



National Park Service
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Independence National
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Independence National Historical Park

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National Park Service Proposes Plan for Visitation and Security at Independence Park

Independence National Historical Park (INHP) released today a draft decision document detailing the park's plans for moving forward on visitation and security measures. Based on the revisions to park security proposed in October 2006, the document, called a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), outlines the park's intent to implement a Visitor Use Area around Independence Hall that is derived from the "No Action Alternative" described in the July 2006 Environmental Assessment. The draft FONSI will be available for public comment for 30 days, until February 23, 2007. On February 1, 2007, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm, INHP will host a public Q&A session at the Independence Visitor Center to answer any questions members of the public may have about the proposal.

As announced by National Park Service (NPS) Director Mary Bomar and INHP Superintendent Dennis Reidenbach in October 2006, this proposal is designed to provide continued excellence in visitor service as well as appropriate security for Independence Hall, visitors, and park staff. The revised measures, which were worked out in consultation between the Department of the Interior, the NPS, Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter, and the City of Philadelphia, address concerns expressed by the public and elected officials during the public comment period for the "Security Fence and Screening Facilities" Environmental Assessment (EA) which was released in July 2006.

The FONSI provides a detailed analysis of the modified No Action alternative that consists of a Visitor Use Area around Independence Hall, as well as modifications to the visitor screening procedure at Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell, which are derived from the "No Action Alternative" of the EA. The proposed Visitor Use Area will be enclosed by bollards and chains and will provide visitors and neighbors with a secure, contemplative space for visits to Independence Hall and Independence Square. The Visitor Use Area will be smaller than the current secure zone around Independence Hall. Under normal conditions, screening techniques for entrance to this area will be limited to a visual package and parcel inspection. The Visitor Use Area proposal provides the best achievable balance between providing necessary security for

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Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell while still preserving the cultural resources and maintaining the quality of the visitor experience.

So that the public can conveniently comment, the FONSI is posted on the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>, as well as the Park's website http://www.nps.gov/inde/management_documents. Hard copies are also available at the Park Headquarters at the address below.

Comments on the FONSI may be sent electronically via the web sites listed above or may be mailed or emailed to the address below. The public comment period will close February 23, 2007; comments must be postmarked no later than that date.

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