

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Intermountain Region  
Arizona, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Utah, Wyoming, Texas



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**Fort Union National Monument**  
*Exhibit Concept Plan*

*Exhibit Concept Plan*

*A Conceptual Plan for the Development  
Of Museum Exhibits*

September 24, 2008

**Submitted by:**

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Date

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## Introduction

This Concept Plan was developed by park staff with the assistance of park stakeholders. It serves as a tool for the development of a Concept Plan. This document will provide guidance, based on primary themes, for research, writers, and designers as they begin to formulate designs for individual exhibits in the Exhibit Concept Plan. The plan is intended to provide a consistent overview of the exhibits as a whole and to avoid unneeded repetition of information, orientation, or interpretation. It should be in-line with the park’s goal for interpretation as described in the park’s Strategic Plan: increasing people’s understanding and appreciation of the significant resources comprising Fort Union National Monument.

Fort Union National Monument would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the participants, who gave freely of their time and expertise to forge this document.

### **Internal Audience: Park Stakeholders Meeting on May 1-2, 2008**

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## Foundational Information

### Statements of Significance

Statements of significance clearly define the most important things about the park’s resources and values. They serve as the foundation for developing primary interpretive themes and desirable visitor experiences. Significance statements help park managers and staffs focus on the preservation and enjoyment of those attributes that directly contribute to the purpose of the park and that must be protected.

This area is the traditional homeland and/or hunting and gathering grounds of several indigenous peoples, including the Jemez Pueblo, Pecos Pueblo, Jicarilla Apache, Navajo, Southern Ute, and other tribal nations and contains landmarks and sacred sites embedded in their cultures.

The Santa Fe Trail, evolving from indigenous trade routes, served as a corridor of cultural exchange for more than a millennium. In 1821, it became a major international highway between the United States and Mexico’s northern frontier and by 1848, a national highway joining the U.S. to the new territory of New Mexico. During this historic period and

through the life of Fort Union, the Santa Fe Trail served as a corridor for military movement in the Mexican-American War, Civil War, and Indian Wars.

Fort Union was established in 1851 to protect residents, travelers, and freight along the Santa Fe Trail and in the New Mexico Territory. During its 40-year lifespan (1851-1891), Fort Union —with its garrison, depot, and arsenal — became one of the largest, most important forts that strengthened United States rule, presence, and influence in the American Southwest. Its military hospital was one of the largest and best equipped medical facilities in the Southwest at the time.

The military demand for supplies at Fort Union helped change the region's economy from a barter/subsistence system to a cash-based system of supply and use.

Fort Union troops participated in and supported significant military campaigns such as the Long Walk, Battle of Adobe Walls, Sand Creek Massacre, and others resulting in captivity, internment, massacre, and ultimate removal of tribal groups from traditional homelands and lifeways.

In defense of the New Mexico Territory during the Civil War, the “Star Fort” (one of the finest remaining earthworks in the Southwest) was constructed in 1861 to protect the Union defenses and military supply from Confederate attack. Approximately 3,000 New Mexico Volunteers served in the Federal forces, many of whom were trained and quartered at Fort Union and were integral to the Union victory in the Civil War campaign in the Southwest.

The cultural landscape of Fort Union National Monument possesses a high degree of historic integrity as its viewshed has changed little since the fort's establishment in 1851. The natural resources and values preserved here —such as natural sounds, clear night skies, unobstructed views, and short-grass prairie— contribute to an authentic historic setting.

Fort Union contains the largest concentration of 19<sup>th</sup>-century adobe ruins in the United States. The architectural style of its buildings influenced the development of New Mexico Territorial Style Architecture.

Fort Union National Monument is one of the few federally managed sites preserving physical remains of the Santa Fe Trail.

#### Primary Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes convey park significance. Primary interpretive themes are the key ideas through which the park's nationally significant resource values are conveyed to the public. They connect park resources to the larger ideas, meaning, and values of which they are a part. They are the building blocks — the core content — on which the interpretive program is based. Each primary theme may connect to a number of specific stories or sub themes. These elements are helpful in designing individual services, such as exhibits, ensuring that the main aspects of primary themes are addressed.

**A** — Evolving from indigenous trade routes, the Santa Fe Trail set the stage for diverse cultural encounters, international exchange, struggles for sovereignty, and the evolution of cultural identity in the American Southwest.

**B** — United States military presence at Fort Union and along the Santa Fe Trail changed the face of the Southwest by introducing a new political system, economic structure, and set of rules and social values from which people benefited, adapted to, or perished.

**C** — Fort Union National Monument’s architectural remains, Santa Fe Trail ruts, and little-changed landscape provide an authentic setting for visitors to imagine and reflect on human activity and military life on the western frontier and defining events that shaped the developing nation.

**D** — Fort Union National Monument provides opportunities to share the profound impacts that the concept of Manifest Destiny and westward expansion had on inhabitants of the area and still has on their descendents today.

**E** — The natural resources that provided subsistence here for centuries and a strategic place to build Fort Union, offer today’s visitors an authentic and premier setting to recreate and reflect on a bygone era.

#### Interpretive Audiences

Interpretive audiences are those distinct groups of individuals for whom interpretive services are specifically designed. By definition, services designed specifically for one audience will be less effective for other audiences. The following is a list of specific audiences that this park’s interpretive plan is designed to take into account. The numbers are used for identification only; they do not denote priority.

**1 — General Audience.** *(Includes families, retirees, virtual visitors, NPS-informed, local communities, and affiliated tribes and nations)*

**2 — Organized Educational Groups.** *(Includes grades K-12, college)*

#### Visitor Experience Considerations

The desired outcome of park operations is to manage visitor-resource interactions so that resources will remain unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations while ensuring that opportunities exist for the widest variety of current visitors to forge meaningful connections with those resources. The following list of visitor experience considerations, derived from park and stakeholder understanding of desired visitor experiences, serves to guide the development of services that will be offered as the park’s desired future interpretive program.

- Visitors want to experience 19<sup>th</sup>-century military life, ambience, and material culture at Fort Union. They want an authentic, historically accurate, and interactive experience to bring the fort to life. They want to understand the true significance of Fort Union from multiple perspectives.
- Visitors want to see and experience riding on the Santa Fe Trail, and want to know about the place before the fort’s establishment.
- Visitors want to experience the natural world of Fort Union.

#### **Park User and Visitor Experience Observations:**

Each year approximately 11,000 visitors come to Fort Union National Monument. These figures are based on a three-year average taken during calendar years 2005, 2006, and 2007.

Visitors come to Fort Union National Monument to learn about the history associated with the site, walk the 1.25 mile self-guided trail of the fort grounds, view Santa Fe Trail ruts, and enjoy the vast openness of the outdoors. Visitors normally spend an average of 1 to 1 ½ hours experiencing the park. Generally, weekends draw a higher number of visitors, than weekday visits.

During a typical year, October through March is the period of lowest visitation while April through September draws the highest visitation. Out of state visitors' make-up the highest percentage of visits, while local visitors, the lowest percentage.

## Management Goals and Support for the Plan

### **Vision and Strategy Goals - April 29, 2008**

(In April 2008, the park undertook a visioning and planning session with park staff and from the draft results, the following management goals support not only the Museum Concept Plan but also, interpretation, education and community and public outreach.)

**Fort Union maintains a high level of preservation professionalism, shares knowledge with others, and passes knowledge and skills to future generations.**

**Fort Union has a research library that supports park staff and attracts national researchers/scholars.**

Library: Increase library's holdings; create a research quality library; continue library upgrades; create adequate facilities in library to accommodate visiting scholars

**Fort Union is relevant and valued by the surrounding communities and schools; all visitors have a reason to return.**

Education/Schools: Develop a solid educational program with the local surrounding school districts, ongoing, grades K-12 curriculum based program and incorporate Fort Union into schools, and New Mexico history classes.

