



# Foundation Document

## Gateway National Recreation Area

New Jersey and New York

May 2017





# Contents

**Mission of the National Park Service . . . . . 1**

**Introduction. . . . . 2**

**Part 1: Core Components . . . . . 3**

    Brief Description of the Park. . . . . 3

    Park Purpose . . . . . 4

    Park Significance . . . . . 5

    Fundamental Resources and Values . . . . . 6

        Fundamental Resources. . . . . 6

        Fundamental Values . . . . . 8

    Other Important Resources and Values . . . . . 9

    Interpretive Themes . . . . . 10

**Part 2: Dynamic Components . . . . . 11**

    Special Mandates and Administrative Commitments . . . . . 11

        Special Mandates. . . . . 11

    Assessment of Planning Needs . . . . . 13

        Identification of Key Issues . . . . . 13

        Planning Needs. . . . . 14

**Part 3: Contributors . . . . . 15**

    Gateway National Recreation Area . . . . . 15

    NPS Northeast Region. . . . . 15

    NPS Park Planning and Special Studies . . . . . 15

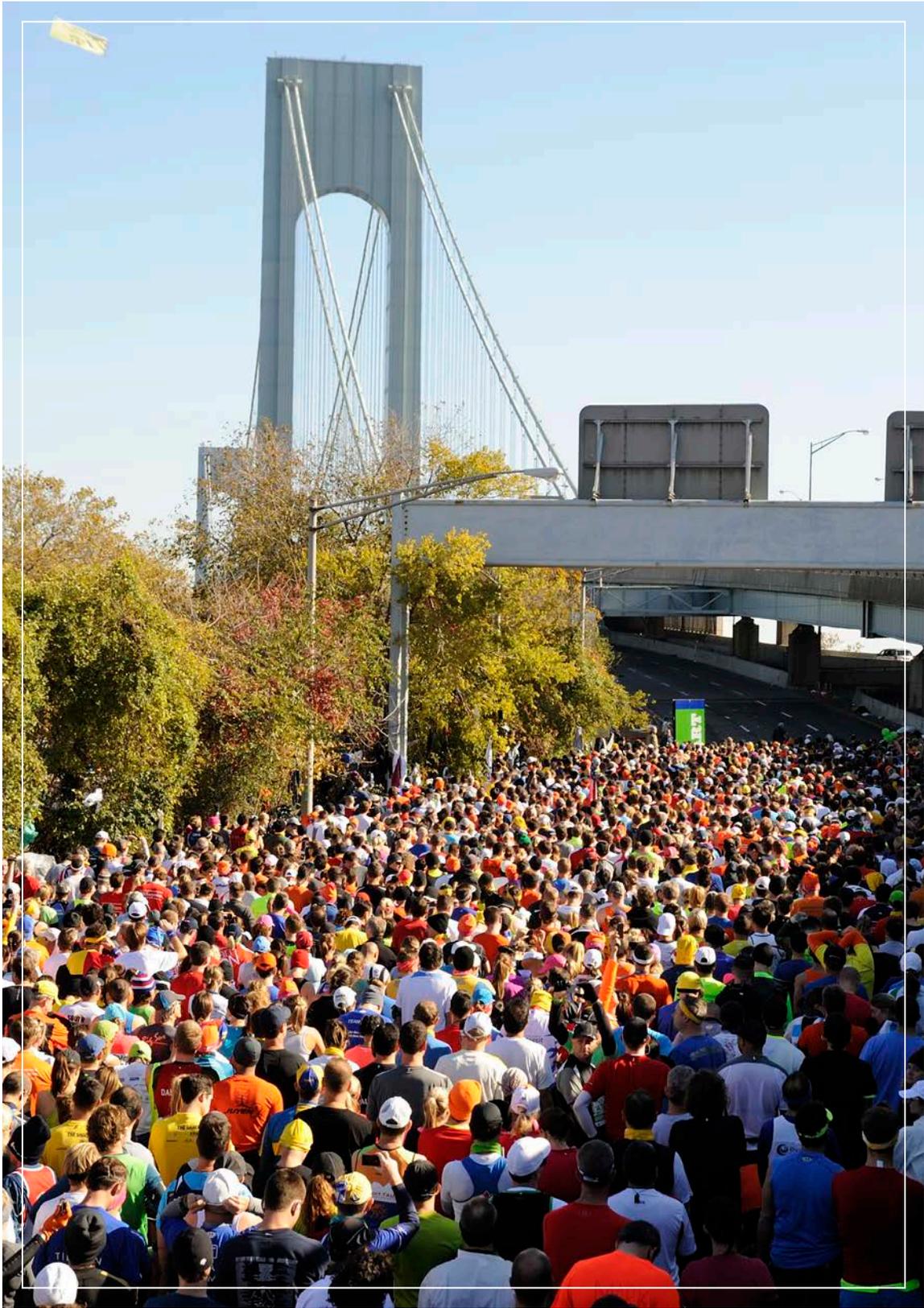
    NPS Denver Service Center, Planning Division . . . . . 15

**Appendixes . . . . . 16**

    Appendix A: Legislation for Gateway  
        National Recreation Area . . . . . 16

    Appendix B: Summary of Administrative Commitments . . . . . 21





## Mission of the National Park Service

The National Park Service (NPS) preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

The NPS core values are a framework in which the National Park Service accomplishes its mission. They express the manner in which, both individually and collectively, the National Park Service pursues its mission. The NPS core values are:

- **Shared stewardship:** We share a commitment to resource stewardship with the global preservation community.
- **Excellence:** We strive continually to learn and improve so that we may achieve the highest ideals of public service.
- **Integrity:** We deal honestly and fairly with the public and one another.
- **Tradition:** We are proud of it; we learn from it; we are not bound by it.
- **Respect:** We embrace each other's differences so that we may enrich the well-being of everyone.

The National Park Service is a bureau within the Department of the Interior. While numerous national park system units were created prior to 1916, it was not until August 25, 1916, that President Woodrow Wilson signed the National Park Service Organic Act formally establishing the National Park Service.

The national park system continues to grow and comprises more than 400 park units covering more than 84 million acres in every state, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. These units include, but are not limited to, national parks, monuments, battlefields, military parks, historical parks, historic sites, lakeshores, seashores, recreation areas, scenic rivers and trails, and the White House. The variety and diversity of park units throughout the nation require a strong commitment to resource stewardship and management to ensure both the protection and enjoyment of these resources for future generations.



