

For Immediate Release
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Park Service (NPS) is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate a range of alternatives for the rehabilitation of the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool (Reflecting Pool) and surrounding area located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

The EA will analyze alternatives intended to rehabilitate and enhance the infrastructure, circulation, accessibility, and historic resources at various locations around the Reflecting Pool. At the Reflecting Pool, upgrades are proposed both to improve its water supply, water quality, drainage, and structural system as well as to formalize walkways along the worn dirt paths created by approximately 4.5 million annual visitors travelling between the World War II Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial. To the north and south of the Reflecting Pool along the historic elm walks, some furnishings would be reconfigured and the walkways would be upgraded to enhance visitor experience. New permanent lighting would also be installed. To the west end of the elm walks, improvements are proposed that integrate accessible pathways down to the Reflecting Pool with a permanent vehicular security system to replace the temporary concrete closure at the center section of the Lincoln Memorial east plaza.

The purpose of these actions is to improve and enhance visitor experience, the efficiency of park management and operations, and the functionality and sustainability of certain elements at the Reflecting Pool and surrounding area in a manner that respects the historic resources of the Lincoln Memorial cultural landscape. The monuments, memorials, landscape features, and vistas within the project area constitute some of the most iconic and recognizable images commemorating presidential legacies and war veterans in the country, contributing to an annual estimated visitorship of approximately 4.5 million. Nevertheless, the project area is being used far beyond capacity, and the physical condition of the infrastructure and circulation systems have deteriorated to such an extent that they are creating inefficiencies in park management and operations. In addition, several components need to be upgraded to address issues that were not anticipated in the original planning and design of the project area, such as security, accessibility, and nighttime visitation.

A public scoping meeting will be held by the NPS on Thursday, July 9, 2009 from 5:30 PM to 8:00 PM at the Old Post Office Tower (Room MO9), 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. NPS staff and their consultants will present project information from 6:00pm to 6:30pm. Subsequently, during an open house from 6:30pm to 8pm, the project team will be available to discuss alternatives and site characteristics.

If you wish to comment on the Reflecting Pool Rehabilitation Project, comments will be taken during this meeting, or you may submit them electronically (*The NPS preferred method of receiving comments*), by fax, or mail them directly. The NPS will accept comments on the proposed project through Friday, August 14, 2009.

Submit comments on-line by following the appropriate links at:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/NAMA>

Fax comments to:

Attn: Reflecting Pool Rehabilitation Project
(202) 401-0017

Mailed directly to:

Terri Urbanowski, Project Manager
Attn: Reflecting Pool Rehabilitation Project
National Park Service - DSC
12795 West Alameda Parkway

Lakewood, CO 80288-2838

The public scoping meeting will also provide the first opportunity for consultation on the project under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Section 106 is the process by which federal agencies take into account the effect of undertakings upon historic resources on or eligible for the National Register for Historic Places.

Public Access to Old Post Office Tower meeting room:

Enter only via the south side of the building, across the street from the Federal Triangle Metro station on 12th Street NW. Proceed through a security checkpoint; proceed to the stairs or elevators and go upstairs one level.