



# General Management Plan Reconstruction Era National Historical Park

May 2024







# How to Comment on This Plan

The National Park Service (NPS) welcomes comments on this general management plan. We will accept comments for 30 days following the plan’s official public release. To share your feedback, please submit written comments using one of the following methods. Please send only one set of comments.

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# Executive Summary

The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 established four statutory planning requirements that must be addressed for every park (54 United States Code [USC] 100502). The requirements establish measures for preserving park resources, determine types and general intensities of development, identify visitor carrying capacities, and address potential modifications to the park’s boundary. Reconstruction Era National Historical Park (park) staff have prepared this general management plan (plan) to meet these comprehensive planning requirements and the plan purpose discussed below. Associated environmental compliance for the implementation of the general management plan is included as a part of this effort (see part II).

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## PURPOSE AND GOAL

The purpose of this general management plan is to help the national park improve visitor experience, management capabilities, and facilities in a way that is consistent with the character-defining aspects of its associated national historic landmark (NHL) districts and cultural landscapes and protects the resources within the park boundary in collaboration with partners.

This general management plan is intended to formalize the recommendations for the treatment of historic properties, provide guidance of future development and acquisitions, and serve as the implementation plan for achieving desired future conditions at the park. Furthermore, the park has many community and administrative partners, and the National Park Service (NPS) needs to formalize these partnerships with agreements to coordinate and accomplish shared goals and the park’s purpose, including resource protection, consistent visitor experiences, accessibility, interpretation strategies and programming, transportation and wayfinding, and connectivity between resources.

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## MANAGEMENT CONCEPT

The general management plan presents a management concept for the national park that includes articulated desired conditions for park resources, operations, and administration and presents strategies to achieve the desired conditions. Under the concept presented, park managers would balance visitor use opportunities and resource protection through strategies and actions that apply parkwide at Reconstruction Era National Historical Park and to specific management areas.

### PARKWIDE

- Establish land acquisition criteria for properties within the park’s existing authorized boundary, and articulate an interest in property acquisitions for administrative use and for resource protection and improved visitor appreciation of the Reconstruction era (1861–1900) in Beaufort.
- Establish visitor capacities and indicators and thresholds for monitoring capacity and visitor-introduced impacts on park resources for all NPS-managed sites and some NPS operational areas on partner properties.
- Commit to working with partners in their efforts to provide safe multimodal access routes to all park sites, including separated multimodal paths, shared roadways, and other solutions.
- Articulate commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion by leveraging outreach and relationships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities and African American history and cultural institutions; using hiring authorities to recruit diverse staff; and bolstering diversity, equity, and inclusion in interpretation by involving and engaging park partners, local businesses, contractors, and residents and exploring potential concession and contracting opportunities.
- Improve wayfinding within and between management areas of the park.
- Promote the development of recreational water access points at sites throughout the park and at associated partner destinations, and explore concession or commercial opportunities for water-based recreation and tours focused on Reconstruction-era history.
- Provide measures for preserving and protecting park collections and archives using museum storage space within collection facilities at Charles Pinckney National Historic Site and the NPS Southeast Archeological Center.





## BEAUFORT NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT

- Enhance interpretive opportunities in the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District by identifying prioritized Reconstruction-era interpretive zones and properties while articulating the park’s commitment to working with community leaders, organizations, and property owners to minimize impacts on private property when exploring interpretive opportunities at these sites.
- Identify criteria for establishing maintenance and administrative space that protect historic resources by consolidating primary office and maintenance space in a centrally located nonhistoric facility in or near Beaufort.

## PENN CENTER NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT

- Describe future collaborative operations at the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District by ensuring collaboration on joint operations and interpretation between the National Park Service and the Penn Center, providing NPS technical expertise and support, as needed, for development projects on the Penn Center or Brick Baptist Church grounds.
- Consolidate the administrative NPS presence in the study house at Brick Baptist Church to minimize stress on the historic fabric of Darrah Hall and maximize its space for public appreciation.
- Establish a program of guided tours inside Brick Baptist Church in coordination with the church congregation.