*The arrowhead was authorized as the official National Park Service emblem by the Secretary of the Interior on July 20, 1951. The sequoia tree and bison represent vegetation and wildlife, the mountains and water represent scenic and recreational values, and the arrowhead represents historical and archeological values.*

## Introduction

Every unit of the national park system will have a foundational document to provide basic guidance for planning and management decisions—a foundation for planning and management. The core components of a foundation document include a brief description of the park as well as the park’s purpose, significance, fundamental resources and values, other important resources and values, and interpretive themes. The foundation document also includes special mandates and administrative commitments, an assessment of planning needs that identifies planning issues, and planning products to be developed. Along with the core components, the assessment provides a focus for park planning activities and establishes a baseline from which planning documents are developed.

A primary benefit of developing a foundation document is the opportunity to integrate and coordinate all kinds and levels of planning from a single, shared understanding of what is most important about the park. The process of developing a foundation document begins with gathering and integrating information about the park. Next, this information is refined and focused to determine what the most important attributes of the park are. The process of preparing a foundation document aids park managers, staff, and the public in identifying and clearly stating in one document the essential information that is necessary for park management to consider when determining future planning efforts, outlining key planning issues, and protecting resources and values that are integral to park purpose and identity.

The content for the Gateway National Recreation Area foundation document was taken from the park’s 2014 general management plan / environmental impact statement.

While not included in this document, a park atlas is also part of a foundation project. The atlas is a series of maps compiled from available geographic information system (GIS) data on natural and cultural resources, visitor use patterns, facilities, and other topics. It serves as a GIS-based support tool for planning and park operations. The atlas is published as a (hard copy) paper product and as geospatial data for use in a web mapping environment. The park atlas for Gateway National Recreation Area can be accessed online at: <http://insideparkatlas.nps.gov/>.



## Part 1: Core Components

The core components of a foundation document include a brief description of the park, park purpose, significance statements, fundamental resources and values, other important resources and values, and interpretive themes. These components are core because they typically do not change over time. Core components are expected to be used in future planning and management efforts.

### Brief Description of the Park

Gateway covers more than 40 square miles in New York and New Jersey. That is an area nearly twice the size of the island of Manhattan. The park is split into three different areas in Monmouth County, New Jersey, and the New York City boroughs of Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. The park is part of the National Parks of New York Harbor cluster that includes 12 national park sites and affiliated areas.

The legislative boundary for Gateway is 27,025 acres and extends into adjacent waters, including the Atlantic Ocean, Jamaica Bay, Raritan Bay, and Upper and Lower New York Bay. The park manages 21,680 acres of land and waters. An additional 5,345 acres are managed by other federal agencies, owned by New York City, or privately held by entities such as Breezy Point Cooperative, Broad Channel, and Roxbury. The park has three administrative units: Jamaica Bay, Sandy Hook, and Staten Island.

These three distinct geographic areas are linked together by similar types of resources and recreation uses, yet retain distinctive characteristics that make them special. The Jamaica Bay Unit is the largest of the three units and is one of the largest expanses of open space in the region, consisting of over 19,000 acres of land, bay, and ocean waters within two boroughs of New York, Brooklyn and Queens. The unit includes Plumb Beach, Floyd Bennett Field, Bergen Beach, Canarsie Pier, Pennsylvania Avenue and Fountain Avenue Parks, Frank Charles Memorial Park, Hamilton Beach, Spring Creek, Jacob Riis Park, Fort Tilden, Breezy Point Tip, and the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge in the center of the bay.

The Staten Island Unit encompasses bay waters, shoreline, and four areas including Great Kills Park, World War Veterans Park at Miller Field, Fort Wadsworth, and Swinburne Island and Hoffman Island in Staten Island, New York.

The Sandy Hook Unit encompasses the Fort Hancock and Sandy Hook Proving Ground National Historic Landmark District and natural areas and shorelines adjacent to the Atlantic Ocean and Sandy Hook Bay in Monmouth County, New Jersey.

With its location at the edge of the greater New York and New Jersey metropolitan area, the park lands and waters form an expansive public green space that serves many millions of visitors a year, including local residents and tourists. The park setting provides an opportunity to engage audiences of diverse backgrounds and use inclusive, collaborative approaches when engaging neighboring communities and stakeholders.



## Park Purpose

The purpose statement identifies the specific reason(s) for establishment of a particular park. The purpose statement for Gateway National Recreation Area was drafted through a careful analysis of its enabling legislation and the legislative history that influenced its development. The park was established when the enabling legislation adopted by Congress was signed into law on October 27, 1972 (see appendix A for enabling legislation). The purpose statement lays the foundation for understanding what is most important about the park.

*GATEWAY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA provides a national park experience in the country's largest metropolitan area. The park preserves a mosaic of coastal ecosystems and natural areas interwoven with historic coastal defense and maritime sites around New York's Outer Harbor. Beaches, marshes, waters, scenic views, and open space offer resource-based recreational opportunities to a diverse public, recognizing the importance to preserve these special places for future generations.*

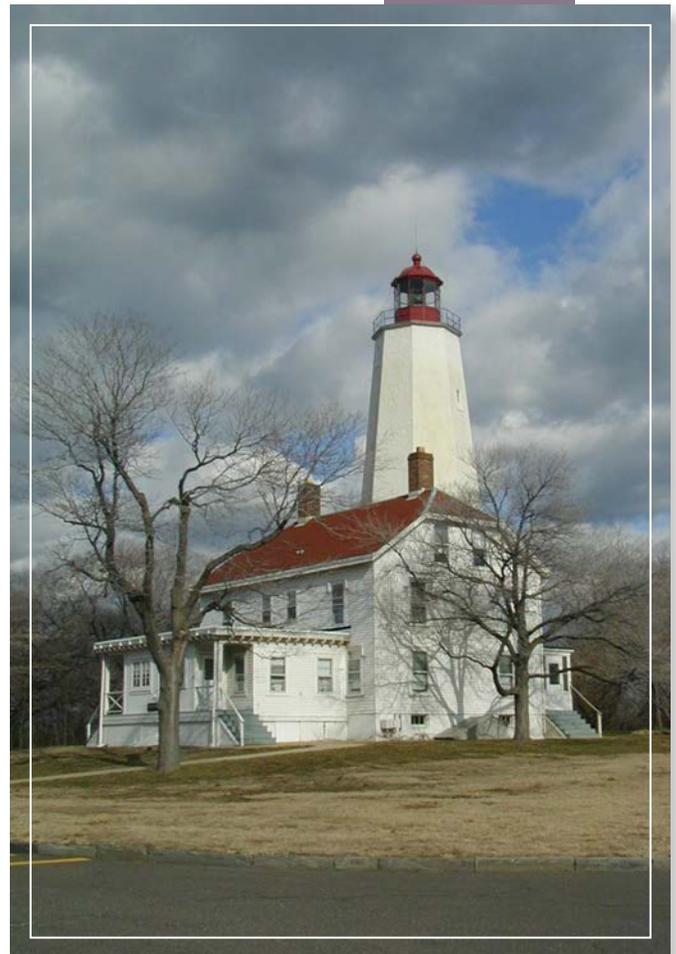


## Park Significance

Significance statements express why a park's resources and values are important enough to merit designation as a unit of the national park system. These statements are linked to the purpose of Gateway National Recreation Area, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Statements of significance describe the distinctive nature of the park and why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. They focus on the most important resources and values that will assist in park planning and management.