Interpretation and Special Events: Develop public, educational, and living history interpretive programs utilizing primary interpretive themes from CIP; better advertise special events, including at schools; provide more special events; create more interpretive positions to better tell the story and serve the public; complete museum exhibits which include full inclusive and rich stories; install new waysides complete 18 panels; interpret prairie trail – cultural landscape and natural resources.

**Fort Union continues to evolve with methods, programs, and technology for outstanding communication with visitors.**

**Fort Union recognizes, interprets, and protects its scenic, cultural, and historic landscape including dark night skies and natural resources.**

**Fort Union is enhanced by numerous partnerships.**

Partnerships: Increase and maintain partnerships with community groups, agencies, and stakeholders; develop partnership for friends group; partnership with Highlands University to develop green, sustainable operation; engage and cultivate a community awareness of Fort Union NM that leads to support and positive community expectations; provide partnership opportunities with local college and universities.

**Fort Union is a partner with groups and organizations with historical or traditional ties to the fort and area and stories; they are involved in various aspects of park programs.**

**Fort Union is an anchor in the Santa Fe Trail and linked to other land managing agencies.**

### Management Goals for Interpretation

Interpretation operates within the larger environment of park management. A clear statement of what park management expects interpretation to contribute to the larger whole is requisite to the design of an interpretive program, including exhibits, which will work in concert with other park operations to achieve the overall goals of the park.

**The mission and role of interpretation:**

- The mission of interpretation is to increase visitor understanding and appreciation of the significance of park resources. (GPRA)
- Interpretive services provide opportunities for people to forge their own intellectual and emotional connections with the ideas and meanings inherent in the resources of the park. (Interpretive Development Plan)

**The Superintendent expects interpretation to accomplish the following for the park:**

- To identify the stories of Fort Union and share them with the public.
- To develop foundational information to inform management and decisions.
- To move the park forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, to be relevant, and keep Fort Union on the public radar screen.
- To share stories of Fort Union with the public, and to identify stakeholders and partners to achieve interpretive goals.
- To use significance statements to inform the public, NPS officials, and politicians about why this place is significant.
- To remain true to the legislation, provide public access, and to serve in the public interest.
- To strengthen partnerships and relations with local communities and affiliated nations and pueblos.
- To increase visitation.

**The purpose of the park:**

- To preserve the historic remains and setting of Fort Union and its inextricable link to the Santa Fe Trail, to provide for public use and education, and to interpret Fort Union's role in westward expansion.
- To comprehensively interpret Fort Union, encompassing the time before and after its establishment, as well as the multiple perspectives of the cultures that contributed to, and were affected by, the fort.
- To preserve the natural resources and values of Fort Union and the Santa Fe Trail, in order to maintain an authentic historical setting in which to experience them.

Issues and Influences Affecting Interpretation

The park's interpretation operation is subject to internal and external constraints that affect its ability to accomplish the goal of enhancing public understanding and appreciation of park significances. A review of those issues and influences currently affecting or expected to affect interpretation during the life of these exhibits allows the staff to predict and proactively address challenges to effective interpretation.

**New Museum Exhibits:** Project was funded in March 2008 (FLREA 20%) and planning work has begun in spring of 2008.

**Action:** Begin to develop a Museum Exhibit Plan that will inform design and fabrication contractors of the nature and content of exhibits. Park staff is exploring CESU options already in place and determine the methods and allocation of budget for design and fabrication of exhibits.

**Action:** Consult with affiliated nations/pueblos that can provide content on exhibits pertaining to native subject areas. Keep them informed of process and progress.

**Action:** Engage in public review for comments on exhibits.

**Wayside Exhibits:** FLREA 20% funding exists to replace 10 wayside exhibits with new ones in 2008. All 18 wayside exhibits within the monument should be replaced to have a consistent appearance and convey updated significances, primary interpretive themes, and subthemes as additional funds become available.

**Action:** Implement Wayside Exhibit Plan for Fort Union that prioritizes exhibit replacements, articulates content, identifies existing images or image needs, and establishes design consistency

**Action:** Seek additional funding through PMIS FLREA sources to complete the last 8 wayside exhibits planning, development and fabrication.

**Low/Decreasing Visitation:** Park visitation has dropped from 19,000 to less than 12,000 over the past 15 years. Park staff is exploring reasons for the decline, more information on visitor profile and trends, and avenues to increase visitation.

**Native Consultation:** Official government-to-government consultation conducted prior to the CIP process in August, 2007, revealed that this area is important to Jicarilla Apache, Navajo nations, Southern Ute, Ute Mountain Ute Tribes, and Jemez Pueblo and potentially others. All have expressed interest in continued consultation, especially in the development of accurate content and storylines for all interpretive services and programs.

**Action:** Hold an annual meeting with current consultants and invite others who have missed the CIP opportunity. Meetings will provide opportunity to share important information and updates on park goals, initiatives and projects.

**Ruins Preservation Program:** Opportunities exist to include the public in the ruins preservation program through watching professionals at work and hands-on activities.

**Museum Exhibit Space:** Opportunities exist to increase the visitor center space.

**Action:** Through the New Museum Exhibits planning process, explore design opportunities to increase interpretive opportunities and, exhibit space to determine if more space is possible.

**DOE of Mission 66:** The Monument is the first NPS site completely planned under the Mission 66 scope. Because the visitor center and other buildings are reaching the 50 year threshold, the site including visitor center has been evaluated in 2008 for eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Action:** A DOE, Determination of Eligibility will be submitted to the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office in early 2009 for consideration. A determination will mean that new actions to the eligible buildings will require special consideration in light of the Mission 66 designation.

**NM 161 Roadside Pullofts and waysides project:** The Connect Trails to Parks project with the Santa Fe National Historic Trail office and the Cornerstones Community Partnerships will provide new opportunities for connections with the local communities of Tiptonville and Watrous as well as create new interpretive opportunities on the way to Fort Union NM on NM 161.

**Action:** These activities should be recognized in the Museum exhibit planning process with regard to interpretive messages and compatibility.

#### Interpretive References — Resources for Interpretation

Resources supporting the interpretive effort and actions to strengthen that support are listed below. Action items for these exhibits identified by the core planning team are identified below.

#### **Resource-Focused Research**

Research references at the monument are extensive, including the Ethnographic Overview, Historic Resource Studies, Historic Structure Report, Cultural Landscape Inventory, Natural Resources Inventory, , and many more. (Reports and locations are listed in the Interpretive Database section of the CIP). However, certain research is needed in order to fully and accurately interpret Fort Union:

#### **Actions:**

- Conduct research on: Buffalo Soldiers, New Mexico Volunteers, and Masonic Lodges at Fort Union, and the role of Fort Union during the Civil War. This is a working list and not inclusive.
- Obtain from the National Archives: Quartermaster and Arsenal returns; maps
- Update FOUN's Administrative History
- Conduct oral histories from local ranchers, native groups. Hispanic communities, descendents (Lawrence), former employees, and members of Masonic Lodge meetings at Fort Union, etc.
- Summarize Natural Resource Inventory/Monitoring Report and convey in lay terms. Make use of the Virtual Southwest Learning Center website.
- Develop reading list for park staff.
- Examine the Studies at Corazon SFTA, see what research is applicable to FOUN and copy for FOUN's library.
- Develop a guide and SOP's to access all this research.

#### **Visitor-Focused Research**

Visitation has been significantly decreasing over the past decade. Research is needed:

- Who visits Fort Union and what do they want from their visit (demographics, visitor trends in New Mexico national monuments, other forts) Clean –up (shorten)
- Tap into any research/information from New Mexico Department of Tourism.
- Access, review, and apply data from visitors at Las Vegas Museum re: their visit in the area and what they'd like to see.
- How did visitors find out about Fort Union?
- Review visitor log book to glean information on visitors.
- Find out what percent of FOUN visitors are return visitors.
- Tap into regional or national studies about visitors to the area, region, or forts within the NPS.