## CAMP SAXTON

- Identify the future NPS jurisdictional land interest at Camp Saxton, consistent with the park’s enabling legislation.

Additional actions and further detail on these strategies are described in chapter 2 of this plan, and the environmental impacts of its implementation are presented in the associated environmental assessment (see part II).





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## Part 1: General Management Plan

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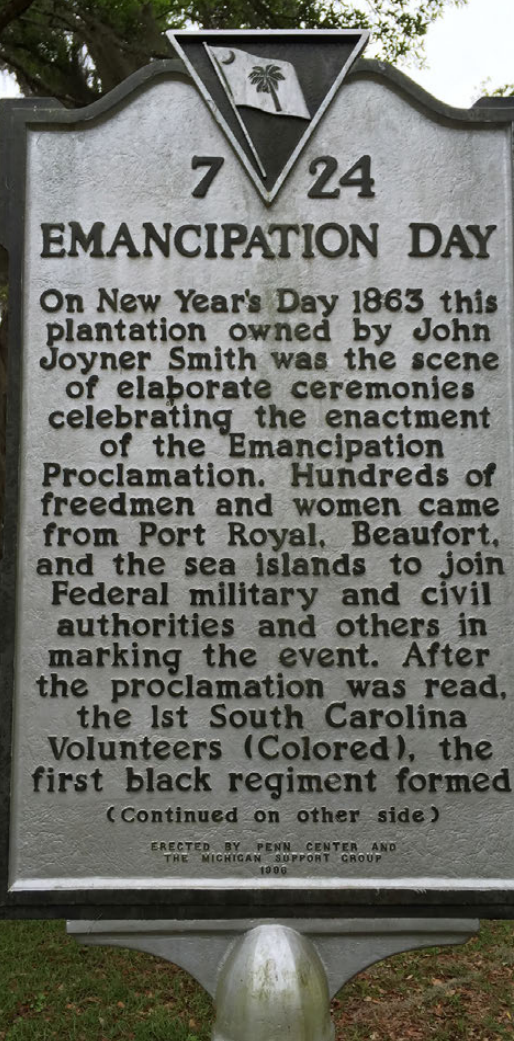
# Chapter 1: Introduction

7 24  
EMANCIPATION DAY  
On New Year's Day 1865 this plantation owned by John Joyner Smith was the scene of elaborate ceremonies celebrating the enactment of the Emancipation Proclamation. Hundreds of freedmen and women came from Port Royal, Beaufort, and the sea islands to join Federal military and civil authorities and others in marking the event. After the proclamation was read, the 1st South Carolina Volunteers (Colored), the first black regiment formed (continued on other side)

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THE MICHIGAN SUPPORT GROUP  
1989







# Chapter 1 | Introduction

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLANNING

The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 and National Park Service (NPS) *Management Policies 2006* require each unit of the national park system to have a general management plan (plan or GMP). Director's Order 2: *Park Planning* specifies that a general management plan refers to (1) a stand-alone general management plan or (2) the planning documents in a park's planning portfolio that collectively meet the statutory requirements for a general management plan. The following statutory requirements are described in the National Parks and Recreation Act:

- measures for resource preservation
- indications of the types and general intensities of development (visitor circulation and transportation patterns, systems, and modes), including general locations, timing of implementation, and anticipated costs
- identification of and implementation commitments for visitor carrying capacities
- indications of potential boundary modifications

The purpose of general management planning is to ensure that a national park system unit has a clearly defined direction for resource preservation and visitor use to best achieve the NPS mandate to preserve resources unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. In addition, the following general management planning components make the National Park Service more effective, collaborative, and accountable:



- Providing a balance between continuity and adaptability in decision-making by defining the desired conditions to be achieved and maintained in a park unit and providing a touchstone that allows NPS managers and staff to adapt their actions to changing situations while staying focused on what is most important about the park unit.
- Analyzing the park unit in relation to the surrounding ecosystem, cultural setting, and community, which helps NPS managers and staff understand how the park unit can interrelate with neighbors and others in ways that are ecologically, socially, and economically sustainable. Decisions made within such a larger context are more likely to be successful over time.
- Affording everyone who has a stake in decisions affecting a park unit an opportunity to be involved in the planning process and to understand the decisions that are made. Park units are often the focus of intense public interest and public involvement throughout the planning process. Involving all interested stakeholders in GMP development provides opportunities for NPS managers and staff to interact with the public to learn about their concerns, expectations, and values and to share information about the park unit's purpose and significance and the opportunities and constraints for managing park lands.

