and publicize the celebration for the NPS Centennial in 2016.
- Continue to host the successful John Muir Earth Day Birthday each April on the site, in collaboration with the City of Martinez and other partners.
 - Consider ways to leverage this event to expand visitor involvement at the site on a regular basis.

Educational Outreach

- Work with local school districts to develop grade-appropriate curricula to connect students with park resources and introduce them to John Muir, his contributions to the American environmental movement, and the creation of our earliest national parks. (Centennial Strategy Recommendation)

- The Sierra Club website’s John Muir Exhibit pages (at Lesson Plans) offer an excellent starting point with grade-level references keyed to the California state education requirements. Park staff should reach out to the Sierra Club and explore collaborating on these curricula so as not to duplicate materials.

- Expand the park’s popular Environmental Living program to reach more students, especially in schools serving at-risk youth.
- Develop specific volunteer activities and projects with older youth such as the students of New Leaf and Contra Costa County high school science classes, Boy Scouts, etc.
- Introduce an NPS Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program at the site. Through this nationwide NPS program, K-12 teachers work as park rangers during the summer months and return to their classrooms during the school year. Participants develop lesson plans based on their park experience, and they coordinate NPS programs in their schools during National Park Week each spring. Begun in 2003 in Colorado, the NPS Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program went nationwide in 2007 and had 90 teacher-participants in 2008. See www.nps.gov/learn/trt.

- Continue to provide an eight-week NPS Youth Conservation Corps work-learn-earn program where youth work, learn, and earn together on projects that develop an understanding and appreciation about John Muir, conservation, and the surrounding natural and cultural resources at the park. (Centennial Strategy Recommendation)



John Muir Day Camp

Personal Services

According to the 2007 Visitor Services Project visitor study, only 17% of visitors received a ranger-led tour of the Strentzel-Muir home. How can John Muir National Historic Site ensure that more visitors have the opportunity for ranger-led tours that communicate the primary themes of the site?

The following recommendations address this need for all audiences:

- Increase the number of scheduled ranger-led and/or volunteer-led tours of the site to reach a targeted management goal.
- Restructure both ranger-led and docent/volunteer tours of Strentzel-Muir house away from the historic house approach to focus more concretely on the primary interpretive themes and subthemes established in this plan. Where appropriate, provide interested visitors with a site bulletin specific to the Strentzel-Muir house, as well as a list of other historic houses in the area.
- Create a revolving set of shorter ranger-led tours concentrating on specific themes and subthemes, such as Muir's growth and development as a writer and conservation advocate, the Strentzel-Muir family heritage and family life, and the Strentzel-Muir property as representative of the agricultural history and changing landscape of the Alhambra Valley.
- Consider gradual de-accession of objects in the home that do not relate directly to the primary themes, purpose and significance of John Muir National Historic Site. As the core group workshop participants and the management team recognize (and the 2005 Historic Furnishings Report confirms), most of the furnishings, except those in the Scribble Den, are period pieces that are not original to the house. As these items are removed, some rooms within the house can be converted to theme-related interpretive uses.
 - This approach has already been partially implemented by the use of an upstairs room for a long-term temporary photography exhibit.
 - The 2005 Historic Furnishings Report made recommendations on interpretive topics and objects for the non-historical rooms; however, as noted above, there have been conflicting professional opinions about this approach.²
- Rework ranger-led and self-guided programming to match the repurposing of non-historic rooms for specific interpretive themes and subthemes that will contribute to the desired visitor experiences.³
 - Specific examples include the dining room and the children's bedroom, which currently have little relevance to the themes of the site and could be converted to theme-based uses employing such items as enlargements of historic photographs, the small ivories now in the visitor center, and examples from the herbarium currently stored in the basement.
 - If necessary, plan for a site evaluation to assess space/occupancy issues, infrastructure needs, and connectivity and visitor circulation through the site.
- Consider converting a main-floor room, perhaps the library, into the John Muir Reading Room, a space where visitors can sit down, select books to peruse, hold environmentally focused book club meetings, and engage in



Mt. Wanda Nature Walk

conversation with other visitors. Maintain samples of first editions and family books in cases, but also equip this room with inexpensive, replaceable copies of Muir’s works for visitors to read at leisure.

- Increase the number of ranger-led tours and nature activities on Mt. Wanda, including weekend events as well as more evening walks and youth walks, both of which are very popular with local residents.
- Provide ranger-facilitated access to the Strentzel-Muir family gravesite (probably by alternative-fuel vehicle as outlined in the Centennial Recommendations). This access should include an unobtrusive level of interpretation that will enrich visitors’ experience but not interfere with the quietude, solemnity, and contemplative nature of the site. For example, the ranger might play an audio rendition of the Muir eulogy on the shuttle ride to the site or provide a high-quality one-page printed handout with the eulogy on one side and a diagram of the burial sites on the other.
- Develop a strategy for assessing the structures, access, and interpretive opportunities offered by the Strain Ranch property, which becomes available in 2016. Planning workshop discussions yielded ideas ranging from overnight youth trips to the creation of a full-time, sustainable environmental education and demonstration center.