The following significance statements have been identified for Gateway National Recreation Area. (Please note that the sequence of the statements does not reflect the level of significance.)

1. Forts Hancock, Tilden, and Wadsworth comprise one of the largest sets of military installations and distinctive fortifications in the country, dating from pre-Civil War through the 20th century. These installations represent a long period of military presence and served as the defense of New York City, the largest city in the United States.
2. Gateway contains an assemblage of coastal ecosystems formed by natural features, both physical and biological, that include barrier peninsulas, estuaries, oceans, and maritime uplands. The habitats that comprise these ecosystems, so rare in such highly developed areas, support a rich biota that includes migratory birds; marine finfish and shellfish; plant communities; and rare, threatened, and endangered species. These features provide opportunities to restore, study, enhance, and experience coastal habitats and ecosystem processes.
3. The maritime resources of Gateway include the oldest continuously operating lighthouse in the United States and one of the first federally sponsored lifesaving stations in the country. These resources served to protect ocean commerce and enhance the safety of the busiest U.S. seaport.
4. The vast and diverse park resources at the gateway to the most densely populated region of the United States provide an abundance of outstanding recreational and educational opportunities.



## Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values (FRVs) are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to warrant primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance. Fundamental resources and values are closely related to a park's legislative purpose and are more specific than significance statements.

Fundamental resources and values help focus planning and management efforts on what is truly significant about the park. One of the most important responsibilities of NPS managers is to ensure the conservation and public enjoyment of those qualities that are essential (fundamental) to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance. If fundamental resources and values are allowed to deteriorate, the park purpose and/or significance could be jeopardized.

The following fundamental resources and values have been identified for Gateway National Recreation Area:

### Fundamental Resources

- **Coastal Defense Resources.** New York Harbor has served as one of the most convenient and active deep-water ports on the eastern seaboard. Surrounded by land favorable for urban development, the harbor has been commercially important to the Dutch, the British, and the Americans, eventually supporting New York City. Early earthwork fortifications, first built by the Dutch and British to repel ground forces and enemy vessels, later gave way to U.S. artillery emplacements and fortifications that were designed to destroy enemy vessels and protect local residents. During the last half of the 20th century, defensive structures and weapons related to the Nike Missile Program played a role in the national defense system. The park's most notable coastal defense resources include earthworks, associated structures, museum collections, and archeological sites associated with Fort Hancock, Fort Tilden, and Fort Wadsworth.