The ultimate outcome of general management planning for park units is an agreement among the National Park Service, its partners, and the public on why each area is managed as part of the national park system, what resource conditions and visitor experiences should exist, and how those conditions can best be achieved and maintained over time.

General management plans are intended to be long-term documents that establish and articulate a management philosophy and framework for decision-making and problem solving in national park system units. General management plans usually provide guidance for 15 to 20 years.

Reconstruction Era National Historical Park (park) in South Carolina was established in 2017 by presidential proclamation to commemorate, preserve, and interpret the period spanning the early Civil War years until the start of Jim Crow racial segregation in the 1890s, a time of significant transformation in the United States as the nation grappled with the opportunities and challenge of integrating millions of newly free African Americans into its social, political, and economic life. The Reconstruction era was, in many ways, the nation's second founding, as Americans abolished slavery and struggled earnestly, if not always successfully, to build a nation of free and equal citizens. The national park was redesignated Reconstruction Era National Historical Park (park) in 2019 by Public Law 116-9, which also established the Reconstruction Era Network under the administration of the new park. This document represents the first general management plan for the recently established unit of the national park system.

## OTHER LAWS AND POLICIES RELATED TO NATIONAL PARK SERVICE MANAGEMENT

This section discusses some of the most pertinent servicewide laws and policies related to planning and managing Reconstruction Era National Historical Park. Park managers must comply with these laws and policies regardless of this GMP planning effort.

The National Park Service must comply with laws and policies to protect environmental quality and resources, preserve cultural resources, and provide public services. Applicable laws and policies related to resource management include the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978; the Clean Water Act of 1972; the Endangered Species Act of 1973; the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended; the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990; and Executive Order 11990, “Protection of Wetlands.” Laws and policies related to public services and access include the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Act Standards (ABAAS), the Final Outdoor Developed Area Guidelines, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Fair Housing Act.

Some of these laws and policies are applicable solely or primarily to units of the national park system. These include the 1916 Organic Act that created the National Park Service; the General Authorities Act of 1970; the act of March 27, 1978, relating to the management of the national park system; and the National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998. Other laws and policies have much broader application, such as the Endangered Species Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and Executive Order 11990, which addresses wetland protection.

The NPS Organic Act (16 United States Code [USC] 1) provides the central management direction for all units of the national park system as follows:

*... Promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, parks, and reservations... by such means and measure as to conform to the fundamental purpose of said parks, parks and reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.*

The national park system General Authorities Act (16 USC 1a-1 et seq.) affirms that while all national park system units remain “distinct in character,” they are “united through their inter-related purposes and resources into one national park system as cumulative expressions of a single national heritage.” The act makes it clear that the NPS Organic Act and other protective mandates apply equally to all units of the system. Further, amendments state that NPS management of park units should not “derogate ... the purposes and values for which these various areas have been established.”

The National Park Service also has established policies for all units under its stewardship. These are identified and explained in a guidance manual titled NPS Management Policies 2006. This general management plan incorporates and complies with the provisions of these mandates and policies.

## COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

This general management plan is subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires an assessment and public disclosure of the environmental impacts, both adverse and beneficial, of actions proposed by the federal government before those actions are implemented. When there are actions that could have a significant impact on the natural or human environment, the National Park Service is required to prepare an environmental impact statement.

The National Park Service has prepared an environmental assessment for this general management plan in accordance with NEPA, implementing regulations found in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500–1508; Director’s Order 12: *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-Making* (NPS 2011); and the NPS NEPA Handbook (NPS 2015). The plan addresses desired conditions for the national park that are not mandated by laws and policies and must be determined through a planning process. Desired conditions and management strategies are identified and further discussed in “Chapter 2: Proposed Management Concept” and are analyzed in the environmental assessment (part II).