Audiovisual Media

- Create a virtual tour of the Scribble Den, viewable from the first floor, for visitors who cannot climb stairs. (Underway in 2009-10)
- Create an online interactive calendar for current events, and display it on a flat-panel screen in the visitor center and on the web. Consider having a group of student volunteers launch and maintain this calendar, and publicize the students’ involvement.
 - Invite the student team to work on social networking websites such as Facebook, MySpace, Flickr, YouTube, and so on to network with current and potential visitors and supporters. [A John Muir Facebook page, launched in September 2009 by an anonymous source, has over 1,100 fans so far.]
- Explore whether the 22-minute visitor center film can be made available for purchase in the bookstore.
- Revise the self-guided interpretive tour booklet and the park website to include appropriate instructions on how visitors may access the gravesite. Because the cemetery is unstaffed and sits in a residential neighborhood with minimal parking, self-guided public access so far has been limited. Options under consideration include ranger-led tours via shuttle service originating from the visitor center at specified hours, as well as a future hiking trail connecting the gravesite to Mt. Wanda and the visitor center.

Non-Personal Services

Many of the following non-personal interpretive services, particularly audiovisual and web-based programming and online book sales, target both on-site and virtual visitors.

- Create a topical series of short, self-guided audio interpretive tours of the site, similar to the short ranger-led tours recommended above. The audio pieces, based on the primary themes and their associated



Muir Gravesite



John Muir Facebook Page

locations, should include extensive voiced quotations from primary sources such as Muir's writings, family diaries and recollections, and contemporaneous accounts from newspapers and other relevant documents. Provide these audio programs in digital format at the visitor center, as well as in a downloadable format for personal electronic devices. Examples of these programs might include:

- a multi-segment series (about 4 minutes total) on John Muir's evolution as a writer-advocate for public ownership and preservation of wild places, using excerpts from his writings, along with displays of manuscripts, original documents and historic and contemporary photographs;
- a series that directs visitors through the historic orchard restorations and discusses changing agriculture and land use in the Alhambra Valley, with voiced readings from archeological documents, historic records of Martinez's founding, Muir's descriptions of the ranch operation, etc.;
- a series that offers glimpses of the Muirs' family life, with excerpts of piano music, readings from Helen's diary and accounts of hiking on Mt. Wanda; and
- a Strentzel house series describing the physical features of the house and its well-to-do owners (i.e., Dr. and Mrs. Strentzel) in the social context of late 19th-century California.

Bookstore

At many NPS sites, the bookstore serves as an adjunct and complementary service to interpretation.

- Working the Western National Parks Association, consider relocating or expanding the bookstore at John

Muir National Historic Site to make it a more compelling, relevant part of the interpretive program and one of the top locations in Northern California for purchasing comprehensive source materials on John Muir. Publicize its holdings, link those to other NPS sites related to Muir (Yosemite National Park, Muir Woods National Monument), and explore online shopping.

- Explore the feasibility of relocating the office spaces currently in the visitor center to another location, either within the site or on leased property nearby, to allow more space upfront for the bookstore.

Exhibits

Interior Exhibits:

Currently, John Muir National Historic Site has very little space for displaying custom-designed interpretive exhibits, artifacts or archival materials, fine art, photography, or local or traveling exhibits. De-accessioning some furnishings in the Strentzel-Muir house could provide additional space for showing visitors some of the many authentic holdings in the park's collections. Exhibit recommendations for the next ten years include the following:

- Improve the visibility of the small exhibits in the current visitor center or, if visibility cannot be improved, remove them altogether.
- Consider repurposing some of the rooms in the house to serve as backdrops for interpretive programming addressing specific themes. The 2005 Historic Furnishings Report listed the following exhibit concepts, with supporting objects and historic images, for the rooms for which there is no reliable record of authentic historic furnishings:

- West Parlor: *Muir Comes to Martinez*
- Library: *Background on the Strentzel Family; Dr. Strentzel's Office*
- Kitchen: *Ah Fong, Muir Family Cook*
- East parlor: *Muir's Work*
- Bedroom: *Muir's Background before Martinez*

Should the de-accessioning of non-authentic furnishings proceed as suggested above, it is recommended that a new interpretive exhibit plan for the house be developed, based on the themes and subthemes developed in this Long-Range Interpretive Plan.

- Create more displays in the Strentzel-Muir house to show actual manuscripts of John Muir's writings, journals, and correspondence (as well as legible enlargements), original editions of his published magazine articles, and first editions of his books.
- Explore installing a John Muir National Historic Site exhibit space, and possibly a volunteer-staffed desk, in a city tourist facility or historic structure in downtown Martinez.
- Remodel the Carriage House as a useful interpretive or educational space. For example:
 - Use the space strategically for a small, single-storyline interpretive exhibit that adds depth and interest in support of one of the primary themes in ways not presented elsewhere. A small exhibit here could tell the story of Muir's long fascination with and commitment to Yosemite, complete with printed quotations, audio excerpts, and numerous large-scale historic photographs. Alternately, the exhibit storyline could address

Alhambra Valley agriculture, the orchard and the restored historic landscape.

- Another approach is to renovate the Carriage House as a small hands-on classroom space for school groups.

- Convert the back rooms of the Martinez Adobe into exhibit space highlighting the Martinez family and Spanish American history in the Alhambra Valley.