- Investigate similar declines in visitation.
- Find out: what does Fort Union and the Santa Fe Trail mean to people?

### **Library**

The park has developed a Mission Statement for the Library and a list of goals to achieve it: One vision for the library is to modify and improve the quality of the collections to a Research Library quality facility. The park has developed a vision statement to improve and secure a collection in a new research library facility. Currently the library is located in park housing with controlled access by appointment only. The library is a significant regional resource, containing about 2,000 volumes and documents. Of these, there are a significant number of rare books, and many that are out of print and hard to find. The digital catalog is complete and up to date. The high quality of the collection casts the library as high potential to become a research library.

#### **Actions:**

- Copy archival documents and maps and make accessible in the library.
- Organize maps: which should stay in the library, which in archives
- Develop SOPs for current and future research library.
- Explore another location to house the library, outside the trailer, including either relocation or new construction.
- Provide online access to the catalog and online access from library to the internet.
- Make space for researchers to work.

### **Image Collection**

Image collection: The parks image collection including ??? slides ??? photos are scattered throughout the park and hard to access. The park is in the process of digitizing the entire collection.

#### **Actions:**

- Continue to complete digitization and make accessible to park staff.
- Develop SOPs for the photo image collection.
- Digitize complete photo collection for staff and public use
- Cull, catalog, and digitize the park's slide collection.
- Duplicate FOUN's CD photo collection and store in a fire-proof place.
- Research what images are stored at WACC and TIC.
- Find out what the National Archives have that may be useful to FOUN.
- Acquire historic photos of New Mexico Volunteers, civilians, and American Indians at the fort.
- Centrally locate/move the entire image collection to "controlled access" at the library.

### **Interpretive Collection**

This large collection consists of weapons, ammunition, military uniforms, period clothing, utensils, cookware, furniture, stove, tents, lanterns, wagons, musical instruments, saddle/tack, water barrels, washtubs, and wagon parts along with many smaller artifacts from Spanish coins and helmet to bow, arrows, and railroad spike. The collection has been inventoried and is located within the park's storage room.

#### **Actions:**

- Ensure that interpretive object collections meet standards for proper and safe storage.

### **Museum Collection and Archives**

The museum collection consists of archeological, ethnological, historical, archival, and biological items and specimens. The total museum collections cataloged is approximately 48,000 items with a backlog of approximately 21,000 items yet to be cataloged. The park's Scope of Collection Statement (SOCS) was signed in 1988. The museum collection is located in a building in the residence area of the park. The facility has dedicated museum storage space with a work area. The Museum Checklist lists 68 out of 115 standards are met for the facility.

#### **Actions:**

- Update the SOC, providing clear guidance for future museum acquisitions.
- Correct one Checklist deficiency each year for the next five years to bring standards met to 72 out of 115.
- Complete a 100% inventory of the collection and update the ANCS+ database as necessary.
- Review accession documentation and update backlog of collections as necessary.
- Continue to submit projects statements through PMIS to obtain funding to complete the backlog cataloging.
- Continue to submit project statements through PMIS to obtain funding to correct museum collection storage deficiencies as listed on the park's Museum Checklist.
- Organize maps: which should stay in the library, which stay in archives.
- Review research permits issued in the past and determine location of natural history collection at non-NPS repositories. Complete Loan Agreements as necessary.
- Copy archival documents and maps and make accessible in the library
- Organize maps: which should stay in the library, which in archives

#### **Interpretive Partnerships**

Park partners are critical to the support and/or delivery of the exhibits. Identification of current and potential park partners for this project, and the ways they can support these goals, enhances the park's ability to strategically use resources to serve the public and achieve management goals.

### **Current Partners with Fort Union National Monument**

The partners listed below have official partner relationships with Fort Union NM.

- Western Parks and Monument Association (WNPA) is the official cooperating organization through agreements and memorandum.
- Santa Fe National Historic Trail – NPS affiliation
- Vanishing Treasures Program – NPS IMR/PCW affiliation
- Spanish Colonial Research Center - History dept, Center for Southwest Research, University of New Mexico on various projects
- State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
- Santa Fe Trail National Scenic Byway Alliance – member
- Watrous Volunteer Fire Department
- Boots and Saddles Coordinating Group
- Various NPS IMR park group relationships: Fire, IT, SW Cluster, New Mexico NPS parks, Pecos NHP.
- TANM – Tourism Association of New Mexico

The partnerships list below are not official partners with agreements and the relationships differ widely.

- Citizen's Committee for Historic Preservation (CCHP)
- Las Vegas-San Miguel Chamber of Commerce (member 2008)
- Mora Valley Chamber of Commerce (2008)
- Highlands University
- New Mexico State Parks (Storrie Lake State Park)
- Fort Union Ranch
- Wind River Ranch
- United World College
- Santa Fe Trail Association (SFTA)
- Tierra y Montes Soil and Water Conservation District
- Santa Fe Trail Association, Corazon Chapter,
- Scottsdale Arizona Civil War Roundtable
- New Mexico Artillery Company
- 1<sup>st</sup> Colorado Volunteer History Group
- 2nd Colorado Volunteer History Group
- Fort Garland Museum
- Northeastern New Mexico Department of Tourism
- Grand Lodge of New Mexico (F & AM)
- Las Vegas Night Sky Group
- City of Las Vegas Museum

Tribal and Pueblo affiliations:

- Jicarilla Apache Nation
- Navajo Nation
- Jemez Pueblo
- Southern Ute Tribe
- Ute Mountain Ute
- Southern Cheyenne
- Others

### **Potential Partners for Fort Union National Monument**

The following list includes groups that we may like or hope to develop fruitful partner relationships with in the future.

- United States Forest Service, Santa Fe National Forest, Las Vegas/Pecos Ranger District
- Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge
- Cornerstones Community Foundation
- U.S. Army and US Army Reserves
- Rotary Club
- Elks Club
- Mora Land Grant
- New Friends of Fort Union (creation of new group)

**Potential Benefits to the Park from Partnerships**

- Building help
- Fundraising
- Interpretive services
- Knowledge and expertise
- Maintenance
- Media announcements and publicity
- Photographs and artwork
- Planning and design assistance
- Writing and editing

**Strategic Approach to Partnering**

A strategic examination of partners and assistance they can provide is designed to maximize the effectiveness of working with others to achieve interpretive goals. In this case, these partners may provide important research and information for exhibits.

Partner	Types of Assistance					
	Support including advocacy	Distribution of information	Potential for Donating funds or supplies	External perspectives, viewpoints, advice	Potential for Fundraising	Donating services - Labor for service projects
Chamber of Commerce (Las Vegas) and Mora Valley Chamber of Commerce		●		●		
Citizens Committee for Historic Preservation (CCHP)	●	●	●	●		●
Corazon Chapter, SFTA	●	●		●		●
First Colorado Volunteer Living History Group				●		●
Fort Union Ranch				●		●
Jemez Pueblo				●		
Jicarilla Apache Nation				●		●
Navajo Nation				●		
New Mexico Artillery Company		●		●		●
Santa Fe Trail Association	●	●		●	●	●
Santa Fe Trail National Scenic Byway Alliance	●		●	●	●	
Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable			●	●		
Second Colorado Volunteer Living History Group				●		●
Southern Ute Tribe				●		
United World College (Armand Hammer)				●		●
Ute Mountain Ute				●		
Western National Parks Association (WNPA)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Wind River Ranch	●		●	●		●

<b>Potential Partners</b>	
Boots and Saddles Historical Society	● ●
City Museum of Las Vegas	● ● ●
Fort Garland State Park	● ● ●
Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge	●
Las Vegas Night Sky Group	● ● ●
New Mexico Highlands University	● ● ●
New Mexico State Parks (i.e. Storrie Lake)	● ● ●

### Cooperating Association Operations

Western Parks and Monument Association (WNPA) is the official cooperating organization through agreements and memorandum. is a critical partner in providing funding and design support for exhibits. Defining their role in this project can be completed through narration and by outlining any budget considerations.