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## PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

This general management plan represents input from the National Park Service, its partners, other agencies and bureaus, and the public. Consultation and coordination among partner organizations, key stakeholders, and the public were vitally important to the planning process.

### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT/CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

In May 2022, the National Park Service held a virtual two-day desired conditions workshop to conduct internal scoping and solicit input to inform the development of draft desired conditions for the park. Workshop sessions included a visioning exercise, introduction to desired conditions, a development session for site-specific desired conditions, and a gap analysis of existing and desired conditions parkwide.

Internal scoping was followed by a stakeholder workshop in July 2022. This three-day stakeholder workshop convened representatives from the stakeholder groups described above for site visits, discussions about the park’s long-range interpretive plan, and a GMP-specific workshop session. The GMP-specific session was held at the Second Founding of America Learning Center in Beaufort, South Carolina, on July 13, 2022. The purpose of workshop was to introduce the GMP process and develop a planning vision for the park’s primary visitor areas and resources. Draft desired conditions initially developed by the National Park Service were further refined by stakeholders and partners during the work session. The in-person workshop was followed by a series of calls with individual partners to develop draft management concepts, inclusive of the desired conditions and the management strategies designed to meet them.

From February 23 to March 23, 2023, the National Park Service requested public input on the major components of the general management plan. These elements were described in a newsletter, which presented preliminary desired conditions for the park and its surrounding environment, as well as draft management strategies that could help achieve those conditions. The newsletter also included potential criteria considerations for future acquisitions. Virtual and in-person public meetings were hosted to collect public feedback and answer questions.



## AGENCY/TRIBAL CONSULTATION

The environmental assessment prepared for the general management plan (part II) describes consultation and coordination with other federal agencies, offices, and federally recognized Tribes.

## KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Strategies for managing Reconstruction Era National Historical Park in this document were developed in consultation with the park's key partners and stakeholders, and successful implementation is dependent on continued coordinated efforts. Key stakeholders for park planning and operations that were engaged as part of this process include the following:

### Penn Center Board of Trustees and Advisory Board

The Penn Center, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit African American cultural and educational center on St. Helena Island, founded in 1862 by abolitionists and Christian missionaries from Pennsylvania. The nonprofit is one of the first schools founded in the southern United States specifically for the education of formerly enslaved African Americans. Penn Center's governance promotes and preserves Penn's true history and culture through a commitment to education, community development, and social justice. Penn's collaborative partnership with Reconstruction Era National Historical Park focuses on the mutual protection and preservation of the NHL district. Darrah Hall, managed by the National Park Service, is but one piece of the national historic landmark that also includes Brick Baptist Church.

### Brick Baptist Church

Brick Baptist Church, historically known as Brick Church, is a major contributing feature of Reconstruction Era National Historical Park and is the oldest church on St. Helena Island. Built by enslaved people in 1855 for the White congregation, the church was turned over to the Black residents of St. Helena Island in 1861 as the government sold abandoned plantations and land holdings to newly free people. Between 1862 and 1865, the church was home to Penn School. Today, the National Park Service has a preservation easement over the exterior of the church and its surrounding landscape, but all ownership and operations of the church remain in the hands of an active church congregation and several ongoing ministries. The church is led by a lead pastor and associate minister, a board of deacons, and a board of trustees.





## US Navy at Naval Support Facility Beaufort

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Naval Support Facility Beaufort provides medical services to all active-duty Navy and Marine Corps personnel, as well as retired military personnel and all military dependents residing in the Beaufort area—a total population of approximately 35,000 beneficiaries. The hospital, opened in 1949 on 127 acres of land, was formerly the John Joiner Smith Plantation that included Camp Saxton and Fort Frederick, both recognized as national historic sites. Portions of historic Camp Saxton in the naval facility grounds are within the authorized boundary of Reconstruction Era National Historical Park but are not administered by the National Park Service or regularly open to the public. Through a partnership between the US Navy and Reconstruction Era National Historical Park, park staff occasionally take visitors on tours through the naval site. Atlantic Marine Corps Communities currently leases the part of the facility that is within the park and manages the housing. The National Park Service is not involved in any leasing activities and continues to work with the Navy to ensure visitor access is approved and follows any base policy.