Exterior Exhibits:

Integrating wayside exhibits and site orientation into a restored historic landscape can be done with well-planned installations that respect the historic nature of the land. At John Muir National Historic Site, wayside interpretation can be very effective and helpful to visitors as they seek to learn more about the historic and cultural landscape and agricultural development of the Alhambra Valley. The following approaches to exterior exhibits are recommended for John Muir National Historic Site.

- Install interpretive and wayfinding kiosks, with primary-theme-level interpretation, illustrations, and maps keyed to sites, at the beginning and end of the walkway through the historic landscape. Consider including an easily recognizable icon where appropriate to prompt downloadable audio to personal electronic devices.
- Choose one or two locations within the historic landscape where the integrity of the viewshed is already compromised and explore ways to use an interpretive kiosk, reproduction agricultural tools or equipment (a stack of wooden shipping crates, a ladder for picking fruit), or other creative devices to support interpretive panels while distracting attention from the intrusive modern view.



John Muir leading a Sierra Club outing

- Consider creating one or two visitor seating areas with period-style seating and interpretive signs within the historic zone. If done carefully and with restraint, this degree of intrusion will not impair visitors’ overall sense of the landscape and will provide them with a richer understanding of what they are seeing.
 - Consider using the pathway itself as an interpretive device, perhaps by incorporating a timeline, a geographical feature such as the outline of the Alhambra River Valley, or blocked quotations from John Muir (as in Jack Kerouac Alley near City Lights Bookstore in San Francisco).
 - Depending on how the visitor center is reconfigured, consider replacing the recently removed interpretive signs at the existing back exit with new panel exhibits that support the interpretive themes in this plan and complement the proposed new wayside exhibits throughout the site.
 - Create several additional kiosks containing wayfinding orientation and interpretation for selected path junctions and entry points at Mt. Wanda.
- information on and directions to Mt. Wanda, and the Muir family gravesite, pending resolution of concerns about appropriate modes of access.
 - Update the site’s standard NPS unigrid brochure to focus less on timelines and more on the interpretive themes of the site. A new brochure should also include the Anza National Historic Trail exhibits at the Martinez Adobe, the gravesite and appropriate modes of access, and a site map that shows visitors how to access Mt. Wanda.
 - Create site bulletins for the following:
 - Martinez Adobe
 - Strentzel-Muir house
 - Orchards and agriculture in 19th-century Alhambra Valley
 - Mt. Wanda

The following recommendations apply specifically to educational audiences:

- Update K-12 curriculum materials to meet California grade-level standards; make these materials available in print for mail-out and also online for download.
- Update and publish the fourth-grade Environmental Living program curriculum online.

Publications

Visitor publications are a vital part of a site’s overall interpretive program for all audiences. John Muir National Historic Site visitor publications should be put on a regular schedule for upgrading. At a minimum, these upgrades and additions are needed:

- Update the current self-guided tour booklet to reflect the site’s interpretive themes. The tour booklet should also include the Anza National Historic Trail exhibits at the Martinez Adobe,

Website

Park websites serve at least two distinct audiences: virtual visitors who access the website for information and interpretation but may never visit the park first-hand, and travelers or locals who use the website to plan a visit. Both these categories of visitors will benefit from regular content revisions and upgrades to the park website. In addition, like all websites, the John Muir National Historic Site website needs ongoing maintenance to keep it up-to-date.



Kiosk at Mt. Wanda

- Review the current website text for accuracy and clarity. (Current homepage text is confusing: “John Muir NHS is located in Martinez, California. Muir lived here because his wife and her family were here. John lived with his new inlaws, the Strentzels, for 2 years while they built their dream house; soon to be the Muir family home.”)
- Expand the “Stories” section under History and Culture to include interpretive storytelling as well as quotations from Muir.
- Update “Mammals” section of Nature & Science entry on website to parallel other entries with mammals actually found on the acreage of the historic site.
- Review and update the online reading list.
- Create and maintain regular, up-to-date news releases and archived news releases. Web-based current and archived news releases not only provide the public with valuable information; they also constitute a body of easily accessible, factually accurate contemporaneous accounts of important events throughout the history of the site.
- Provide access information for the gravesite when this issue is resolved.
- Create a virtual Junior Ranger activities booklet for the website, so children can get their John Muir National Historic Site Junior Ranger patch through distance learning.
- Add the new K-12 curriculum materials for download when available.
- Add links to other appropriate websites, including social media sites related to John Muir.

Themes, Locations, and Interpretive Services

Effective interpretation is a unique combination of personal and non-personal communication techniques, thematic stories, and tangible resources such as distinct locations or specific objects. Ideally, a park’s interpretive program pairs each interpretive theme with the most appropriate communication technique and most appropriate setting or resource. In practice, this approach usually means matching techniques to stories to locations, such as interpreting the Scribble Den using handwritten Muir manuscripts at the Scribble Den instead of unrelated artifacts at the visitor center, or interpreting the agricultural development of the Alhambra Valley outdoors in the orchards instead of in the formal parlor of the Strentzel-Muir house.

The following chart illustrates the proposed convergence of themes, interpretive services, and locations at John Muir National Historic Site under this Long-Range Interpretive Plan. In reviewing these scenarios, it is evident that there are multiple locations and techniques for addressing each of the three themes.

