

Appendix A - Finding of No Significant Impact

Finding of No Significant Impact

The National Park Service (NPS) prepared and made available for public review a Draft General Management Plan (DGMP) for the Harry S Truman National Historic Site. The DGMP described three alternative approaches for managing the site over the next 15-20 years. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a draft environmental assessment (EA) was prepared with the draft plan, which analyzed the potential environmental and social impacts that might result from implementing the three alternatives for managing the site. One of the management alternatives was identified as the NPS' preferred alternative. The DGMP/EA was presented to the public in early January 1999 and was on public review for 45 days.

The purpose of this decision document is to affirm which course of action the NPS intends to follow and record a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (40 CFR 1508.9).

The Proposal

The preferred alternative in the DGMP/EA is the proposal selected for long-term management of Harry S Truman National Historic Site. Management of the site generally will be guided by parameters described for the following management areas:

In the **preservation area** the NPS will preserve structures and cultural landscapes in a manner emphasizing the retention of historic fabric and character-defining features associated with the period of historical significance. Archeological remains of structures associated with Harry S Truman will be stabilized and protected from deterioration. Development will be limited to small, sensitively designed interpretive displays. Visitors may participate in ranger-led tours through structures in this area. Visitor use of the grounds within this area will be limited to educational or interpretive activities that help visitors understand Harry S Truman. At the Independence Unit, this area will include the Truman home and surrounding grounds, and the grounds surrounding the Wallace homes and the Noland Home. At the Grandview Unit, this area includes the grounds surrounding the Farm Home and other buildings.

In the **administrative area** the NPS will maintain structures in a manner consistent with their period of historical significance, and will use them for purposes of park administration. At the Independence Unit, this area will include the Wallace homes (the actual structures, but not the surrounding grounds). At the Grandview Unit, this area will include the footprint of the reconstructed historic lane leading from Blue Ridge Boulevard to the farm home.

In the **multi-purpose** area the NPS will maintain structures in a manner consistent with their period of historical significance. Structures might be used for a combination of administrative



purposes and/or visitor use. Visitor support facilities are appropriate in this area, as are interpretive exhibits. Visitors may enjoy the public areas of buildings within the multi-purpose areas on their own, without need of a staff-leader. At the Independence Unit, this area will include the Noland home (actual structure, but not the surrounding grounds). At the Grandview Unit, this area will include the structures that can be historically tied to Harry Truman.

The NPS will generally follow rehabilitation as a treatment approach to cultural resources which preserves property while allowing for use. Visitation will continue to be managed to protect resources and minimize impacts on the Independence and Grandview communities, and the NPS will work in partnership with others to preserve historic resources and promote awareness of the important educational, recreational, and historic resources of both the NPS and surrounding communities. The Truman Home in Independence, however, will be preserved as it was during the residence of Harry and Bess Truman. Using preservation as a treatment approach is intended to sustain the existing form, integrity, and material of the historic structure.

The NPS will work in partnership with others to preserve historic resources, promote awareness of NPS resources and related resources in the area, and further the common goals of the agency and the community. The NPS will work with others to provide for and enhance financial, educational, recreational, and operational benefits to the historic site and the community. The NPS will provide technical assistance and work with others to develop a comprehensive set of alternative protection and preservation strategies, possibly including a revolving fund for historic preservation.

The NPS will expand the options available to visitors and will develop a comprehensive wayfinding system to improve visitor access and orientation. Increased options for visitors might include more ranger-led programs, expanded exhibits, and collaborative programming with partners. Visitor programs will go beyond park boundaries and encompass both NPS facilities and those in the surrounding area. The NPS, in cooperation with others, will develop a wayfinding system, incorporating and linking both park units and other tourism attractions. The NPS will work with local communities and others to ensure that adequate parking is available without adversely impacting local residents and businesses.

The Grandview Unit will retain its current character; existing historic structures and features will be rehabilitated. Some previously existing historic features could be reconstructed. Alterations will occur only to the extent necessary to best convey the significance of the farm period in the life of Truman. Congressional authorization and funding will be sought to add five acres of land to the Grandview Unit.

Other Alternatives Considered

The DGMP/EA analyzed two other alternatives for managing the Harry S Truman National Historic Site. The minimum action alternative would have focused on improving visitor orientation and services primarily within the boundaries of the national historic site.

Management of the site generally would have been guided by management areas similar to those described in the proposal. No multi-purpose area would have been established at the Grandview Unit. Under this alternative, the NPS might have provided a wider variety of programs to their visitors than currently exists, and improved signage within the park. As in the preferred alternative, the NPS would have remained a strong advocate for historic resources associated with Truman.

Under the "no action" alternative, the NPS would have continued to manage the national historic site as it has in the past retaining the management guidance and direction of the 1987 General Management Plan and the Interim Interpretive Prospectus.

Public Involvement

In early January 1999 the DGMP/EA was mailed to about 150 other agencies, organizations, and private individuals. Availability of the draft was announced in the local media and made available by phone request to the park. A public meeting to discuss the DGMP/EA and to provide for public comment was held on January 6, 1999. The review period for the DGMP/EA lasted 45 days and closed on February 28 1999.

The NPS received a total of 4 comment letters from the public and one from a government agency. Nine persons attended the public meeting; some made oral comments on the plan. Based on public and agency comments, the NPS has clarified the text in some sections and corrected factual errors to the DGMP/EA. However, none of the comments required the NPS to make substantive changes in the three management alternatives or in the conclusions in the environmental assessment.

Summary of Environmental Consequences

The potential environmental consequences of the three alternatives, including the preferred alternative, are described on pages 49-55 of the DGMP/EA. Briefly, the environmental assessment states that the preferred alternative would have a negligible to minor impact on the site's natural resources. There are no threatened or endangered species listed for the area. The preferred alternative would have a negligible to minor impact on known cultural resources. No adverse impacts were identified to sites listed on or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. No adverse impacts would occur to the existing range of visitor services. In the long term, visitor experience and opportunities would be enhanced under the preferred alternative. Limited economic and social benefits would be expected to result from the preferred alternative, but the overall economic effects on the greater Kansas City economy would be negligible. No appreciable cumulative effects were identified that would result from implementing the preferred alternative. No unmitigated adverse impact on public health, public safety, or on unique characteristics of the region. No highly uncertain or controversial impact, unique or unknown risks, or elements of precedence were identified. Implementation of the preferred alternative will not violate any federal, state, or local laws.



Finding

After reviewing the comments on the DGMP/EA for Harry S Truman National Historic Site, the NPS adopts the preferred alternative as the general management plan for Harry S Truman NHS. The NPS selected this alternative for several reasons. This alternative enables the NPS to enhance visitor experience and opportunities while continuing to manage the site for its established purpose. The plan establishes a management framework for the Grandview Unit of the park making certain to tell the important stories associated with Truman. In addition, since many of the historic resources associated with Truman lie beyond park boundaries, this alternative sets a course in which the NPS will work in a more proactive and collaborative manner with partners representing the communities and local, state and federal agencies in preserving and promoting these important resources. Public comments indicated that these were important issues, which the preferred alternative acknowledges.

On the basis of the information contained in the environmental assessment as summarized in the DGMP/EA, it is the determination of the NPS that the preferred alternative does not constitute a major federal action that would significantly impact the quality of the human environment. Therefore, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1508.9), an environmental impact statement will not be prepared for this plan.

The NPS will make this FONSI available for public review for 30 days. After this public review period expires, the NPS will begin implementing the preferred alternative.

William W. Schenk
Approved

6/9/99
Date