## South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

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The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources owns and manages Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve and is responsible for producing planning documentation and other resources regarding the site. The preserve includes rich archeological resources that include Fort Frederick, the oldest surviving tabby fort in South Carolina and the oldest known tabby structure in Beaufort County. Built by the British colonial government between 1733 and 1735, the fort was already abandoned by the time of the Civil War but was incorporated into the landscape of Camp Saxton during its operation and during the Reconstruction era. Today, the preserve is immediately adjacent to Naval Support Facility Beaufort and within the legislated boundary of Reconstruction Era National Historical Park. The preserve provides public access to Fort Frederick and partners with the National Park Service, who guide visitors to the preserve as a means to access and interpret the associated larger landscape of Camp Saxton.



## Beaufort County

The Beaufort County government's self-stated mission is to serve the people of Beaufort County in a cost-effective manner and enable citizens to experience a protected quality of life, natural and developed resources in a coastal environment, a diverse heritage, and economic well-being. Park and county staff work together to ensure compliance with local policies, coordination of resources, and investment in mutually beneficial partnerships between the park and county communities. Beaufort County manages and owns two parcels of land to the west and on the southeast corner of Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve.

## Town of Port Royal

The Town of Port Royal is located between the Beaufort River and Battery Creek in the heart of South Carolina's Lowcountry. The town creates opportunities for accessibility to the natural environment through a network of walking trails, a community beach, boardwalk, and various public amenities. The town owns the Pinckney-Porters Chapel in Naval Heritage Park, which the National Park Service is permitted to use as a visitor contact center for Camp Saxton. Together, park and town staff work collaboratively to engage in park planning efforts, recruit and train volunteers, develop interpretive signs and exhibits, and provide access to Camp Saxton.

## The Second Founding of America

Second Founding (formerly known as Reconstruction Beaufort and founded in 2018) is a Beaufort-based incorporated nonprofit that connects an expansive national collaboration of scholars, educators, public officials, visual and performing artists and community leaders whose common purpose is to uncover and teach the untold stories, and correct the false stories, of the Reconstruction era during and the following the Civil War. The Second Founding of America is Reconstruction Era National Historical Park's official philanthropic partner. Together, the park and Second Founding of America work to support and promote awareness and appreciation for the significance of the park and pursue mutually beneficial working relationships with other organizations and institutions that support opportunities, activities, programming, and initiatives in the park and among members of the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network.







### **Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor**

The Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor is a national heritage area managed by the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission. Designated by Congress in 2006, the purpose of the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor national heritage area is to preserve, share, and interpret the history, traditional cultural practices, heritage sites, and natural resources associated with Gullah Geechee people of coastal North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Pursuant to its purpose, corridor staff provide direct, technical interpretive assistance and a range of other support to the park.

### **Greater Beaufort-Port Royal Convention & Visitor's Bureau**

The Greater Beaufort-Port Royal Convention & Visitor's Bureau serves as the official destination marketing organization for the City of Beaufort, the Town of Port Royal, and the unincorporated Sea Island regions of northern Beaufort County. The organization serves to increase awareness of Northern Beaufort County as a vacation, group, meeting, and/or sports tourism destination to enhance economic growth in the region. The informal partnership between the park and the Convention & Visitor's Bureau functions to support consistent and enjoyable experiences for those visiting the park and the broader Beaufort area.





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## PARK BACKGROUND

### GEOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION

Located in Beaufort County, South Carolina, Reconstruction Era National Historical Park embodies central themes of the historically significant phase of US Reconstruction following the end of the Civil War. The significant historical events that transpired in the park and around the county make it an ideal place to tell critical national, regional, and local stories of experimentation, potential transformation, accomplishment, and disappointment. In the Beaufort region, including the City of Beaufort, the Town of Port Royal, and the neighboring Sea Islands, many existing historic sites demonstrate the transformative effect of emancipation and Reconstruction.