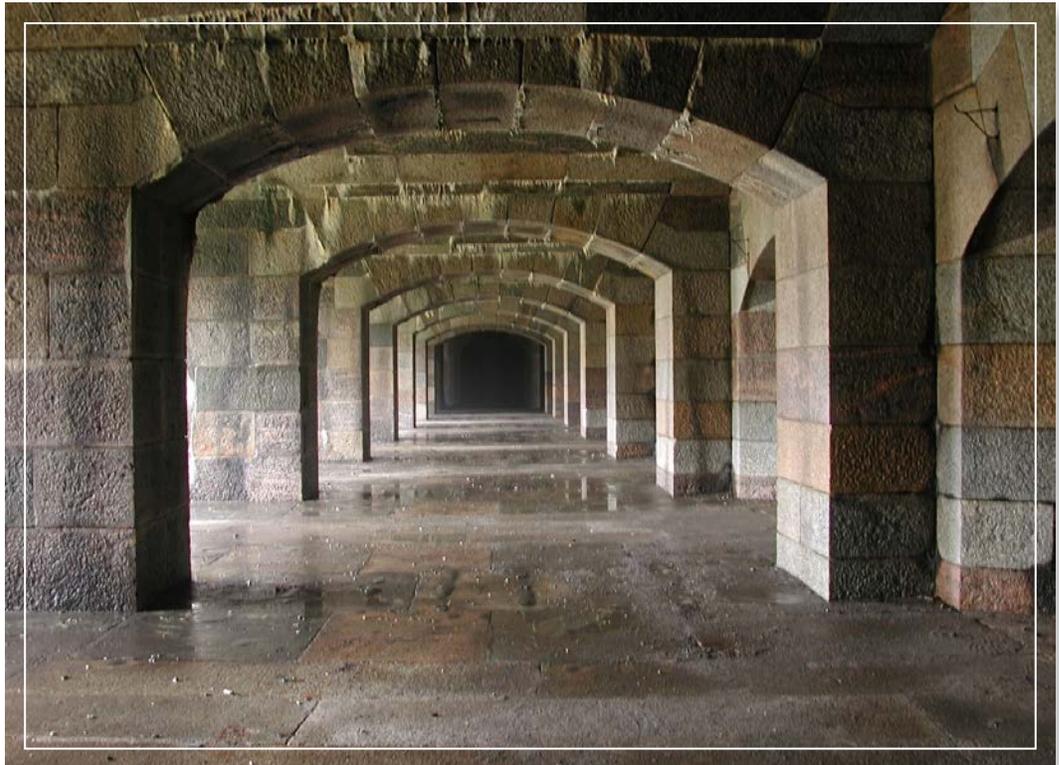




- **Beaches/Dune System.** The park's notable beaches and dune systems are located at Bergen Beach, Breezy Point Tip, Fort Tilden, Great Kills, Jacob Riis Park, Plumb Beach, and Sandy Hook. The park has about 75 miles of shoreline, including 31 miles of ocean beaches. Undeveloped coastal habitats provide natural storm resilience.
- **Natural Areas.** Breezy Point Tip, Crooke's Point, Floyd Bennett Field, Fort Tilden, Great Kills, Hoffman and Swinburne Islands, Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, and Sandy Hook comprise the natural areas, which are unique in that they are large open areas adjacent to New York City. Once heavily disturbed areas, they are now examples of reemerging ecosystems. These areas support animal and plant species that are not seen elsewhere in the city. Furthermore, many of Gateway's natural areas offer a unique opportunity to find a relatively quiet place amid a loud urban soundscape.
- **Jamaica Bay Waters.** The waters of Jamaica Bay include inlets, submerged lands, emergent wetlands and uplands, and Dead Horse Bay. Because Jamaica Bay is at the intersection of not only cooler ocean waters from the north and warmer currents from the south, but also the Hudson River–Raritan Bay estuary, it is considered part of a regionally important fish, wildlife, and plant habitat complex that also includes Breezy Point Tip. Jamaica Bay and its saltmarsh islands form one of the most recognizable and striking features in New York City.
- **Sandy Hook Maritime Forest.** Maritime forests are situated on barrier islands and peninsulas, which are subjected to wind-driven salt spray and occasional inundation by storm-driven ocean surges. Much of the barrier island forest along the New Jersey and New York coasts has been lost to urban development. Two types of barrier island forest—maritime red-cedar woodland and maritime holly forest—are globally imperiled. In the park, both occur only at Sandy Hook.
- **Maritime Resources.** These include Sandy Hook Lighthouse and the Spermaceti Cove Life-Saving Station. The Sandy Hook Lighthouse (also known as Sandy Hook Light) is designated a national historic landmark. Construction on the lighthouse began sometime in 1761, with the first lighting in 1764. It was the fifth lighthouse to be built in America and now stands as the oldest continuously operating light tower in the nation. Constructed in 1894, the Spermaceti Cove Life-Saving Station is considered significant due to its association with the earliest federally sponsored efforts (through the United States Life-Saving Service and U.S. Coast Guard) to save life and property from shipwrecks and its distinctive characteristics of a particular period and type of construction.

## Fundamental Values

- **Beach Experience (including public access to bay and ocean shorelines and surf).** Beaches play an important role in recreational activities for visitors in the park. Guarded swim beaches at Sandy Hook, Great Kills Park, Jacob Riis Park, and the Breezy Point Surf and Silver Gull Beach Clubs provide places for visitors to walk, jog, sunbathe, picnic, surf, and swim. Unguarded beaches at Fort Wadsworth, Miller Field, Fort Tilden, Breezy Point Tip, and Plumb Beach offer a more natural visitor experience and provide opportunities for fishing, wind sports, beach walks, surfing, and nature study.
- **Variety of Recreation Experiences.** These include opportunities for nature observation such as bird-watching and astronomy; water-based activities such as surfing, boating, fishing, and swimming; walking, hiking, biking, and horseback riding on trails; and picnicking. The trails and natural areas of the park invite self-guided exploration and discovery of the habitats and historic resources; whereas Gateway National Recreation Area beaches present opportunities for relaxation and retreat from the more congested urban areas surrounding the park.
- **Direct Sensory Experience.** Sensory experiences with the natural elements include feelings associated with open space in a high-density area, observation of darkness and the night sky, and views of the ocean and New York City’s Outer Harbor. The coastal edges of Gateway park lands, in particular, are soundscape “havens” where the natural soundscape is perceptible and the sounds of the urban surroundings are diminished.
- **Connections to National Defense History and Opportunities for Visiting Historic Sites.** Learning about the area’s history is an important part of the Gateway visitor experience connected to the park’s scenic and preserved historic settings. The opportunities to “discover” historic structures and view signs of military and maritime history enrich the visitor experience at several Gateway park sites. At Fort Wadsworth, Fort Tilden, and Sandy Hook, for example, visitors can follow a trail from the more popular areas of the park into the backcountry and find themselves alone in the presence of impressive batteries and fortifications.





## Other Important Resources and Values

Gateway National Recreation Area contains other resources and values that are not fundamental to the purpose of the park and may be unrelated to its significance, but are important to consider in planning processes. These are referred to as “other important resources and values” (OIRV). These resources and values have been selected because they are important in the operation and management of the park and warrant special consideration in park planning.

The following other important resources and values have been identified for Gateway National Recreation Area:

- **Civil and Military Aviation History Resources at Floyd Bennett Field and Miller Field.** The early history of aviation in the United States is well represented in several Gateway facilities dating back to the early 20th century, including Floyd Bennett Field, Miller Army Airfield, and the Rockaway Naval Air Station (now the site of Jacob Riis Park).
- **Historic Landscape at Jacob Riis Park, Including the Beaches, Boardwalk, and Bathhouse.** The Jacob Riis Park Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1981, is considered an “excellent, though greatly deteriorated, example of . . . municipal recreational planning of the 1930s.” Its historical significance derives from its association with New York City Commissioner of Parks Robert Moses, as well as it being a notable work of landscape architecture. The park was completed through the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and is associated with this important social and government program of the New Deal.
- **Pre-Contact Archeological Sites, Historic Archeological Sites Related to Domestic and Military Occupations of Park Lands, and Submerged Resources.** Archeological resources in the park date primarily to later pre-contact (Woodland period) and historical periods. Cultural manifestations include both surface and subsurface materials. Many of the archeological resources identified in earlier studies can no longer be found. This is related to a variety of factors, including inaccuracy of the original recordation, the influence of natural processes (e.g., erosion), and the significant effect of landfilling operations that have occurred throughout the region in the late 19th and 20th centuries.

## 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 park significance statements and fundamental and other important resources and values.

Interpretive themes are an organizational tool that reveal and clarify meaning, concepts, contexts, and values represented by park resources. Sound themes are accurate and reflect current scholarship and science. They encourage exploration of the context in which events or natural processes occurred and the effects of those events and processes. Interpretive themes go beyond a mere description of the event or process to foster multiple opportunities to experience and consider the park and its resources. These themes help explain why a park story is relevant to people who may otherwise be unaware of connections they have to an event, time, or place associated with the park.

The following interpretive themes have been identified for Gateway National Recreation Area:

- **Two Centuries of National Defense.** For over 200 years, places in Gateway were critical to the defense of New York Harbor and played a significant role in the development of the military technologies and strategies used to protect the United States. The changing nature of national defense reveals stories of triumph, struggle, and everyday life as well as the contrast of innovation and obsolescence. Today, the remaining fortifications, structures, and historic landscapes are a visible reminder of the importance of preparedness and defense then and now.
- **The Natural Wonders, Dynamics, and Challenges of an Urban Estuary.** The natural resources of Gateway are remarkably diverse given their location in the nation's most densely populated urban area. The mosaic of coastal habitats is a refuge for both rich and rare plant and animal life intrinsically governed by the rhythms, processes, and cycles of nature, yet also continually shaped by people and the surrounding built environment. These resources provide unique and surprising opportunities for experiencing the wildness of the natural world while within the city limits, and a model for studying, managing, and restoring urban ecosystems.
- **Recreation and Education: Quality of Urban Life for All Visitors.** The human need for recreation and renewal has resulted in an evolving history of traditional and innovative uses of park lands and waters to improve the quality of urban life. Intrinsically connected to the diverse population of the New York metropolitan area, Gateway's resources provide unique opportunities for outdoor recreation and rejuvenation in a densely populated and largely impacted metropolitan area. It is an outdoor laboratory for learning and discovery, where academic facts and knowledge can be observed in real settings. The park's open spaces and wide horizons offer opportunities for resource-based recreation as well as contemplation and reflection.
- **Maritime Heritage.** Since the days of European exploration and colonization, Sandy Hook Lighthouse has played an important role in facilitating navigation and commerce in and out of New York Harbor. Its maritime resources illustrate the evolution of navigation aids and coastal rescue, in part via the oldest lighthouse in the United States, one of the original life-saving stations built by the federal government, historic U.S. Coast Guard structures, and a relatively safe natural harbor that has provided refuge to generations of mariners. Dedicated and heroic individuals ensured that the Sandy Hook Lighthouse served to guide ships in all seasons and under all conditions.

## Part 2: Dynamic Components

The dynamic components of a foundation document include special mandates and administrative commitments and an assessment of planning needs. These components are dynamic because they will change over time. New special mandates can be established and new administrative commitments made. As conditions and trends of fundamental and other important resources and values change over time, the analysis of planning needs will need to be revisited and revised, along with key issues. Therefore, this part of the foundation document will be updated accordingly.

### Special Mandates and Administrative Commitments

Many management decisions for a park unit are directed or influenced by special mandates and administrative commitments with other federal agencies, state and local governments, utility companies, partnering organizations, and other entities. Special mandates are requirements specific to a park that must be fulfilled. Mandates can be expressed in enabling legislation, in separate legislation following the establishment of the park, or through a judicial process. They may expand on park purpose or introduce elements unrelated to the purpose of the park. Administrative commitments are, in general, agreements that have been reached through formal, documented processes, often through memorandums of agreement. Examples include easements, rights-of-way, arrangements for emergency service responses, etc. Special mandates and administrative commitments can support, in many cases, a network of partnerships that help fulfill the objectives of the park and facilitate working relationships with other organizations. They are an essential component of managing and planning for Gateway National Recreation Area.

#### Special Mandates

- **16 United States Code [USC] 460cc-2(a) Conservation and Management of Wildlife and Natural Resources in the Jamaica Bay Unit** – The Secretary of the Interior (the Secretary) shall administer and protect the islands and waters within the Jamaica Bay Unit with the primary aim of conserving the natural resources, fish, and wildlife located therein and shall permit no development or use of this area which is incompatible with this purpose.
- **16 USC 460cc-2(b)(1) Visitor Center Designation** – The Secretary shall designate the principal visitor center within the recreation area as the “William Fitts Ryan Visitor Center” in commemoration of the leadership and contributions which Representative William Fitts Ryan made with respect to the creation and establishment of this public recreation area. To inform the public of the contributions of Representative Ryan to the creation of the recreation area, the Secretary shall provide such signs, markers, maps, interpretive materials, literature, and programs as he deems appropriate.

- **16 USC 460cc-(d) Water Resource Developments** – The authority of the Secretary of the Army to undertake or contribute to water resource developments, including shore erosion control, beach protection, and navigation improvements (including the deepening of the shipping channel from the Atlantic Ocean to the New York harbor) on land and/or waters within the recreation area shall be exercised in accordance with plans that are mutually acceptable to the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of the Army and which are consistent with both the purpose of this subchapter [the recreation area administration provisions] and the purpose of existing statutes dealing with water and related land resource development.
- **16 USC 460cc-(e) Airway Facilities; Maintenance, Operation, and Installation; Jamaica Bay and Floyd Bennett Field Restrictions** – The authority of the Secretary of Transportation to maintain and operate existing airway facilities and to install necessary new facilities within the recreation area shall be exercised in accordance with plans which are mutually acceptable to the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Transportation and that are consistent with both the purpose of this subchapter and the purpose of existing statutes dealing with the establishment, maintenance, and operation of airway facilities: Provided, That nothing in this section shall authorize the expansion of airport runways into Jamaica Bay or air facilities at Floyd Bennett Field.
- **16 USC 460cc-(f) Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping** – The Secretary shall permit hunting, fishing, shellfishing, trapping, and the taking of specimens on the lands and waters under his jurisdiction within the Gateway National Recreation Area in accordance with the applicable laws of the United States and the laws of the states of New York and New Jersey and political subdivisions thereof, except that the Secretary may designate zones where and establish periods when these activities may not be permitted, for reasons of public safety, administration, fish or wildlife management, or public use and enjoyment.
- **16 USC 460cc-(g) Programs for Preservation, Restoration, Interpretation, and Utilization of Sites and Structures in the Sandy Hook and Staten Island Units** – In the Sandy Hook and Staten Island Units, the Secretary shall inventory and evaluate all sites and structures having present and potential historical, cultural, or architectural significance and shall provide for appropriate programs for the preservation, restoration, interpretation, and utilization of them.
- **16 USC 460cc-(i) Rights to Solid Waste Byproducts of Fountain Avenue Landfill; Conveyance from United States to City of New York; Rights-of-way and Permits; Conditions; Payments to United States for Development and Improvement of Gateway National Recreation Area** – Section conveys all rights to the methane gas and associated byproducts resulting from solid waste decomposition on the area within the Jamaica Bay Unit known as the Fountain Avenue Landfill site to the City of New York, subject to payments to the United States of 50 per centum of the revenue received by the City of New York, if any, from the development of such rights. The Secretary shall grant to the City, its lessee or assignee, all rights-of-way and other permits necessary from the Department of the Interior to extract and transport the gas from the site: Provided, That the rights-of-way and other permits shall provide for reasonable restoration of the site, including removal of any processing or storage facilities used in the disposal, development, or extraction of the gas, access by the Secretary to the site for safety and other recreation area purposes, and such other reasonable conditions as the Secretary deems necessary to further purposes of the recreation area. All such payments to the United States shall be credited to the appropriations of the National Park Service for the development and improvement of Gateway National Recreation Area.

For information about the existing administrative commitments for Gateway National Recreation Area, please see appendix B.

## Assessment of Planning Needs

Once the core components of part 1 of the foundation document have been identified, it is important to gather and evaluate existing information about the park's fundamental and other important resources and values, and develop a full assessment of the park's planning needs.