The one location that falls short as a venue for addressing all three themes in a tangible way is the visitor center. However, the other locations on the site offer excellent opportunities for addressing the two themes about Muir’s family life and the Strentzel-Muir estate. Therefore, this plan proposes that the visitor center be reconfigured to focus on Muir’s role as a champion of conservation, with improvements that embody this theme: monumental artwork showing visitors scenes from Yosemite and other parks, more space for the bookstore, and a better auditorium for viewing the existing film and other films (such as the 2009 *National Parks* series by Ken Burns on PBS), and perhaps a public meeting space or reading room.



JOMU website

Interpretive Service	Theme: Muir as writer and champion of conservation	Theme: Influence of Muir’s family and home life on his work	Theme: Strentzel-Muir estate in context
Personal			
Ranger-led tours	Scribble Den, Mt. Wanda	Muir house as whole, gravesite	Grounds, orchards, Martinez Adobe, Mt. Wanda
Roving rangers	All sites	All sites	All sites
Educational programming	Scribble Den, Mt. Wanda; also off-site	Muir house as whole, gravesite; also off-site	Grounds, orchards, Martinez Adobe, Mt. Wanda; also off-site
Staffed visitor center	Visitor center film, bookstore, visitor center décor featuring large photos of Yosemite	N/A	N/A
Non-personal			
Interior exhibits	Repurposed rooms in Muir house; small exhibits in newly created John Muir Reading Room	Repurposed rooms in Muir house	Martinez Adobe; repurposed rooms in house
House furnishings	Scribble Den	Parlors	Muir house as whole
Audiovisuals: visitor center film	Primary emphasis	Less emphasis	Less emphasis
Self-accessed electronic media	Available on location at will	Available on location at will	Available on location at will
Website	All themes	All themes	All themes

Themes, Locations and Interpretive Services Matrix

Partnerships

In workshop exercises for developing this plan, core group participants identified many partners and potential partners for John Muir National Historic Site. (A partnership worksheet appears in this document as Appendix C.) Developing and strengthening these partnerships with specific activities and results will require additional staff input from NPS.

General Recommendations:

- Hire or assign a staff person with specific responsibilities as a liaison to partners of John Muir National Historic Site. A partnership coordinator can strengthen the park’s ties with existing partners and volunteers, improve the park’s visibility among its stakeholders, and build partnership relationships for the future.
- Create a simple but regular Partners Outreach communication (a quarterly email, a one-page seasonal update, a quarterly work day,

etc.) to inform/educate partners and potential partners about opportunities for engagement, learning, and fun when they become involved with John Muir National Historic Site. This communication should contain a box in every issue with a query seeking partner suggestions for potential activities.

- Set a goal of selecting one new partnership activity each quarter and asking specific partners to get involved with the project.

John Muir Association:

- Assist the John Muir Association in determining the legally appropriate fiduciary responsibility and use of donor monies collected to date (approximately 10% of goal) for the new interpretive center. With appropriate legal advice and board approval, the language of this fund could possibly be changed, if necessary, to support expansion of the existing visitor center and other interpretive spaces (such as remodeling the Carriage House or

the future holdings on the Strain Ranch), rather than remaining tied to a specific building project. The association and its advisors should determine whether donors need to be notified of any revised plans.

- Encourage the John Muir Association to consult with a professional fund-raising organization about the future of its fund-raising campaign. If the campaign is to be formally placed on hiatus, advise the association to remove the solicitation from its website.
- As these capital campaign concerns are being resolved, continue to work with the John Muir Association on securing funding, volunteers, and other support for other current interpretive needs at the site.
- Assist the association in expanding its membership and raising its public profile in the Martinez community and the greater bay area, including youth, young adults and diverse populations.

Western National Parks Association:

- Work with the Western National Parks Association to revitalize the bookstore at John Muir National Historic Site.
 - In exploring the possibilities of remodeling or repurposing the interior spaces of the visitor center, consult with the Western National Parks Association to get input from retail specialists on reshaping the bookstore and improving its presentation to visitors.
 - In keeping with the interpretive themes developed in this plan, work with the association's content and inventory experts to assess and expand the bookstore's holdings, with a goal of positioning the John Muir National Historic Site bookstore

as a preeminent source within NPS for materials on John Muir.

- Work with the Western National Parks Association to explore new ways to communicate with park visitors and the larger community about the bookstore's unique resources on John Muir and the National Park Service.

Sierra Club:

- Work to engage the Greater San Francisco chapter of the Sierra Club in regular involvement with John Muir National Historic Site. (The San Francisco chapter has eight regions. Although the site appears geographically closer to members in the West Contra County region, it falls just inside the boundary for the Mount Diablo region; both regions and the San Francisco chapter headquarters should all be on the park's outreach list.)
- Work to engage the national headquarters of the Sierra Club in activities at the site. This involvement can range from simple endeavors such as soliciting an endorsement letter from the national president in support of the annual festival, to high-profile activities such as guest lectures, private tours and meetings with the John Muir Association, the NPS, Muir family members, and other interested parties.

The Anza Trail Foundation and related groups:

- Develop partnerships and explore potential joint interpretive programming with the local and regional groups affiliated with the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail.
- Work with the Anza groups in publicizing the Anza National Historic Trail auto tour route along Highway 4 near the site, highlighting the new Anza Trail interpretive



John Muir Association Logo

exhibits being installed in the first floor of the Martinez Adobe in 2010.