The park boundary includes approximately 65 acres of land in three disparate locations in Beaufort County (figure1). Approximately 16 acres of land, or interests in land, are controlled by the federal government<sup>1</sup> and established as the part of the park by its enabling proclamation. These key places include Brick Baptist Church and associated graveyard (an approximate 1-acre historic preservation easement) on Saint Helena Island; Darrah Hall and associated easements (approximately 4 acres) in the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District on Saint Helena Island; a portion of the site of Camp Saxton (approximately 11 acres), on lands administered by downtown Beaufort. The collection of historic sites in Beaufort County, South Carolina, along with other nationally significant sites outside national park boundaries, provides a unique opportunity for visitors to understand the complex history and explore places associated with the Reconstruction era.

In addition to the key historic sites of the park, a nonhistoric building and an associated half acre of land at 913 West Street in Beaufort was recently acquired by the National Park Service via donation from the park's philanthropic partner (Second Founding of America).

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1. A note on land ownership within the park boundary: As described above, Reconstruction Era National Historical Park has a discontinuous boundary and a variety of landowners, managers, and easements within and near the park boundary. To help the general management plan be accessible to all audiences, federal lands managed by the National Park Service are occasionally referred to as "NPS-owned lands" for clarity. The National Park Service does not technically own any land; it only administers federally owned land. With two federal agencies managing land within the boundary of Reconstruction Era National Historical Park (the US Navy and the National Park Service), this helps the reader differentiate between land managers.

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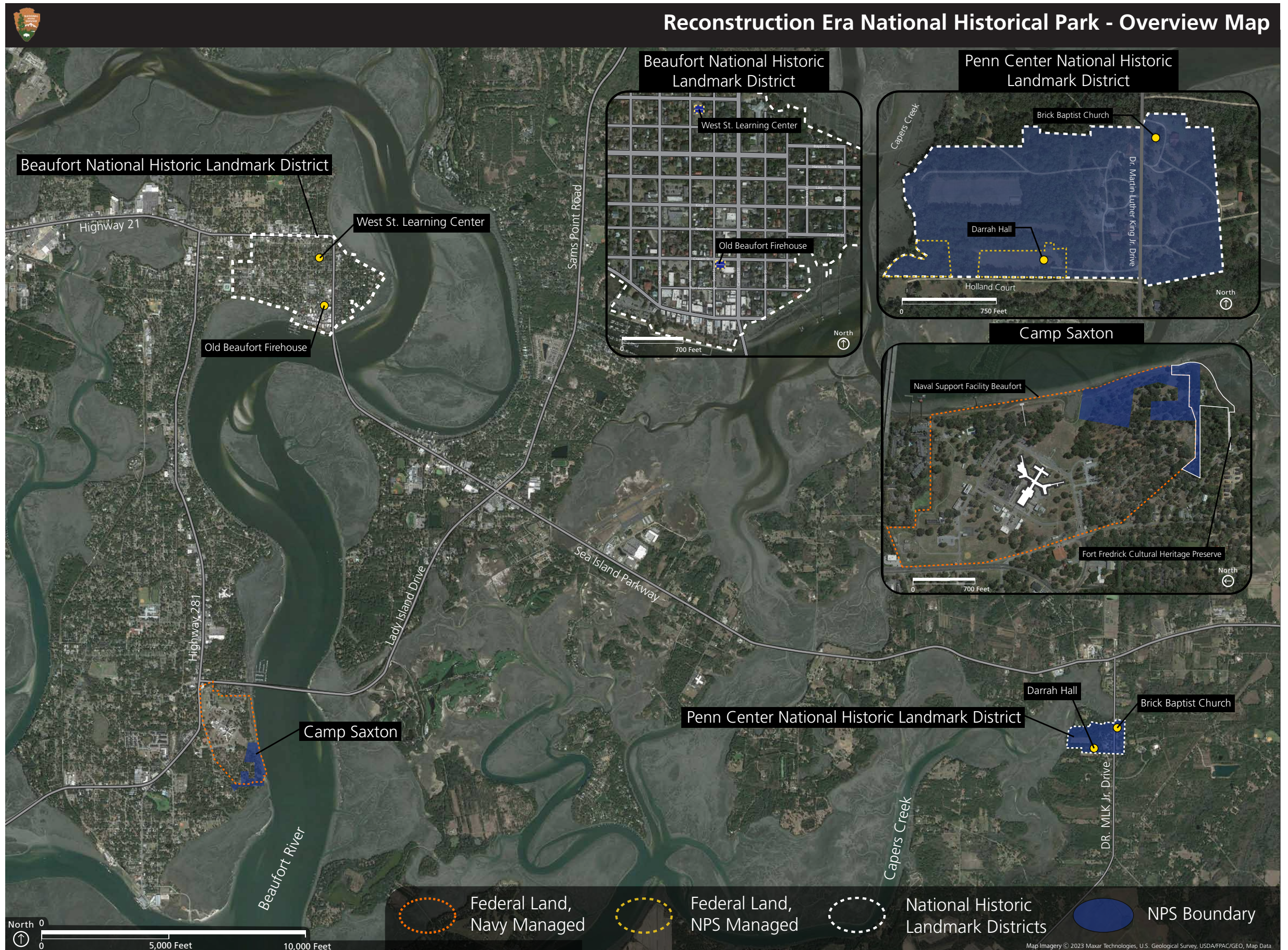