There are two sections in the assessment of planning needs:

1. identification of key issues
2. identification of planning needs

### Identification of Key Issues

This section considers key issues to be addressed in planning and management and therefore takes a broader view over the primary focus of part 1. A key issue focuses on a question that is important for a park. Key issues often raise questions regarding park purpose and significance and fundamental and other important resources and values. For example, a key issue may pertain to the potential for a fundamental or other important resource or value in a park to be detrimentally affected by discretionary management decisions. A key issue may also address crucial questions that are not directly related to purpose and significance, but which still affect them indirectly. Usually, a key issue is one that a future planning effort needs to address and requires a decision by NPS managers.

The following are key issues for Gateway National Recreation Area:

- **Responding to Climate Change and Sea Level Rise.** Climate change refers to changes occurring in the earth's atmospheric, hydrologic, and oceanic systems, which could alter the landscape, natural and cultural resources, and facilities of Gateway. The park sites play an important role in acting as buffer zones and protecting upland communities from flooding and storm surges. Gateway has been experiencing changes due to frequency and intensity of recent storm events such as Hurricane Sandy. The majority of the park's natural and cultural resources are adjacent to the ocean and other water bodies. However, as a result of this, some of these places have already experienced increases in storm flooding. Along with long-term park adaptation planning, the park also strives to work with federal, state, and local partners and its surrounding communities on concerted efforts to increase regional habitat connectivity and the region's resiliency to flooding and storm surges.
- **Preserving Gateway's Heritage.** Gateway possesses more than 800 historic buildings, structures, landscapes, and archeological sites with hundreds of additional individual features that contribute to the character of these special places. When Gateway was established in 1972, the historical significance of its buildings, structures, and landscapes was not clearly understood. Many of these inherited buildings and structures were already in poor condition. Today, repairing, painting, and other maintenance are serious challenges given the number of resources and current condition as well as competing funding and staff priorities. The park's 2014 General Management Plan provides the framework for managing the park's cultural resources in a sustainable manner. Going forward, the park will have to continually prioritize its preservation actions to make best use of scarce resources. Currently, the museum collections are overcrowded in structures that do not meet professional museum standards.



- **Addressing Marine Resources and Water Quality.** Two-thirds of Gateway is covered by water—more than 17,500 acres of bay and oceanic waters that are part of larger systems influenced by land uses and activities taking place outside the park. Previous uses of park lands left a legacy of impacts on the health and ecology of park natural resources. When the park was founded, saltmarshes had been filled, Jamaica Bay had been dredged, and native forests and vegetation had been covered in impervious surfaces. Despite many years of efforts to improve conditions, including the current New York City Department of Environmental Protection-led Jamaica Bay Watershed Protection Plan, water quality is still threatened in all units. Many activities in adjacent communities, including sewer overflow, wastewater treatment plants, historic contaminated fill, and bulkheads that impact sediment transport, contribute to the problem. The beaches and bays are prime habitats for birds, shellfish, and plants as well as the most popular visitor areas for all types of water-based recreation. Degraded water quality harms fish and wildlife and results in beach closures, shellfish consumption bans, and unsafe conditions for water activities. Ocean resources, including natural marine resources and submerged cultural resources, are at risk due to a variety of threats. Natural sediment transport, which affects shoreline and beach dynamics, is affected by activities outside park boundaries. Most of the park’s ocean shoreline is affected by conditions updrift of the park’s boundary and the effects of structures at or near the boundary. The presence of engineering structures, both within and external to Gateway, have produced positive and negative results, including erosion and impacts on habitat and navigation channels.
- **Engaging New Audiences.** Gateway does not have a strong identity as a unit of the national park system. Visitors are sometimes unaware of all that Gateway encompasses—that it involves multiple units across two states and that it contains a collection of unique natural and historic resources. This makes it difficult to promote experiences consistent with other national parks, and the park is often confused with city and state facilities. Visitation at Gateway does not reflect the ethnic, racial, or socioeconomic diversity that now characterizes the U.S. population and the communities adjacent to the park. In addition, the boom of electronic technology, especially with children and teens, is changing expectations for the types of activities offered and how the park should provide information and deliver programs. The park seeks to engage audiences by finding ways to make its fundamental values relevant within the context of the park’s urban backdrop and the diverse regional population.
- **Accessing the Park.** Access to Gateway is predominantly by automobile. Several areas of the park are not conveniently accessible by public transit. This poses a challenge to many visitors, especially lower-income and transit-dependent populations. Visitors are interested in other options for reaching the park, but there are limited formal designated bike or water routes and few parking or docking facilities to support them. Connections from communities in the region to the park are not adequate. There is a need for improved, safe trail connections between park sites and between park sites and communities to provide seamless, safe, direct access alternatives.
- **Providing Appropriate Facilities.** Park resources, visitor safety, and visitor experience have suffered because of the lack of adequate operational facilities in appropriate locations. Over the years, many visitors have expressed concerns about park infrastructure being in a state of decline and there is parkwide demand for more user comforts—shade, playgrounds, benches, bicycle racks, picnic areas, water fountains, facilities for large family groups, and good food. Although there is a growing interest in water recreation opportunities, there are limited facilities and a need for designated water trails (blueways), lockers, boat rentals, and launch sites. Park maintenance and public safety functions are scattered throughout the park and are often at sites and facilities that were not intended for such uses or are not in an optimal location. Gateway strives to be a leader in environmental sustainability. However, park day-to-day operations do not always reflect this value.

### Planning Needs

Gateway National Recreation Area is currently focused on Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts. The park will develop a list of long-term planning needs once hurricane recovery projects are completed.

## Part 3: Contributors

### Gateway National Recreation Area

Doug Adamo, Chief, Natural Resource Management  
Natalya Apostolou, Resource Information Specialist  
Dave Avrin, Chief, Division of Resources Management  
Linda Canzanelli, Superintendent (former)  
Mark Christiano, GIS Specialist  
Marilou Ehrler, Historical Architect  
Brian Feeney, Staten Island Unit Coordinator  
Bruce Lane, Chief Ranger  
Megan Lang, Community Planner  
Pete McCarthy, Sandy Hook Unit Coordinator  
Suzanne McCarthy, Deputy Superintendent  
Pam McLay, Chief of Business and Partnership Development  
Jennifer Nersesian, Superintendent  
Jeanette Parker, Chief of Interpretation and Education  
Minka Sendich, Community Planner  
Dave Taft, Jamaica Bay Unit Coordinator

### NPS Northeast Region

Amanda Jones, Regional Liaison and Community Planner  
Helen Mahan, General Management Plan Team Leader/Community Planner

### NPS Park Planning and Special Studies

Pam Holtman, Foundation Quality Assurance / Quality Control Coordinator

### NPS Denver Service Center, Planning Division

John Paul Jones, Visual Information Specialist  
Wanda Gray Lafferty, Contract Editor (former)  
Tatiana Márquez, Project Specialist and Environmental Economist  
Ray McPadden, Project Manager and Community Planner  
Nancy Shock, Foundation Coordinator

# Appendixes

## Appendix A: Legislation for Gateway National Recreation Area

**Title 16, Chapter 1, Subchapter LXXXVII, 460cc of the United States Code  
Ratified on Oct. 27, 1972**

### **460cc. Establishment**

In order to preserve and protect for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations an area possessing outstanding natural and recreational features, the Gateway National Recreation Area (hereinafter referred to as the “recreation area”) is hereby established.