WNPA supports the NPS and Fort Union National Monument by making educational and interpretive items available for sale to park visitors and by returning a portion of the sales to the park to further their educational, interpretive, and research activities.

The cooperating association will provide support and funding assistance for necessary improvements to the sales outlet and museum project as necessary.

## Desired Museum Exhibit Design Consideration

### Desired Museum Exhibit Design Consideration

The project overview displays the services that constitute the desired outcome for these exhibits. These are the services that are intended to most effectively communicate each of the park's primary interpretive themes to each identified audience in a way that assures balance, effectiveness, and attainability. These services include the following tenets for successful interpretation:

**Universal accessibility:** The interpretive program includes interpretive services that are designed to be as universally accessible as possible to best meet the varied physical and cognitive needs of interpretive audiences.

**Hierarchy of sophistication:** The interpretive program treats subject matter in a range of ways — from simple-and-basic to complex-and-advanced — to best meet the varied interests of interpretive audiences.

**Range of interpretive services:** The interpretive program includes a range of personal and non-personal interpretive services to best meet the varied learning styles of interpretive audiences.

**Multiple points of view:** The interpretive program treats subject matter from a variety of perspectives to aid in accuracy and relevance to varied interpretive audiences.

**Good Scholarship:** The exhibits will be based on sound scholarship to provide accurate and balanced information.

**Visitor Sovereignty:** The exhibits will be designed to respect the right of visitors to come to their own conclusions about the values and meaning of park resources.

### Management Considerations

The VC exterior, entry way, information desk, sales area, AV room, and museum exhibits should each be considered as contributing to the visitor experience as a whole and an opportunity to communicate park significance and interpretive themes. Exhibit rehabilitation shall include improvement of traffic flow, better use of existing space, exploration of additional space, and exemplify the high standards of professionalism of the National Park Service.

Additional considerations in exhibit design include:

- Adequate time and compensation for participation by, and consultation with, culturally affiliated tribes;
- Improvement of facilities and media to accommodate disabled visitors and employees, and multi-lingual audiences;
- A more comprehensive interpretation of the prehistory, history, and natural history of area;
- Greater emphasis on the Santa Fe Trail;
- Maintaining technological and other components of exhibitry in remote location of monument
- Orientation to both the monument and the Mora Valley;
- Dedication of space for development of temporary or rotating exhibits based on monument issues, new information, finds/displays:
- Integration of Cooperative Association book sales area into exhibits; and
- Adequate space for programs, school groups, public meetings/events, which may include design of mobile or moving exhibits.

- All of museum, audio/visual room, book sales area, information desk and entry vestibule should be considered in the entire planning process.
- Consultation with affiliated tribes is essential in exhibit content development

#### Additional Information

The primary goal of exhibit rehabilitation is to expand the current exhibit to present a more comprehensive story of Fort Union, encompassing the time before the forts' establishment through the present as well as the multiple perspectives of those who were associated with, and affected by, the forts.

A design charrette, conducted May 1-2, 2008, generated concepts as a foundation to organize the wealth of interpretive content for the exhibits. Park staff and stakeholders brainstormed broad concepts for each of Fort Union's five primary interpretive themes listed on pages 4-5 of this document. This exercise was the first step in guiding park staff and designers in the in-depth development of content and sequence of the new exhibits. A list of Fort Union's tangible resources that could be used to illustrate the concepts are provided in Appendix A.

## Exhibit Goals, Concepts, and Content

This section addresses interpretive goals, visitor experiential objectives, current conditions/issues, and preliminary concepts and content for exhibit development at the Fort Union NM Visitor Center (VC). It addresses four main areas of the visitor center in which exhibits will be considered and designed: 1) the VC exterior; 2) entry vestibule, reception, information and sales area, 3) the exhibit room and 4) the audio/visual room. All should be integrated to contribute to a positive visitor experience that invites visitors to explore the significance and interpretive themes of Fort Union as a whole.

### 1) VC Exterior

**Goals:** To guide visitors from the parking area to the VC entrance in a way that sets the tone for visitor experience and interpretive themes of Fort Union, to clearly identify the NPS and the VC and its architectural style, and present pertinent orientation and information prior to VC entry.

**Visitors will be able to:**

- Identify the NPS, and the VC – Mission 66 and Territorial Style building
- Receive pertinent information, regulations, and orientation to Santa Fe Trail

**Current conditions/issues:** The entry area is relatively simple and uninspiring.

**Design Considerations:**

Park staff has considered, but is not limited to the following design considerations:

- The visitor experience begins when leaving I-25 and starting the 8 mile drive on NM 161 to Fort.
- Consider an exterior display that identifies the Territorial Style architecture of the original fort incorporated into the current VC (Mission 66) design.
- Any exterior information panels should be well placed and in keeping with the Territorial style of architecture.
- Integrate the new Santa Fe NHT waysides in the picnic areas into arrival experience if possible.

2) VC: Entry Vestibule, Reception, Information, and Sales Area

**Goals:** To welcome visitors, collect entry fees, display and conduct WNPA sales, provide information/orientation to park resources and encourage visitors to view the exhibits and video.

**Visitors will be able to:**

- Feel welcome and receive information by a park ranger or WNPA staff.
- Orient themselves to Fort Union NM and the Santa Fe NHT.
- Receive improved access and introduction to the exhibits.
- Have a place to rest from the heat and other weather extremes.
- Enjoy book browsing and selection with adequate lighting.

**Current conditions/issues:** The entry and reception area looks very utilitarian and mismatched: two water fountains and HV/AC (return vents) dominate opposing walls; the alarm system panel on inside walls is unnecessarily visible; a large donation ‘stove’ and flag dominate the entry way and impedes visitor flow to the information desk. Book store space is limited and could be better arranged to improve traffic flow.

**Design Considerations:**

Park staff has considered, but is not limited to the following design considerations:

- Additional seating for visitor comfort.
- Explore additional space currently being used for other park functions.
- Design access that creates a good flow to information desk, sales area, AV room, and exhibits.
- Introduce theme of visitor center exhibits upon entry
- All components of the VC (entry way, information desk, sales area, and AV room) should be incorporated into the overall visitor experience and consider the park’s interpretive themes, integrating them in a way that invites/leads visitors to view the exhibits.
- Re-do the entry area to be more attractive and integrated into the visitor center experience.

3) Exhibit Room

**Goals:**

A primary goal of park staff and exhibit rehabilitation is to increase current exhibit space in the museum if possible in order to give a more comprehensive interpretation of the prehistory, history, and natural history of area. Options for achieving expanded space need to be explored as well as subsequent design options of all exhibits accordingly.

**Additional goals for the exhibit room:**

- To offer the public a professional, well-organized, accurate, balanced, and engaging interpretation of Fort Union, the Santa Fe Trail, and the important park significances.
- To establish a clear overall theme for the exhibits.
- To improve facilities and media to accommodate disabled visitors and employees, and multi-lingual audiences.
- To reinforce overall theme with park significances via a range of interpretive media that appeals to different learning styles, through AV techniques, interactive exhibits, dioramas, maps, and artifact displays.
- To display artifacts in cases with appropriate lighting, humidity, and climate controls.