Figure 1. Reconstruction Era National Historical Park In Beaufort County, South Carolina



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## **PARK PURPOSE**

The purpose statement identifies the reason the park was established. The purpose statement for Reconstruction Era National Historical Park was drafted through a careful analysis of its enabling presidential proclamation and the legislative history that influenced its development (see appendix A for the proclamation and enabling legislation). The purpose statement lays the foundation for understanding what is most important about the park:

Reconstruction Era National Historical Park, in Beaufort County, South Carolina, preserves and interprets the resources and complex national stories of Reconstruction—African Americans’ quest for freedom, the challenges resulting from the abolition of slavery, and the struggles to redefine the nation during and after the Civil War.

## **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 Reconstruction Era National Historical Park and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Statements of significance describe the distinctive nature of the park and why an area is important in 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 Reconstruction Era National Historical Park in the park’s foundation document, published in September 2019. Please note that the sequence of the statements does not reflect the level of significance.

- In November 1861, while the Civil War raged in the background, Beaufort County became a birthplace of Reconstruction as one of the first places in the United States where formerly enslaved people began defining freedom on their own terms.
- Because of the early occupation by the US military and implementation of Treasury Department policies in 1862, many African Americans were able to acquire land in Beaufort County, and through political and social organizations, many held on to their lands, despite challenges from former landowners. In this setting, land ownership and control over agricultural labor was the way to sustain community life, cultural identity, and economic independence.
- On January 1, 1863, an elaborate ceremony and historic reading of the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed all enslaved people in states then “in rebellion” against the United States, took place at Camp Saxton, a Federal encampment at the Smith Plantation. Camp Saxton functioned as both a recruiting post and training ground for the 1st South Carolina Volunteers, one of the first African American infantry regiments mustered into Federal service during the Civil War.
- One of the most influential African American politicians during Reconstruction, Robert Smalls, a Beaufort native and formerly enslaved, had a political career that spanned the entire Reconstruction era, including advocating for free compulsory public education, representing South Carolina in the US Congress in 1875–1887, and fighting against the disenfranchisement of African American voters.

- Participation in the political process was a defining component of freedom during Reconstruction. In Beaufort County, African American communities mobilized for the right to vote, and when enfranchised in 1867, African American men, many of them Civil War veterans ready to defend their civil rights, exercised their right to vote, becoming a driving force in politics both locally and nationally.
- Once freed, many African Americans in Beaufort County wanted to worship in churches and join organizations that reflected their communities. Brick Baptist Church—also known as Brick Church—was built by enslaved Africans in 1855 for the White planters on St. Helena Island. After the White population fled from the Sea Islands in 1861, newly free African Americans began to make this church their own.
- Freed people sought education, which had previously been denied to them. Northern missionaries, including Laura M. Towne and Ellen Murray, provided access to education for the formerly enslaved, leading to the establishment of Penn School on land donated by Hastings Gantt, who was formerly enslaved.
- In the 20th century, the Penn School evolved into the Penn Center and remains a crucial place for education, community, and political organizing. As a meeting place in the 1950s and 1960s for civil rights leaders, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the staff of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Penn Center links the democratic aspirations of Reconstruction to those of the modern civil rights movement.