- Incorporate details about the Anza Trail exhibits into new John Muir National Historic Site print and web interpretive and informational/directional materials as appropriate – for example, on the proposed electronic bulletin board and white boards in the visitor center.
- Explore ways to use the Anza Trail exhibits as an avenue for new opportunities for community outreach in Martinez, among Hispanic populations in the area, and among trail supporters throughout the region.

NPS-Related Groups:

- Build stronger connections with the Yosemite Association and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, offering resource sharing and mutual assistance in preserving and communicating the legacy of John Muir.

Additional Partnerships:

- Work with Exploritas (formerly Elderhostel), the American Association of Retired Persons, and other senior organizations to identify, define, develop and nurture partnerships that could provide future assistance to the park in accomplishing shared long term goals (Centennial Strategy Recommendation).



Historic photo of John Muir with his dog, Stickeen

Research Needs In Support of Interpretive Planning

- Continue to capture oral histories from individuals who were instrumental in establishing the National Historic Site.

- Select and display more selections from the park museum collections for visitors to see and enjoy in interpretive contexts on-site and online.
- Work with curatorial personnel to evaluate and implement de-accessioning of non-Muir household furnishings on the first and second floors of the house.
- Work with the chief of cultural resources and the visual media specialist to determine ways for visitors to access site-related archives and library holdings electronically, regardless of where the materials are held.
- Consider offering occasional ranger-led tours of selected park collections.

Staffing Needs

- Increase staff to support increasing programming and opening the park seven days a week. At present, the park has to handle all its educational programming for visiting school groups on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, and only those schools calling before programs fill up can be accommodated. Adding two additional weekdays would provide greater opportunities for interpretive and educational programming, while also improving the park's visibility in its local community and the larger tourism audience of the Bay Area.
- Consider hiring a Student Temporary Employment Program employee to assist in interpretive programming such as hands-on educational activities and guided hikes on Mt. Wanda.
- Add a summer interpreter through the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher

program. Not only would such an addition increase interpretive programming at the site; the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program is also a proven educational outreach tool for parks. For more information, see www.nps.gov/learn/trt

- Add an educational specialist to the John Muir National Historic Site staff. Given the curricular requirements of science education and the intense interest in environmental issues among youth, the site is an excellent resource for educators. A staff member focused on educational needs, both onsite and through outreach, will be a great asset for the site.
- Add a visual media specialist to serve all four parks. Currently John Muir National Historic Site has few visual media elements, but as this plan suggests, future audiences will expect and benefit from interpretive services delivered through a variety of forms of new media.
- Either create a new position or assign a current staff member to assume partnership coordinator duties, so that partners and potential partners can easily stay informed and involved in the future of the site.

(Endnotes)

1 See a discussion of past interpretive approaches and 2005 recommendations on page 12ff at http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/jomu/strentzel-muir_hfr.pdf.

See also this observation from the 1971/1982 revised Historic Furnishings Report, as quoted on page 46 of the 2005 document:

“The majority of furnishings in the house are not original to the Muir occupancy. Original items in the collection include: a spoon and fork carved in Alaska; Alaskan spears and an atlatl [sic]; several baskets and pieces of pottery; the kitchen drainboard, stove and marble-topped work table; Muir’s desk; Muir’s world globe, eagle quill pen, and saddle; the Strentzel apothecary/ bookcase; Muir’s herbarium; and fixtures in the bathroom. Original pamphlets, letters, books, and family photographs are also in the collection.” Of the original Muir-occupancy furnishings listed here, some items relevant to his work as a naturalist and writer are displayed in the Scribble Den, but the herbarium remains stored in the basement of the house.

2 As the 2005 Historic Furnishings Report observes: “Situations change over time. Current research for this report confirms the paucity of evidence about furnishings during the Muir occupation. Recommendations to use exhibits within historic spaces conflict with existing IP recommendations; however, the park has requested funding for a new interpretive framework document called a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP). A new CIP will address these issues and can suggest new directions to explore to improve site interpretation.”

3 Room changes can be confined to interior furnishings only, not structural changes, to preserve the Interior Visual Character of the house, as described in NPS Technical Preservation Services’ Preservation Brief 17: “Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character,” by Lee H. Nelson, FAIA.



Implementation Plan

"There is a love of wild nature in everybody, an ancient mother love ever showing itself whether recognized or no, and however covered by cares and duties."

- John Muir
"Wilderness World of John Muir"; edited by Edwin Way Teale

Implementation Plan

This chart lists interpretive planning recommendations by category, with indicators (XX) describing each recommendation as a short-term, mid-term, or long-term goal. (Entries with XX across all three timeframes should be considered as continuous, ongoing activities.)

The cost projection column provides a rough guide to the estimated costs of each recommendation. The symbol \$ estimates a moderate annual cost (under \$50,000); the \$\$ indicates annual expenditures estimated between \$50,000 and \$100,000; and the \$\$\$ indicates major expenditures, usually capital expenditures such as facilities remodeling, exhibit installations, or visitor transportation vehicles.