#### **(a) Composition and boundaries**

The recreation area shall comprise the following lands, waters, marshes, and submerged lands in the New York Harbor area generally depicted on the map entitled “Boundary Map, Gateway National Recreation Area,” numbered 951–40017 sheets 1 through 3 and dated May, 1972:

- (1) Jamaica Bay Unit—including all islands, marshes, hassocks, submerged lands, and waters in Jamaica Bay, Floyd Bennett Field, the lands generally located between highway route 27A and Jamaica Bay, and the area of Jamaica Bay up to the shoreline of John F. Kennedy International Airport;
- (2) Breezy Point Unit—the entire area between the eastern boundary of Jacob Riis Park and the westernmost point of the peninsula;
- (3) Sandy Hook Unit—the entire area between Highway 36 Bridge and the northernmost point of the peninsula;
- (4) Staten Island Unit—including Great Kills Park, World War Veterans Park at Miller Field (except for approximately 26 acres which are to be made available for public school purposes), Fort Wadsworth, and the waterfront lands located between the streets designated as Cedar Grove Avenue, Seaside Boulevard, and Drury Avenue and the bay from Great Kills to Fort Wadsworth;
- (5) Hoffman and Swinburne Islands; and
- (6) All submerged lands, islands, and waters within one-fourth of a mile of the mean low water line of any waterfront area included above.

#### **(b) Boundary revisions: notification of Congressional committees; publication in Federal Register**

The map referred to in this section shall be on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, District of Columbia. After advising the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate in writing, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the “Secretary”) is authorized to make minor revisions of the boundaries of the recreation area when necessary by publication of a revised drawing or other boundary description in the Federal Register.

**460cc-1. Acquisition of property****(a) Authority of Secretary; donation of State lands**

Within the boundaries of the recreation area, the Secretary may acquire lands and waters or interests therein by donation, purchase or exchange, except that lands owned by the States of New York or New Jersey or any political subdivisions thereof may be acquired only by donation.

**(b) Transfer from Federal agency to administrative jurisdiction of Secretary**

With the concurrence of the agency having custody thereof, any Federal property within the boundaries of the recreation area may be transferred, without consideration, to the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary for administration as a part of the recreation area.

**(c) Breezy Point Unit; public use and access; agreement for use of lands for single-family residential community; specific provisions; Rockaway parking lot conveyance**

Within the Breezy Point Unit, (1) the Secretary shall acquire an adequate interest in the area depicted on the map referred to in section 460cc of this title to assure the public use of and access to the entire beach. The Secretary may enter into an agreement with any property owner or owners to assure the continued maintenance and use of all remaining lands in private ownership as a residential community composed of single-family dwellings. Any such agreement shall be irrevocable, unless terminated by mutual agreement, and shall specify, among other things:

(A) that the Secretary may designate, establish and maintain a buffer zone on Federal lands separating the public use area and the private community;

(B) that all construction commencing within the community, including the conversion of dwellings from seasonal to year-round residences, shall comply with standards to be established by the Secretary;

(C) that additional commercial establishments shall be permitted only with the express prior approval of the Secretary or his designee.

(2) If a valid, enforceable agreement is executed pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection, the authority of the Secretary to acquire any interest in the property subject to the agreement, except for the beach property, shall be suspended.

(3) The Secretary is authorized to accept by donation from the city of New York any right, title, or interest which it holds in the parking lot at Rockaway which is part of the Marine Bridge project at Riis Park. Nothing herein shall be deemed to authorize the United States to extinguish any present or future encumbrance or to authorize the State of New York or any political subdivision or agency thereof to further encumber any interest in the property so conveyed.

**(d) Jamaica Bay Unit; Broad Channel Community; title acceptance conditions**

Within the Jamaica Bay Unit,

(1) the Secretary may accept title to lands donated by the city of New York subject to a retained right to continue existing uses for a specifically limited period of time if such uses conform to plans agreed to by the Secretary, and

(2) the Secretary may accept title to the area known as Broad Channel Community only if, within five years after October 27, 1972, all improvements have been removed from the area and a clear title to the area is tendered to the United States.

## 460cc-2. Administration

### (a) Provisions applicable; utilization of authorities for conservation and management of wildlife and natural resources; Jamaica Bay Unit

The Secretary shall administer the recreation area in accordance with the provisions of sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 of this title, as amended and supplemented. In the administration of the recreation area the Secretary may utilize such statutory authority available to him for the conservation and management of wildlife and natural resources as he deems appropriate to carry out the purposes of this subchapter: Provided, That the Secretary shall administer and protect the islands and waters within the Jamaica Bay Unit with the primary aim of conserving the natural resources, fish, and wildlife located therein and shall permit no development or use of this area which is incompatible with this purpose.

### (b) William Fitts Ryan Visitor Center; designation

(1) The Secretary shall designate the principal visitor center within the recreation area as the “William Fitts Ryan Visitor Center” in commemoration of the leadership and contributions which Representative William Fitts Ryan made with respect to the creation and establishment of this public recreation area. To inform the public of the contributions of Representative Ryan to the creation of the recreation area, the Secretary shall provide such signs, markers, maps, interpretive materials, literature, and programs as he deems appropriate. Not later than December 31, 1980, the Secretary shall take such additional actions as he deems appropriate to recognize and commemorate the contributions of Representative Ryan to the recreation area.

(2) The portion of the Staten Island Unit of the recreation area known as Miller Field is hereby designated as “World War Veterans Park at Miller Field”. Any reference to such Miller Field in any law, regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the United States shall be considered to be a reference to “World War Veterans Park at Miller Field”.

### (c) Federal-State cooperative agreements for police and fire protection

The Secretary is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with the States of New York and New Jersey, or any political subdivision thereof, for the rendering, on a reimbursable basis, of rescue, firefighting, and law enforcement services and cooperative assistance by nearby law enforcement and fire preventive agencies.