- To provide space for rotating temporary exhibits, allowing the museum content to be updated and relevant, timely topics to be communicated as needed.
- To greater emphasize the Santa Fe Trail.
- To maintain technological and other components of exhibitry in remote location of monument.
- To dedicate space for temporary or rotating exhibits based on new issues, information, finds, etc
- To integrate Cooperative Association (WNPA) book sales area into exhibits.
- To create adequate indoor public space, programs, school groups, which may include design of mobile exhibits.
- Create life-size replicas, rooms or structures that illustrate officers quarters, enlisted mans barracks, etc that is missing in the ruins.

**Visitors will be able to:**

- Grasp the overall theme of exhibit room and be enticed to explore exhibits
- Follow a clear sequence of exhibits that develop and illustrate the overall theme.
- View artifacts found within the monument
- Engage in a variety of interpretive media that reach different learning styles and age/experience levels: visual, audio, interactive, museum displays, text
- Extend the museum experience beyond their visit through interpretive walk in monument, with additional information on websites, and WNPA literature, etc

**Current conditions/issues:** There is inadequate space to interpret the comprehensive story of Fort union and inadequate lighting to view exhibits and displays. The displays and exhibits due not meet ADA requirements (text size, lighting, etc). The exhibit area feels like a dead-end, without a natural direction for egress.

**Design Considerations:**

Park staff has considered, but is not limited to the following design considerations:

- Open audio/visual room into exhibit area to offer a more circular flow pattern of traffic
- Create flexible space for exhibits that can be moved in order to accommodate additional space for interpretive programs, school groups, and public meetings/events.
- Alarm system needs to be upgraded; humidity control added; and fire suppression system updated.
- Exhibits should be at differing levels/heights throughout space.
- The Regional Historic Architect has explored various design options and offered suggestions for improving visitor center space. See the attached trip report.

4) Audio-visual Room

**Goals:** To explore options for other uses of the space and to improve egress to meet safety standards.

**Current conditions/issues:** Audio/visual room does not meet safety standards for egress

**Design Considerations:**

Park staff has considered, but is not limited to the following design considerations:

- Open audio/visual room into exhibit area to create a more circular traffic flow pattern.

- Consider opening up back end of audio/visual room with entry into additional exhibit space. Once designs for the exhibits are being developed, the park will be able to make more informed choices about architectural changes to the building.
- Consider moving the AV room function into main exhibit space.
- Consider other uses of the AV room.

**CONCEPT 1: Architecture and historic preservation**

These exhibits/displays identify the Territorial Style architecture of the original fort into the VC and illustrate NPS philosophy and techniques in historic preservation and restoration of nationally significant resources contributing to our national heritage.

	Preservation & Architecture
Location and Orientation	Possible locations: VC exterior near entry, behind visitor center at the entry to the adobe ruins and interpretive trail/tour, or VC interior
Management Goal	To demonstrate that Fort Union maintains a high level of preservation professionalism and shares knowledge and skills for current and future stewardship of historic sites.  To communicate the importance of preservation of this historic site.  To introduce the Territorial architectural style of the fort and NPS architects' sensitivity to blend VC in with the landscape and purpose of the national monument.
Visitor Experience Objectives	Visitors will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify at least one feature of Territorial Style architecture</li> <li>• Identify one NPS preservation and one restoration technique used to protect and interpret Fort Union</li> <li>• Understand NPS management actions regarding how much to preserve or restore</li> </ul>
Primary Interpretive Theme	<b>C</b> — Fort Union National Monument's architectural remains, Santa Fe Trail ruts, and little-changed landscape provide an authentic setting for visitors to imagine and reflect on human activity and military life on the western frontier and defining events that shaped the developing nation.
Tangible Resources	The fort ruins Architectural details Architectural features of the visitor center building Resource management activities NPS Mission Construction techniques Territorial Style architecture NPS Architect, Cecil Doty Mission 66-architecture Archeological resources
Intangible Values, Meanings, or Beliefs (universal concepts)	Preserving history and context, preservation of nationally-significant resources and values, cultural heritage and influences, artistic sensibility
Design Ideas, Supporting elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel illustrating preservation/restoration techniques</li> <li>• Exhibit that displays archeological finds at Fort Union</li> <li>• Panel/exhibit in the VC exterior entry area that identifies Territorial Style architecture of the fort</li> </ul>
Graphics, Maps, etc	.
Comments and Text Notes	<i>Incorporate the following park significances:</i>  <i>Fort Union National Monument is one of the few federally managed sites preserving physical remains of the Santa Fe Trail.</i>  <i>Fort Union contains the largest concentration of 19<sup>th</sup>-century adobe ruins in the United States. The architectural style of its buildings influenced the development of New Mexico Territorial Style Architecture.</i>

**CONCEPT 2: Connection between people and place**

The Mora Valley environment and resources attracted people and sustained them and draws people here today.

Topic	Connection between people and place: a sense of place
Location and Orientation	Museum exhibit space
Management Goal	To introduce the concept that the natural environment of the Mora Valley, at the junction of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and the western prairie, attracted people throughout known history and still attracts people today.  To facilitate visitor understanding of how humans interacted with this landscape over time, resulting in the cultural landscape we experience today.
Visitor Experience Objectives	Visitors will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the overall theme of interdependence of humans to this landscape over time</li> <li>• Identify landscape features (rivers, bluffs, springs, etc) that attracted people to this area and</li> <li>• Identify significant natural resources that attracted and sustained people over time</li> <li>• Imagine how fort occupants and others interacted with the landscape.</li> <li>• Identify current natural resource values (night sky, prairie, recreation, etc)</li> </ul>
Primary Interpretive Theme	<b>A</b> — Evolving from indigenous trade routes, the Santa Fe Trail set the stage for diverse cultural encounters, international exchange, struggles for sovereignty, and the evolution of cultural identity in the American Southwest.  <b>C</b> — Fort Union National Monument’s architectural remains, Santa Fe Trail ruts, and little-changed landscape provide an authentic setting for visitors to imagine and reflect on human activity and military life on the western frontier and defining events that shaped the developing nation.  <b>E</b> — The natural resources that provided subsistence here for centuries and a strategic place to build Fort Union, offer today’s visitors an authentic and premier setting to recreate and reflect on a bygone era.
Tangible Resources	The Mora and Sapello Rivers, Wolf Creek, Los Posos The Mora valley landscape, viewshed, and topography The People: prehistoric, historic, and contemporary Geology: clay, limestone, sandstones, river gravel, and basalt Prairie: animals and plants Turkey Mountains, bluffs Weather: wind; harsh winters, tornados; favorable climate for settlement Night sky; bluffs and Resource stability over time Resources providing food, shelter, textiles, and medicine Hydrology: springs (resulting from volcanoes and sediment); aquifers, water storage Steam-powered pumps; plumbing Canals, irrigation, and water hauling
Intangible Values, Meanings, or Beliefs (universal concepts)	Survival, subsistence, comfort, aesthetics, livelihood, sustainability, stability, reflection of past events, traditional homelands, spiritual sites, stewardship, recreation
Design Ideas, Supporting elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mural panorama of the landscape, illustrating continuum of people who inhabited, and subsisted in, the area from prehistoric and historic times to contemporary uses and management of the area</li> <li>• Use of earth tone colors</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topographic relief map, illustrating river, mountains, geology, etc.</li> <li>• Timeline of human use/occupation with photos or graphics</li> <li>• Create exhibit that highlights how local residents used and integrated the natural resources into their lifestyles</li> <li>• Identify land features (using native or local names) significant to different cultural groups.</li> </ul>
<p>Additional Information</p>	<p>Consider developing an introductory panel/exhibit prior to exhibit room that presents the area’s natural features and resources – essential to human use and occupation of the area and location of fort.</p> <p>Follow others’ footsteps along the Santa Fe Trail and through the Mora Valley and along the Santa Fe Trail, beginning with Archaic hunters/gathers, plains tribes and Pueblo Indians, Hispanic settlers, the US Military, historic ranchers, contemporary livelihoods, and land stewards.</p> <p><i>Incorporate the following park significances:</i></p> <p><i>This area is the traditional homeland and/or hunting and gathering grounds of several indigenous peoples, including the Jemez Pueblo, Pecos Pueblo, Jicarilla Apache, Navajo, Southern Ute, and other tribal nations and contains landmarks and sacred sites embedded in their cultures.</i></p> <p><i>The cultural landscape of Fort Union National Monument possesses a high degree of historic integrity as its viewshed has changed little since the fort’s establishment in 1851. The natural resources and values preserved here —such as natural sounds, clear night skies, unobstructed views, and short-grass prairie— contribute to an authentic historic setting.</i></p>

**CONCEPT 3:**

The unique Southwest culture today in the Mora Valley finds its roots in the rich cultural trade along the Santa Fe Trail and was profoundly influenced by three world powers’ (Spain, Mexico, and the U.S.) struggle to rule the area in the 1800’s. As a base of American military operations, Fort Union had profound influences and impacts on cultures and local communities. Whether cultures were blended or displaced, they were forever changed.