Short-, Medium-, and Long-term Implementation Goals and Cost Indicators

Goals/Tasks	Short-term 1 - 3 years 2010 - 2013	Mid-range 4 - 6 years 2014 - 2016	Long-term 7 - 10 yrs 2017 - 2020	Cost projection
OUTREACH ACTIVITIES				
Community Outreach				
Position John Muir National Historic Site as first stop on John Muir tour	XX	XX	XX	\$
Open the site 7 days a week		XX		\$\$\$
Assess removing \$3 fee	XX			\$
Add bulletin board, white board, and calendar at visitor center	XX			\$
Improve interior visitor center ambiance	XX	XX	XX	\$ - \$\$
Establish community engagement program	XX	XX	XX	\$
Issue regular news releases	XX	XX	XX	\$
Plan events for NPS Centennial in 2016	XX	XX		\$\$
Continue John Muir Earth Day Birthday festival each April; leverage for more year-round community involvement	XX	XX	XX	\$\$
Educational Outreach				
Develop grade-level curricula	XX			\$\$
Expand Environmental Living program		XX	XX	\$\$
Develop volunteer activities with older youth		XX	XX	\$
Implement Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program	XX	XX	XX	\$
Continue NPS Youth Conservation Core work-learn program	XX			\$
PERSONAL SERVICES				
Increase the number of personal tours	XX	XX		\$\$
Restructure personal tours away from historic-house approach	XX			\$
Create set of short, topical personal tours	XX			\$
Begin de-accessioning non-Muir objects in house	XX			\$
Rework programming to match repurposed rooms in house		XX	XX	\$\$
Convert main-floor room to John Muir Reading Room		XX		\$\$
Increase tours on Mt. Wanda (with additional staff and vehicle)		XX		\$\$
Provide access to gravesite (with additional staff and vehicle)	XX			\$\$\$
Start strategy for assessing Strain Ranch	XX	XX	XX	\$\$
Plan celebrations for NPS Centennial in 2016		XX		\$\$

Goals/Tasks	Short-term 1 - 3 years 2010 - 2013	Mid-range 4 - 6 years 2014 - 2016	Long-term 7 - 10 yrs 2017 - 2020	Cost projection
NON-PERSONAL SERVICES				
Audiovisuals				
Create virtual tour of Scribble Den for accessibility	XX			\$
Create online interactive calendar	XX			\$
Make visitor center film available for purchase if possible	XX			\$
Create series of self-guided audio tours in digital formats		XX		\$\$ - \$\$\$
Bookstore				
Consider expansion or relocation	XX	XX	XX	\$\$
Consider relocating offices	XX	XX		\$\$\$
Exhibits - Exterior				
Install two interpretive/wayfinding kiosks on grounds		XX		\$\$
Install "creative" waysides			XX	\$\$\$
Create seating zones and waysides		XX		\$\$
Adapt pathway as interpretive device			XX	\$\$
Revise existing exhibits behind visitor center		XX		\$
Exhibits - Interior				
Improve or remove small exhibits in visitor center	XX			\$
Repurpose some rooms in Muir house		XX	XX	\$\$
Create more displays of Muir's work in the house		XX		\$\$
Install John Muir National Historic Site exhibit space and mini-visitor center in downtown Martinez			XX	\$\$\$
Remodel Carriage House as interpretive exhibit space or classroom		XX		\$\$ - \$\$\$
Convert back rooms of Martinez Adobe for exhibit space		XX		\$\$
Publications				
Revise self-guided tour booklet	XX			\$
Update unigrid brochure		XX		\$
Update K-12 curriculum materials for print and online		XX		\$\$
Update Environmental Living curricula		XX		\$
Create site bulletin on Martinez Adobe	XX			\$
Create site bulletin on Strentzel-Muir House	XX			\$
Create site bulletin on orchards and agriculture	XX			\$
Create site bulletin on Mt. Wanda		XX		\$
Website				
Review texts and revise as needed	XX	XX	XX	\$
Create news releases and archive	XX	XX	XX	\$
Add gravesite info	XX			\$
Expand "Stories" tab, update "Mammals tab, update reading list	XX			\$
Create virtual Junior Rangers unit		XX		\$
Upload new K-12 curriculum materials		XX		\$
Add links to other John Muir sites	XX	XX	XX	\$

Goals/Tasks	Short-term 1 - 3 years 2010-2013	Mid-range 4 - 6 years 2014-2016	Long-term 7 - 10 yrs 2017-2020	Cost projection
PARTNERSHIPS				
Hire or assign staff person as partnership liaison		XX		\$\$
Create outreach communication	XX			\$
Set goal for one new partnership activity per quarter	XX			\$
Assist John Muir Association in clarifying funds use, hiring fundraising advisor, expanding membership, etc.	XX	XX	XX	\$
Work with Western National Parks Association to revitalize bookstore at John Muir National Historic Site	XX	XX		
Engage Sierra Club more with John Muir National Historic Site	XX	XX	XX	\$
Work collaboratively with Anza National Historic Trail groups on uses and programming related to Anza Trail exhibits in the Martinez Adobe	XX	XX	XX	\$
Build connections with Yosemite Association and Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy	XX			\$
Work with Exploritas (formerly Elderhostel) and other senior groups to develop partnerships and volunteer base	XX	XX	XX	\$
RESEARCH NEEDS				
Capture oral histories as available	XX			\$
Select more collections materials for display		XX		\$\$
De-accession non-Muir furnishings		XX	XX	\$
Plan for transfer of collections to new Richmond facility			XX	\$\$
Provide more on-site access to museum collections for visitors		XX	XX	\$- \$\$
STAFFING NEEDS				
Increase staff to enable opening park 7 days/week		XX		\$\$\$
Hire a Student Temporary Employment Program worker	XX	XX	XX	\$
Hire a Teacher-Ranger-Teacher	XX	XX	XX	\$
Add an education specialist to staff			XX	\$\$
Add (or assign) a partnership coordinator/liaison		XX		\$\$
Add a media specialist (for all four parks)		XX		\$\$