### (d) Water resource developments

The authority of the Secretary of the Army to undertake or contribute to water resource developments, including shore erosion control, beach protection, and navigation improvements (including the deepening of the shipping channel from the Atlantic Ocean to the New York harbor) on land and/or waters within the recreation area shall be exercised in accordance with plans which are mutually acceptable to the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of the Army and which are consistent with both the purpose of this subchapter and the purpose of existing statutes dealing with water and related land resource development.

### (e) Airway facilities; maintenance, operation, and installation; Jamaica Bay and Floyd Bennett Field restrictions

The authority of the Secretary of Transportation to maintain and operate existing airway facilities and to install necessary new facilities within the recreation area shall be exercised in accordance with plans which are mutually acceptable to the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Transportation and which are consistent with both the purpose of this subchapter and the purpose of existing statutes dealing with the establishment, maintenance, and operation of airway facilities: Provided, That nothing in this section shall authorize the expansion of airport runways into Jamaica Bay or air facilities at Floyd Bennett Field.

(f) **Hunting, fishing, and trapping**

The Secretary shall permit hunting, fishing, shellfishing, trapping, and the taking of specimens on the lands and waters under his jurisdiction within the Gateway National Recreation Area in accordance with the applicable laws of the United States and the laws of the States of New York and New Jersey and political subdivisions thereof, except that the Secretary may designate zones where and establish periods when these activities may not be permitted, for reasons of public safety, administration, fish or wildlife management, or public use and enjoyment.

(g) **Sandy Hook and Staten Island Units; programs for preservation, restoration, interpretation, and utilization of sites and structures**

In the Sandy Hook and Staten Island Units, the Secretary shall inventory and evaluate all sites and structures having present and potential historical, cultural, or architectural significance and shall provide for appropriate programs for the preservation, restoration, interpretation, and utilization of them.

(h) **Donations for services and facilities; acceptance**

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary is authorized to accept donations of funds from individuals, foundations, or corporations for the purpose of providing services and facilities which he deems consistent with the purposes of this subchapter.

(i) **Rights to solid waste byproducts of Fountain Avenue Landfill; conveyance from United States to city of New York; rights-of-way and permits; conditions; payments to United States for development and improvement of Gateway National Recreation Area**

Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, the United States hereby conveys to the city of New York all rights to the methane gas and associated byproducts resulting from solid waste decomposition on the area within the Jamaica Bay Unit known as the Fountain Avenue Landfill site, subject to payments to the United States of 50 per centum of the revenue received by the city of New York, if any, from the development of such rights. The Secretary shall grant to the City, its lessee or assignee, all rights-of-way and other permits necessary from the Department of the Interior to extract and transport the gas from the site: Provided, That the rights-of-way and other permits shall provide for reasonable restoration of the site, including removal of any processing or storage facilities used in the disposal, development, or extraction of the gas, access by the Secretary to the site for safety and other recreation area purposes, and such other reasonable conditions as the Secretary deems necessary for further purposes of the recreation area. All such payments to the United States shall be credited to the appropriations of the National Park Service for the development and improvement of Gateway National Recreation Area.

### **460cc-3. Gateway National Recreation Area Advisory Commission**

#### **(a) Establishment; termination date**

There is hereby established a Gateway National Recreation Area Advisory Commission (hereinafter referred to as the "Commission"). Said Commission shall terminate twenty years after the date of the establishment of the recreation area.

#### **(b) Membership; appointment; terms of office; representation of interests**

The Commission shall be composed of fifteen members each appointed for a term of two years by the Secretary as follows:

- (1) two members to be appointed from recommendations made by the Governor of the State of New York;
- (2) two members to be appointed from recommendations made by the Governor of the State of New Jersey;
- (3) two members to be appointed from recommendations made by the mayor of New York City;
- (4) two members to be appointed from recommendations made by the mayor of Newark, New Jersey; and
- (5) seven members to be appointed by the Secretary to represent the general public.

#### **(c) Chairman; vacancies**

The Secretary shall designate one member to be Chairman. Any vacancy in the Commission shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.

#### **(d) Compensation and expenses; vouchers**

A member of the Commission shall serve without compensation as such. The Secretary is authorized to pay the expenses reasonably incurred by the Commission in carrying out its responsibility under this subchapter upon vouchers signed by the Chairman.

#### **(e) Voting**

The Commission established by this section shall act and advise by affirmative vote of a majority of the members thereof.

#### **(f) Consultations of Secretary with members**

The Secretary or his designee shall, from time to time, consult with the members of the Commission with respect to matters relating to the development of the recreation area.

### **460cc-4. Authorization of appropriations; limitation; adjustments**

There are hereby authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this subchapter, but not more than \$12,125,000 for the acquisition of lands and interests in lands and not more than \$92,813,000 (July, 1971 prices) for development of the recreation area, plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuations in the construction costs as indicated by engineering cost indices applicable to the type of construction involved herein.

## Appendix B: Summary of Administrative Commitments

Party with whom Agreement Exists	Agreement Type
American Littoral Society	Cooperative Agreement
Army Ground Forces Association	Memorandum of Agreement
Bike New York	General Agreement
Department of Sanitation (NYC)	Cooperative Agreement
Eastern National	Cooperating Association Agreement
Eastpointe Condominium Association	General Agreement
Federal Aviation Administration	Interagency Agreement
Great Kills Survey Access Agreement	General Agreement
Marine Academy of Science and Technology	Memorandum of Agreement
National Parks of New York Harbor Conservancy	General Agreement
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	Interagency Agreement
NYC Department of Parks and Recreation Agreement	Cooperative Management
NYC Department of Parks and Recreation – Frank Charles Park	Cooperative Management Agreement
New York City Police Department	Cooperative Agreement
Polytech University	General Agreement
Rockaway Artist Alliance	Cooperative Agreement
Rockaway Theater Company	Cooperative Agreement
Sandy Hook Foundation	General Agreement



---

## Northeast Region Foundation Document Recommendation Gateway National Recreation Area

March 2017

---

This Foundation Document has been prepared as a collaborative effort between park and regional staff and is recommended for approval by the Northeast Regional Director.

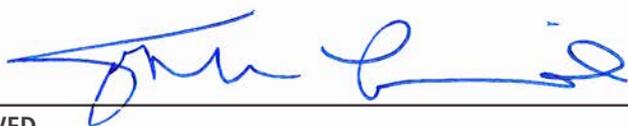


3.23.2017

RECOMMENDED

Jennifer Nersesian, Superintendent, Gateway National Recreation Area

Date



5/1/17

APPROVED

Joshua Laird, Acting Regional Director, Northeast Region

Date



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historic places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

GATE 646/132033

May 2017

Foundation Document • Gateway National Recreation Area