Topic	Cultural relationships and influences overtime: locally, nationally, and internationally
Location and Orientation	Museum exhibit area
Management Goal	To facilitate visitor understanding of cultural interaction along the SFT Trail and in this region through stories of individual people, merchants, and cultures who experienced it  To understand the complex relationship that residents developed over time, resulting in the unique Southwest and Northern New Mexican culture of today.
Visitor Experience Objectives	Visitors will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn about and understand the complex cultural relationships that have contributed to the unique Northern New Mexico culture of today</li> <li>• Site at least three influences that Spain, Mexico, the United States and local indigenous peoples have had on culture and economy throughout history</li> <li>• Identify the Santa Fe Trail as an international trade route that influenced the development of three countries</li> <li>• Understand and appreciate the rich cultures and traditions that existed long before European migration</li> <li>• Site some of the profound impacts and influences of varying world powers/governments (Spanish, Mexican, American) on Native Americans, Spanish Settlers, and European Immigrants.</li> </ul>
Primary Interpretive Theme	<b>A</b> — Evolving from indigenous trade routes, the Santa Fe Trail set the stage for diverse cultural encounters, international exchange, struggles for sovereignty, and the evolution of cultural identity in the American Southwest.  <b>B</b> — United States military presence at Fort Union and along the Santa Fe Trail changed the face of the Southwest by introducing a new political system, economic structure, and set of rules and social values from which people benefited, adapted to, or perished.  <b>C</b> — Fort Union National Monument’s architectural remains, Santa Fe Trail ruts, and little-changed landscape provide an authentic setting for visitors to imagine and reflect on human activity and military life on the western frontier and defining events that shaped the developing nation.
Tangible Resources	Indigenous/Native American peoples European and Hispanic cultures The Santa Fe Trail and trade routes: east-west and west-east; north-south, south-north Santa Fe Trail ruts Trade Camino Real del Tierra Adentro (New Spain and Mexico) A list of the cultures Spanish and Mexican land grants Military presence (buildings, people, and operations) Economic interaction: from barter to cash; military economy Flour mills The military/regional hospital, and medical care

	<p>Job opportunities          Western expansion          Social Rank: Military rank          Cultural distinctions over time; Cultural blending over time          Hospital; Stability of communities          Architectural styles          Commerce          Mineral resources          St. Vrain Company          Job opportunities          Daily activities          Uprisings of local communities          George Bent and his assassination          Ranchers, ranching          Spanish influence          Mexican Territory and influence          European people and influences</p>
<p>Intangible Values, Meanings, or Beliefs (universal concepts)</p>	<p>Interdependence, sustainability, interaction, social status, opportunity, hope, loss, homelands, home, heritage, stability, community, traditions, cultural blending, cultural influences, competition, economy, the American dream, search for wealth, religion, identity, change – both negative and positive</p>
<p>Design Ideas, Supporting elements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an audio exhibit of voices representing varying perspectives, languages, and values (historic and contemporary).</li> <li>• Project images of people on screen or wall associated with varying perspectives.</li> <li>• Create a border on wall with “dichos” (proverbs in different languages).</li> </ul>
<p>Graphics, Maps, etc</p>	<p>Map of region depicting homelands of Native Americans and other cultures.          Create a visual map display with chronology of pre-Spanish settlement to the present depicting Native American homelands, Spanish occupation and settlement, and European migration, and governmental political boundaries.</p>
<p>Comments and Text Notes</p>	<p>As an American territory, this vast expanse of land offered hope and new opportunities.</p> <p><i>Incorporate the following park significances:</i></p> <p><i>This area is the traditional homeland and/or hunting and gathering grounds of several indigenous peoples, including the Jemez Pueblo, Pecos Pueblo, Jicarilla Apache, Navajo, Southern Ute, and other tribal nations and contains landmarks and sacred sites embedded in their cultures.</i></p> <p><i>The Santa Fe Trail, evolving from indigenous trade routes, served as a corridor of cultural exchange for more than a millennium. In 1821, it became a major international highway between the United States and Mexico’s northern frontier and by 1848, a national highway joining the U.S. to the new territory of New Mexico. During this historic period and through the life of Fort Union, the Santa Fe Trail served as a corridor for military movement in the Mexican-American War, Civil War, and Indian Wars.</i></p> <p><i>The U.S. military demand for supplies at Fort Union helped change the region’s economy from a barter/subsistence system to a cash-based system of supply and use.</i></p> <p><i>Fort Union National Monument is one of the few federally managed sites preserving physical remains of the Santa Fe Trail.</i></p>

**Concept 3A:**

A subset of the broader Concept 3, these exhibits focus on specific sovereign powers (Spain, Mexico, U.S.) and their influences on the cultures and economy of the regional and local area.

Topic	Governmental influences on cultures and economy
Location and Orientation	Museum exhibit area
Management Goal	To facilitate visitor understanding of governmental objectives (why they did what they did). To facilitate visitor understanding of how the people, the region and the SFT were affected under the influences of each government that has occupied the area.
Visitor Experience Objectives	Visitors will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify three sovereign powers (Spain, Mexico, and U.S.) that competed for governing presence in northern New Mexico.</li> <li>• Identify two military events that took place in the region in the struggle for rule.</li> <li>• Appreciate the complexity of sovereign nations and their influences on peoples in what is now the Southwest US.</li> </ul>
Primary Interpretive Theme	<b>A</b> — Evolving from indigenous trade routes, the Santa Fe Trail set the stage for diverse cultural encounters, international exchange, struggles for sovereignty, and the evolution of cultural identity in the American Southwest.  <b>B</b> — United States military presence at Fort Union and along the Santa Fe Trail changed the face of the Southwest by introducing a new political system, economic structure, and set of rules and social values from which people benefited, adapted to, or perished.  <b>D</b> — Fort Union National Monument provides opportunities to share the profound impacts that the concept of Manifest Destiny and westward expansion had on inhabitants of the area and still has on their descendants today.
Tangible Resources	Spanish, Mexican, and American governments Native American governances Spanish and Mexican Land Grants Local government Dynamics of SFT under each government Stand-alone economy Mexican-American War (Kearney battle) Civil War and its impacts Confederate troop movement into the Southwest Indian campaigns: Sand creek Massacre, Long Walk, Battle of Adobe Walls Indian reservations
Intangible Values, Meanings, or Beliefs (universal concepts)	Western expansion, Manifest Destiny, trade, exchange, struggle, loss, adaptation, lifestyles, relief, opportunity, search for wealth/riches, power, enhancement, genocide, conflict, land ownership concepts, sovereignty, diversity, trade, restrictions, spiritual beliefs.
Design Ideas, Supporting elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider incorporating native voices (in English and native language) as an audio component to exhibit communicating historical, traditional, spiritual, and contemporary values of area.</li> <li>• Consider an audio-component that relates Hispanic perspectives on, land grants, past and continued use of the area.</li> <li>• Consider an interactive exhibit illustrating barter, then cash economy.</li> </ul>
Graphics, Maps, etc	Map of sovereign areas, with modern land delineations
Comments and Text Notes	Fort Union was a profound power-base for the American government and helped shape the final American occupation of the region, and the stabilization of the regional economy.