Cost Projection Key

- \$ Annual cost under \$50,000
- \$\$ Annual cost of \$50,000 - \$100,000
- \$\$\$ Cost greater than \$100,000



Appendices

"Every other civilized nation in the world has been compelled to care for its forests, and so must we if waste and destruction are not to go on to the bitter end, leaving America as barren as Palestine or Spain."

- John Muir
"Our National Parks"

Appendix A: Planning Team

National Park Service

John Muir National Historic Site

Morgan M. Smith
Chief of Interpretation, Education and Outreach (2009 – present)

Naomi Torres
Chief of Interpretation, Education and Outreach (2007-09)

David Blackburn
Chief of Interpretation, Education and Outreach (1993 - 2007)

Thaddeus Shay
Lead Interpretive Ranger

Cheryl Abel
Interpretive Park Ranger

Greg Bacigalupi
Interpretive Park Ranger

Catherine Eskra
Interpretive Park Ranger

Matt Holmes
Seasonal Interpretive Park Ranger

Ron Good
Interpretive Park Ranger
Founder, Restore Hetch Hetchy

Craig Riordan
Seasonal Interpretive Park Ranger

Eric Stearns
Seasonal Interpretive Park Ranger

Martha J. Lee
General Superintendent

Tom Leatherman
Deputy Superintendent

Ric Borjes
Chief of Cultural Resources

Carla Koop
Community Outreach Coordinator

Nancy Pierce
Visitor Use Assistant

Pacific West Region

Carola Derooy
Curator of Record

Lynn Nakata
Interpretive Specialist

Diane Nicholson
Regional Curator

Harpers Ferry Center

Toni Dufficy
Contracting Officer's Representative

Rick Jones
Project Manager

Park Partners – Workshop Participants

The staff of John Muir National Historic Site appreciates the contributions and participation of the many park partners and community members who attended the Long-Range Interpretive Plan development meetings from 2006 to 2009. We thank all these attendees, who included the mayor, city manager, members of the city council, board members of the John Muir Association, Muir family members, and representatives of the Western National Parks Association, John Muir Mountain Day Camp, Friends of the Alhambra Creek Watershed, Environmental Studies Academy/New Leaf, Martinez Unified School District, Sierra Club, Bay Area Ridge Trail, East Bay Regional Parks District, and the Martinez Historical Society, among others. Input from these stakeholders was invaluable in making this plan a more inclusive and complete vision for interpretation, outreach, and educational operations at John Muir National Historic Site.

Consultant Team

Faye Goolrick
Certified Interpretive Planner, Goolrick
Interpretive Group

Shannon Kettering
Vice President, Ecos Environmental
Design, Inc.

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Alison Smith
Project Manager, Ecos Environmental
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Appendix B: Enabling Legislation

Public Law 88-547

An Act to Provide for the establishment of the John Muir National Historic Site in the State of California, and for other purposes.

Section 2

The property acquired under the Act shall be designated as the John Muir National Historic Site and shall be set aside as a public national memorial to John Muir in recognition of his efforts as a conservationist and a crusader of national parks and reservations. The Secretary of the Interior shall administer, protect, and develop such national historic site in accordance with the provisions of the Act entitled “An Act to establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes,” approved August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535), as amended and supplemented, and the Act entitled “An Act to provide for the preservation of historic sites, buildings, objects, and antiquities of national significance and for other purposes,” approved August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666), as amended.

Section 3

There is hereby authorized to be appropriated not more than \$300,000 for land acquisition and restoration of the buildings thereon.

Approved August 31, 1964

Public Law 100-563

Colorado River Storage Act [legislation authorizing Mt. Wanda]

To authorize additional appropriations for the Central Utah Project, to implement a settlement with the Strawberry Water Users, expand the John Muir Historic Site, to prohibit the expansion of any reservoir within the boundaries of Yosemite National Park, and for other purposes.

Section 5: Boundary Change for John Muir National Historic Site

a) MAP; LAND ACQUISITION.—The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to acquire (by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange) lands and interests in land within the area generally depicted on the map entitled “Boundary Map, John Muir National Historic Site” numbered 426–80,015B and dated July 1988. The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Lands and interests in lands, within the boundaries of such area which are owned by the State of California or any political subdivision thereof, may be acquired only by donation or exchange. The Secretary of the Interior shall acquire only such interests in the John Muir grave site (as depicted on the map referred to in this subsection) as may be necessary to preserve the site in its present undeveloped condition and to provide all maintenance of the site by the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) INCLUSION WITHIN HISTORIC SITE.—The lands and interests in lands within the boundaries of the area depicted on the map referred to in subsection (a) shall be administered as part of the John Muir National Historic Site established by the Act of August 31, 1964 (78 Stat. 753; 16 U.S.C. 461 note).

