



# Foundation Document Overview

## World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument

Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i



### Contact Information

For more information about the *World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument Foundation Document*, contact: [valr\\_superintendent@nps.gov](mailto:valr_superintendent@nps.gov) or (808) 422-3399 or write to:

Superintendent, World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, 1845 Wasp Blvd. #176 Honolulu, HI 968180

## Purpose



DoD photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Daniel Barker, U.S. Navy.

*WORLD WAR II VALOR IN THE PACIFIC NATIONAL MONUMENT, Pearl Harbor and its partners preserve, interpret, and commemorate the history of World War II in the Pacific from the events leading to the December 7, 1941, attack on Oahu, to peace and reconciliation.*



## Significance

Significance statements express why World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

- **Japan Attacks Oahu.** World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, Pearl Harbor interprets and preserves sites and artifacts of the December 7, 1941, Japanese military attack on Oahu, which killed more than 2,300 military and civilian personnel, and compelled the United States' entry into World War II.
- **Pacific War Oahu.** World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, Pearl Harbor works collaboratively to preserve the historic settings of Oahu's strategic land, air, and sea commands that were crucial to the Pacific War effort.
- **Remember the Sacrifices.** Pearl Harbor serves as a focal point to honor and commemorate the sacrifices made during the Pacific War.
- **Final Resting Place.** Pearl Harbor is the final resting place of hundreds of crew members of the USS *Arizona* and USS *Utah* who made the ultimate sacrifice in the greatest loss of life during a single event in US Naval history. The National Park Service and the US Navy continue to honor WWII veterans through ceremonial and stewardship activities.
- **Portal to the Pacific War Story.** World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, Pearl Harbor serves as a portal to the Pacific War story, from its epic land, air, and sea battles to the violations of human rights and the long-lasting impacts of the war.
- **Enduring Peace.** The meaningful setting of Pearl Harbor provides unique opportunities for reconciliation among former Pacific War combatants. The memorials serve as icons of enduring peace and reminders of the healing that is still ongoing.

## Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

- **Historic Structures of Battleship Row.** The shipwrecks; submerged resources; mooring quays F6 North and South, F7 North and South, and F8 North and South; the six Chief Petty Officer Bungalows; and other historic and archeological sites are tangible features of Battleship Row and the Pearl Harbor environs.
- **The USS *Arizona*, the USS *Utah*, and the USS *Oklahoma* Memorials.** The memorials provide opportunities for people to commemorate, remember, and understand the events and sacrifices of December 7, 1941, and the Pacific War.
- **Physical Record.** The original objects, records, manuscripts, photos, and oral histories that document the events of the Pacific War, including the buildup to war and its aftermath.
- **Knowledge and Understanding of the Pacific War during WWII.** The first-hand narratives from those who lived the story; evidence of the social, political, and economic impacts of the war; and ongoing research conducted at the monument contribute to site stewardship, protection of resources, and communicating the story.
- **Ability to Reach People with an Authentic and Relevant Story of the Pacific War.** World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, Pearl Harbor is an internationally recognized, accessible, and highly visited site that reaches many people through its exhibits, commemorative and ceremonial events, public programs, and guided boat tours to the USS *Arizona* Memorial.
- **Sense of Place.** Physical access to the Pearl Harbor National Historic Landmark landscape, artifacts, and remnants of the war inspire visitors to form their own meaningful connections with the Pacific War story and the sacrifices that were made.

## Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from—and should reflect—park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

- The diverse and complex impacts of World War II on the people of the Pacific shaped and transformed ways of life.
- The memorials constitute places of remembrance and contemplation of the nature of war and the sacrifices of those who lost their lives during the Pacific War.
- The devastating surprise attack on Oahu compelled the United States into an unprecedented world conflict no one was quite ready for, galvanizing all sides for a long, cruel war.
- The war in the Pacific challenged the resolve, ingenuity, and moral compass of every citizen and soldier. The events deeply changed the world socially, geopolitically, environmentally, and militarily.
- Emerging from the destruction of the war, the world is still struggling to find new meanings of trust, respect, and peace for the future.



# Description

World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, Pearl Harbor is located in Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, on the island of Oahu in the State of Hawai'i. The Pearl Harbor area was designated a national historic landmark in 1964 for its strategic importance related to the United States' annexation of Hawaii, and for the December 7, 1941, Japanese attack during World War II. Within close proximity to downtown Honolulu and the resort area of Waikiki, the Pearl Harbor site is the most visited destination on Oahu.

Pearl Harbor is one of three locations where sites associated with the Pacific War were designated as part of the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument to commemorate the heroic sacrifices made in the cause of democracy and freedom during World War II. The monument also includes sites on the Aleutian Islands in Alaska and in Newell, California (Tule Lake Unit). The three locations are managed separately, but together tell the broader story of the Pacific War.

The role of the National Park Service at Pearl Harbor has evolved over time. In 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower approved legislation for the establishment of the USS *Arizona* Memorial to commemorate military personnel killed in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The USS *Arizona* Memorial was constructed over the hull of the sunken USS *Arizona*, and dedicated by the Pacific War Memorial Commission in 1962. Visitation and management of the memorial was the responsibility of the US Navy until 1980, when operations were turned over to the National Park Service through an agreement with the US Navy.

On December 5, 2008, an Executive Order establishing World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument expanded the NPS mission and directed the National Park Service to manage the following sites at Pearl Harbor: the USS *Arizona* Memorial and Visitor Center (now referred to as the Pearl Harbor visitor center); the USS *Utah* and USS *Oklahoma* memorials (although not the shipwrecks themselves); six Chief Petty Officer Bungalows on Ford Island; and mooring quays F6 North and South, F7 North and South, and F8 North and South (part of Battleship Row).

Central to the NPS mission at Pearl Harbor is memorializing those who fell during the December 7, 1941, attack on Oahu. The USS *Arizona* Memorial honors the 1,177 crewmen who died as a result of the attack. The hull is both a tomb for more than 900 sailors who remain within and also serves as an artificial reef providing habitat for marine life. The USS *Oklahoma* Memorial honors 429 sailors who died when the ship capsized. The USS *Utah* Memorial, with its visible hull nearby, commemorates its 58 dead. Although not within the monument boundaries, both the USS *Arizona* and USS *Utah* shipwrecks are designated national historic landmarks located in Pearl Harbor.

The recently expanded and renovated Pearl Harbor visitor center offers excellent opportunities to learn about the Pacific War and the December 7, 1941, attack on Oahu. From this area visitors are able to access to other Pearl Harbor Historic Sites such as the USS *Bowfin* Submarine Museum and Park, the Battleship *Missouri* Memorial, and the Pacific Aviation Museum.