Tell the Native American and Hispanic stories: impacts to long standing life ways and cultures.

*Incorporate the following park significances:*

*Fort Union troops participated in and supported significant military campaigns such as the Long Walk, Battle of Adobe Walls, Sand Creek Massacre, and others resulting in captivity, internment, massacre, and ultimate removal of tribal groups from traditional homelands and lifeways.*

*In defense of the New Mexico Territory during the Civil War, the “Star Fort” (one of the finest remaining earthworks in the Southwest) was constructed in 1861 to protect the Union defenses and military supply from Confederate attack. Approximately 3,000 New Mexico Volunteers served in the Federal forces, many of whom were trained and quartered at Fort Union and were integral to the Union victory in the Civil War campaign in the Southwest.*

*The Santa Fe Trail, evolving from indigenous trade routes, served as a corridor of cultural exchange for more than a millennium. In 1821, it became a major international highway between the United States and Mexico’s northern frontier and by 1848, a national highway joining the U.S. to the new territory of New Mexico. During this historic period and through the life of Fort Union, the Santa Fe Trail served as a corridor for military movement in the Mexican-American War, Civil War, and Indian Wars.*

*Fort Union was established in 1851 to protect residents, travelers, and freight along the Santa Fe Trail and in the New Mexico Territory. During its 40-year lifespan (1851-1891), Fort Union –with its garrison, depot, and arsenal – became one of the largest, most important forts that strengthened United States rule, presence, and influence in the American Southwest. Its military hospital was one of the largest and best equipped medical facilities in the Southwest at the time.*

*The military demand for supplies at Fort Union helped change the region’s economy from a barter/subsistence system to a cash-based system of supply and use.*

*Fort Union troops participated in and supported significant military campaigns such as the Long Walk, Battle of Adobe Walls, Sand Creek Massacre, and others resulting in captivity, internment, massacre, and ultimate removal of tribal groups from traditional homelands and lifeways.*

### Concept 4: Military Post

This group of exhibits explores why Fort Union was established, and its role in the protection of the Santa Fe Trail, Civil War, Indian Wars, and influences on regional/local government and communities. They should also present a view of military operations and residents' daily lifestyles through the development of life-size (or smaller replicas) quarters, barracks, and quartermaster operations.

Topic	The Military Post – largest in the US Southwest Territory
Location	Museum exhibit area
Management Goal	To present overview of military operations in the SW and at Fort Union
Visitor Experience Objectives	<p>Visitors will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand Fort Union’s role in the new US southwestern territories</li> <li>• Connect the concept of Manifest Destiny to Fort Union</li> <li>• Learn about daily life and activity at Fort Union</li> <li>• Identify at least three military campaigns staged from Fort Union</li> <li>• Identify the three fort construction/expansion and their time frames</li> <li>• Understand that location and resources played a significant role in the establishment of Fort Union.</li> </ul>
Primary Interpretive Theme	<p><b>B</b> — United States military presence at Fort Union and along the Santa Fe Trail changed the face of the Southwest by introducing a new political system, economic structure, and set of rules and social values from which people benefited, adapted to, or perished.</p> <p><b>C</b> — Fort Union National Monument’s architectural remains, Santa Fe Trail ruts, and little-changed landscape provide an authentic setting for visitors to imagine and reflect on human activity and military life on the western frontier and defining events that shaped the developing nation.</p> <p><b>E</b> — The natural resources that provided subsistence here for centuries and a strategic place to build Fort Union, offer today’s visitors an authentic and premier setting to recreate and reflect on a bygone era.</p>
Tangible Resources	<p>Fort Union: ruins, earthworks, and fort-related ruts  Hospital  Santa Fe Trail ruts  Military quarters, barracks, quartermaster depot, arsenal  First hand accounts, journals, diaries  Military campaigns: Civil War, Sand Creek Massacre, etc.  Natural resources providing fort location and sustenance  New Mexico Volunteers  Buffalo Soldiers  Museum objects  Archeology</p>
Intangible Values, Meanings, or Beliefs (universal concepts)	Power, occupation, expansion, patriotism, Manifest Destiny, security, home, work, daily grind, protection of homelands
Design Ideas, Supporting elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a life-sized officer setting, barracks, or living residence in museum.</li> <li>• Consider using book sales area to create fort quarters (officer’s residence).</li> <li>• Consider an exhibit on Buffalo soldiers and their role in military campaigns here</li> <li>• New exhibit on the New Mexico Volunteers and their significant contributions to Union success in the Civil War and other campaigns.</li> <li>• Consider audio component providing varying military perspectives and lifestyles of fort residents, (i.e. officer’s wife, Eddie Matthews’s letters, Buffalo soldiers,</li> </ul>

	<p>commanding officer's orders to troops.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreate a sense of the bustling activity of the fort operations and daily life using the senses (touch, smell, sight, sound, taste).</li> </ul>
Graphics, Maps, etc	Historic photos, maps, diaries/journals
Comments and Text Notes	<p><i>Incorporate the following park significances:</i></p> <p><i>The Santa Fe Trail, evolving from indigenous trade routes, served as a corridor of cultural exchange for more than a millennium. In 1821, it became a major international highway between the United States and Mexico's northern frontier and by 1848, a national highway joining the U.S. to the new territory of New Mexico. During this historic period and through the life of Fort Union, the Santa Fe Trail served as a corridor for military movement in the Mexican-American War, Civil War, and Indian Wars.</i></p> <p><i>Fort Union was established in 1851 to protect residents, travelers, and freight along the Santa Fe Trail and in the New Mexico Territory. During its 40-year lifespan (1851-1891), Fort Union—with its garrison, depot, and arsenal—became one of the largest, most important forts that strengthened United States rule, presence, and influence in the American Southwest. Its military hospital was one of the largest and best equipped medical facilities in the Southwest at the time.</i></p> <p><i>The military demand for supplies at Fort Union helped change the region's economy from a barter/subsistence system to a cash-based system of supply and use.</i></p> <p><i>Fort Union troops participated in and supported significant military campaigns such as the Long Walk, Battle of Adobe Walls, Sand Creek Massacre, and others resulting in captivity, internment, massacre, and ultimate removal of tribal groups from traditional homelands and lifeways.</i></p> <p><i>In defense of the New Mexico Territory during the Civil War, the "Star Fort" (one of the finest remaining earthworks in the Southwest) was constructed in 1861 to protect the Union defenses and military supply from Confederate attack. Approximately 3,000 New Mexico Volunteers served in the Federal forces, many of whom were trained and quartered at Fort Union and were integral to the Union victory in the Civil War campaign in the Southwest.</i></p> <p><i>The cultural landscape of Fort Union National Monument possesses a high degree of historic integrity as its viewshed has changed little since the fort's establishment in 1851. The natural resources and values preserved here—such as natural sounds, clear night skies, unobstructed views, and short-grass prairie—contribute to an authentic historic setting.</i></p> <p><i>Fort Union contains the largest concentration of 19<sup>th</sup>-century adobe ruins in the United States. The architectural style of its buildings influenced the development of New Mexico Territorial Style Architecture.</i></p> <p><i>Fort Union National Monument is one of the few federally managed sites preserving physical remains of the Santa Fe Trail.</i></p>

Schedule of Tasks to Complete the Exhibit through Installation.