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For purposes of acquiring the lands and interests in lands within the area depicted on the map referred to in subsection (a), there are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary.

(d) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.—The Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the National Park Service, is authorized to enter into a cooperative agreement with the East Bay Regional Park District of Oakland, California, for the operation and maintenance by such District of trails on lands within the John Muir National Historic Site.

Approved October 31, 1988

Public Law 108–385

An Act to adjust the boundary of the John Muir National Historic Site, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “John Muir National Historic Site Boundary Adjustment Act”.

SEC. 2. BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.

(a) **BOUNDARY.**—The boundary of the John Muir National Historic Site is adjusted to include the lands generally depicted on the map entitled “Boundary Map, John Muir National Historic Site” numbered PWR–OL 426–80,044a and dated August 2001.

(b) **LAND ACQUISITION.**—The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to acquire the lands and interests in lands identified as the “Boundary Adjustment Area” on the map referred to in subsection (a) by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, exchange, or otherwise.

(c) **ADMINISTRATION.**—The lands and interests in lands described in subsection (b) shall be administered as part of the John Muir National Historic Site established by the Act of August 31, 1964 (78 Stat. 753; 16 U.S.C. 461 note).

Approved October 30, 2004.

Appendix C: Partnership Worksheet

The following matrix was created at the John Muir Core Group Recommendations Workshop to explore existing and potential partnerships for the park’s interpretation & education program.

Partners:	John Muir Association	The Muir Heritage Land Trust	Hanna Muir Trust	Western National Parks Association	Student Conservation Association (SCA)	Martinez Historical Society
Assistance						
Advocacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Distribution of information	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Donating funds or supplies	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Fundraising/ grants	✓			✓		
Labor for service projects	✓			✓	✓	
Providing facilities and equipment						
Research			✓	✓		✓
Sharing resources	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Special events assistance	✓	✓		✓		✓
Special projects	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Staff (front-line or support personnel)	✓			✓	✓	
Training				✓	✓	✓

Partners:	City of Martinez	Contra Costa County	New Leaf/ Environmental Services Academy	Contra Costa Master Gardeners	Friends of Alhamera Creek	Alhamera Watershed Council (AWC)
Assistance						
Advocacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Distribution of information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Donating funds or supplies			✓		✓	
Fundraising/ grants			✓			✓
Labor for service projects	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Providing facilities and equipment	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Research			✓	✓	✓	
Sharing resources	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Special events assistance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Special projects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff (front-line or support personnel)			✓	✓	✓	
Training			✓	✓	✓	

Partners:	California Native Plant Society	UOP Library	Sierra Club	Yosemite Association	Yosemite Fund	Muir Woods (NPS)
Assistance						
Advocacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Distribution of information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Donating funds or supplies	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Fundraising/ grants	✓			✓		
Labor for service projects	✓		✓			✓
Providing facilities and equipment	✓					✓
Research	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Sharing resources	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Special events assistance	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Special projects	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Staff (front-line or support personnel)						✓
Training						✓

Partners:	Chamber of Commerce	"Worth a Dam"	Pacific G&E	Shell Oil	East Bay Regional Parks District	Local School Districts
Assistance						
Advocacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Distribution of Information	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Donating Funds or Supplies			✓	✓	✓	
Fundraising/ grants			✓			
Labor for service projects				✓		✓
Providing facilities and equipment	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Research		✓				
Sharing resources	✓			✓	✓	✓
Special events assistance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Special projects	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Staff (front-line or support personnel)						
Training						

Partners:	California Department of Transportation	J. Muir Birth Place	University of California Cooperative Extension	John Muir Wisconsin (Madison)	St. Mary's College	Oakland Museum
Assistance						
Advocacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Distribution of Information		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Donating Funds or Supplies						
Fundraising/ grants						
Labor for service projects						
Providing facilities and equipment	✓				✓	
Research		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sharing resources	✓	✓	✓			✓
Special events assistance		✓				✓
Special projects		✓	✓		✓	✓
Staff (front-line or support personnel)		✓				
Training		✓				

Partners:	California Academy of Sciences	Earth Team Environmental Network	The St. Andrews Society	California Historical Association	California Writers Club	Resource Conservation District
Assistance						
Advocacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Distribution of information	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Donating funds or supplies			✓			
Fundraising/ grants						✓
Labor for service projects		✓				
Providing facilities and equipment		✓				✓
Research	✓		✓	✓		
Sharing resources				✓	✓	✓
Special events assistance	✓	✓	✓			✓
Special projects	✓	✓	✓			✓
Staff (front-line or support personnel)						
Training						✓

Partners:	Civic Groups (Lions Club, Rotary, etc.)	Amtrak	Main Street Martinez	Union	University of California, Berkeley
Assistance					
Advocacy	✓	✓	✓		
Distribution of Information		✓	✓	✓	✓
Donating Funds or Supplies	✓		✓		
Fundraising/ grants					
Labor for service projects	✓				
Providing facilities and equipment			✓	✓	
Research					✓
Sharing resources	✓			✓	✓
Special events assistance	✓		✓		✓
Special projects	✓		✓		✓
Staff (front-line or support personnel)					
Training					

Harpers Ferry Center
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



John Muir National Historic Site

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