NOTE: The core planning team identified the various tasks needed to complete this plan and start the Concept Plan.

Subject	Task / Action	Responsible	Tentative Due Dates
<b>Post-workshop starting place for the <i>Concept Plan</i></b>	Transcribe the information gathered in the workshops.	Planners	June 13, 2008
<b>Exhibit Stakeholder review of concept document material</b>	Stakeholders review and comment.	Stakeholders	June 25, 2008
<b>Finalize input for Each Concept</b>	Meet, brainstorm, draft exhibit tables, edit, complete.	Park	
<b>Develop advertisement for CESU and advertise</b>	Edit documents	Park Region CESU staff	
<b>Select CESU</b>	Review submissions and select	Park	
<b>Develop Cooperative Agreement</b>	Write up agreement and send to CESU staff	Park Region CESU staff	
<b>Start to developing the resource book.</b>	Meet, brainstorm, draft, edit, and complete.	Park	

# Architect Trip Report

## Fort Union National Monument

### Visitor Center Interpretative Concepts Meeting

#### May 1-2, 2008

**Traveler:** Sayre Hutchison, IMR Historical Architect

**Location:** Fort Union National Monument, New Mexico

**Purpose:** To evaluate and develop interpretative concepts related to the Comprehensive Interpretative Plan (CIP) and begin preliminary discussions on how the Visitor Center (VC) building might be utilized to realize the updated concepts and displays.

**Participants:**

Marie Sauter, Fort Union  
Frank Torres, Fort Union  
Roger Portillo, Fort Union  
Claudette Norman, Fort Union  
Tibor K. Remenyik, Fort Union  
Bill Broughton, Fort Union  
Tomye Folts, NPS Natural Resources Monitoring Network  
Lorenzo Vigil, PECO  
Linda Lutz-Ryan, IMR, Interpretation & Education  
Judy Rosen, IMR, Interpretation & Education  
Sayre Hutchison, IMR Cultural Resource Program

**Meeting Notes and Discussions:**

Visitor Center Building General Notes:

Fort Union Visitor Center was designed by Cecil Doty of the Western Office of Design and Construction, Branch of Architecture in 1958, project number FTU-W159. It is unique for three reasons:

- a. It is identified in Sarah Allabaks Mission 66 visitor center (VC) book as being one of the early designs to locate the VC “on” the primary resource. This became a common design technique for VCs during the Mission 66 movement.
- b. The design of the building utilizes an architectural style, Territorial Style, to interpret and capture a sense of what the Third Fort buildings would have looked like. This concept is particularly significant due to the congressional record stating the buildings were not to be reconstructed.
- c. It is designed by the prominent National Park Service architect Cecil Doty.

While the building has been altered a number of times many of the character defining features and spaces have been maintained or only slightly altered. Currently, the VC has not been evaluated for its eligibility for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NR). Given its influence and tie to the design philosophy for Mission 66 VCs, its association with Cecil Doty as well as a fair, although not a high, level of integrity the building would likely be found eligible for the NR. It is likely eligible under Criterion A for its early tie to the Mission 66 movement and under C for Mission 66 architecture and Cecil Doty. The level of significance would either be State or Local level as this VC wasn't identified in the Visitor Center context

statement as being one of the top five Mission 66 VCs which are still extant. The period of significance would be the year the building was completed.

Architectural features, materials, and spaces define the character of a building. The following is a list of the primary character defining features and spaces for the VC:

Character Defining Features:

1. Contemporary adaptation of Territorial Design
  - a. Low one story building
  - b. Exterior wood porches (painted white)
  - c. Exterior stucco finish and color
  - d. Brick capped parapet walls
  - e. Window architraves
  - f. Primary entrance doorways
2. Entrance vestibule, sales area/lobby and reception desk, and their proximity to the interpretative displays.
3. Interior finishes such as the natural decorative wood ceiling in the lobby and the natural wood beams and ceiling in the sales area.
4. Sitting in relation to the Third Fort and its relationship to the earth works.

To maintain the character of the building the current interpretative designs should compliment and if possible restore some of the features which have been altered over time.

The following list outlines the major alterations which have occurred to the VC since it was built.

Alterations to the Building From 1958 As-built Plans:

1. The main entry vestibule was partially closed down when the wall between the sales area/lobby and admin area was moved forward into the sales area/lobby. When this alteration took place, the main desk was moved several feet into the sales area and away from the NW wall to create a pass through. In addition, the hallway leading to the offices was also removed and the space captured in the admin area. The original exposed wood ceiling and beams, similar to the ceiling in the sales area/lobby, is extant above the administrative area drop ceiling.
2. The mechanical room has been altered to create a small break area/kitchenette.
3. The rear or NE façade of the building originally had a porch similar to the front entrance. Over time this porch has been enclosed to create two offices and more recently a small linear auditorium and a garage/parking area for the electric car.
4. The exterior wall at the bathrooms was moved SE to increase the plumbing count and allow for accessibility to both toilet rooms. When this change occurred the original porch was also moved SE to maintain the character defining feature on the front façade.
5. A raised metal roof system was added to the VC. It appears to be a hipped roof although this observation was made from the ground at the rear of the building. The raised roof with metal turbine ventilators is only visible from the back of the building when walking down the trail from the ruins.

Possible Design Concepts to Consider for Interpretative Area and Visitor Experience:

1. Reprogram the office space on the SE corner of the front façade and incorporate the space into the existing interpretative area.

2. Integrate the existing auditorium/movie area into the overall design of the interpretative area. By incorporating the audio visual area into the overall space it would allow for a portion of the exterior porch to be restored.
3. Relocate wall between the sales and admin area to restore original entry vestibule and overall size of the sales area/lobby.
4. With the possible relocation of the lobby/sales area wall to its original location, back into the admin area, the front desk could be redesigned to more efficient as well as accessible.
5. Consider designing some or all of the displays in the interpretative room so they are movable. By having movable displays the space could also function as a multi-purpose room for meetings and gatherings.
6. Consider creating openings through the original SW wall of the interpretative area to assess current A/V area. Under this scenario the A/V area would be moved into the main interpretative room and integrated into the overall design of the displays. This would allow for additional space to be added to the interpretative room as well as create a circulation pattern through the current A/V room.
7. Add a tactile map for orientation to the site in the lobby. Restore the windows on either side of the main door leading to the walkway to the Third Fort. Restoring these windows would allow for orientation views to the fort.
8. Remove the high book shelves from the lobby/sales area. Install new low shelves which meet accessibility requirements and wrap them around the perimeter of the room on the SE and SW walls.
9. Install a “universal concept” or “big idea” graphic interpretative panel on the SE wall of the lobby/sales area above the proposed book shelves.

Other Design Concepts to Consider to Restore Missing or Altered VC Features:

1. Restore rear or NW elevation porch. This would require removing all or a portion of the existing infill enclosures (audio visual room, electric vehicle storage bay, admin storage room, office).
2. Consider creating a vending machine niche in one of the non-historic walls on the NW porch. If the niche is designed or placed properly it would conceal the view of the machines while being located in a convenient location for the visitors returning from the walking tour.
3. Remove the drop ceiling from the admin room to reveal the original wood beam ceiling concealed above.

**Meeting Recommendations:**

1. Prepare a Determination of Eligibility (DOE) for the VC and/or Mission 66 master plan. The document would be addressed to the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer and establish the historical significance of the building/master plan using the criteria, level of significance, and period of significance noted under the General Notes section of this report. The letter would request SHPO written concurrence on the NPS findings of eligibility.
2. As the interpretative plan and displays develop the reconfiguration/modification and design of the VC to accommodate the displays needs to run concurrently. As the redesign of the VC proceeds through the design process the park should consult with the NMSHPO.