## RESOURCE DESCRIPTIONS AND CONDITIONS

Within its boundaries, Reconstruction Era National Historical Park contains numerous historic properties, objects, and cultural resources that embody the historically significant Reconstruction era in Beaufort County, South Carolina. Some of these resources are under direct NPS management, while others are owned and managed by public and private partners. Per the park’s enabling legislation and preceding presidential proclamation (see appendix A), the National Park Service is directed to use applicable authorities to seek to enter into agreements with partner stakeholders within the park boundaries to address common interests and promote management efficiencies, including provision of visitor services, interpretation and education, the establishment and care of museum collections, and the preservation of historic objects. Reconstruction Era National Historical Park’s general management plan provides management guidance for its fundamental and other important resources and values, as described below. Examples of other potential partner properties that represent significant Reconstruction era history in Beaufort are presented in appendix B.

### Fundamental Resources and Values

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Fundamental resources and values 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. The following fundamental resources and values have been identified for Reconstruction Era National Historical Park per its foundation document (NPS 2019):



**Brick Baptist Church** and its surrounding landscape and historic cemetery is a contributing resource to the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District. The church is within the district and the NPS boundary but is owned and managed by the Baptist Church congregation. The National Park Service has a conservation easement for the exterior façade of Brick Baptist Church and surrounding cultural landscape, which was executed as part of the establishment of the park. The park also has a general agreement with the Brick Church describing partnership and collaboration, including interpretative and educational programming.

Brick Baptist Church, where Towne and Murray held classes in 1862–1864, is today the oldest operating church on St. Helena Island. It was built by enslaved African Americans in 1855 for the White planters on St. Helena Island. When the White population fled from the Sea Islands in 1861, the suddenly freed African Americans made the church their own. Besides serving as a place of worship, the Brick Church and its environs were used for numerous meetings to promote the Reconstruction movement, the raising of African American troops, and celebrations of freedom. The church continues to serve the spiritual needs of the community and its modern congregation to this day.

There is a small cottage (the “Study House,” aka Deacon’s Study House) on the church grounds that is under renovation, part of which will involve moving the building to its original location immediately north of the church. Live oaks, other character-defining trees, and shrubs are also part of the cultural landscape surrounding the church and provide an important context for the site.





**Darrah Hall** is a contributing property to the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District and provides a venue to connect visitors to the rich legacy of the Penn Center. Freed people hungered for education, as every state in the Confederacy except Tennessee had prohibited enslaved African Americans from learning to read and write. In 1862, Laura M. Towne and Ellen Murray from Pennsylvania were among the northern teachers to arrive at St. Helena Island as part of the Port Royal Experiment. Charlotte Forten, a well-educated African American woman from a prominent abolitionist family in Philadelphia, joined the faculty later that year. Initially located in a room of the Oaks Plantation House, in 1862, the school was moved to the Brick Church to accommodate large numbers of students. In 1864, Hastings Gantt, an African American landowner, donated land for a permanent school. The school became a model to illustrate the development of African American educational institutions in the Reconstruction era. The Penn School would evolve into the Penn Center in the 20th century and remain a crucial place for education, community, and political organizing for decades to come. Darrah Hall is the oldest standing structure on the site of the Penn School grounds. The original Darrah Hall was built in 1882 off the Penn Center campus on The Green in The Corners area of the island. This large, two-story gathering hall, named after Laura Towne's sister Sophia Towne Darrah, burned following the Great Hurricane of 1893. Shortly thereafter, with funds from Northern benefactors, students and community members built a new Darrah Hall close to Lathers Hall in the core of the Penn Center. The date for construction is uncertain; however, evidence suggests that the new Darrah Hall postdates 1895. Between 1968 and 1972 Darrah Hall was moved to its current location. As part of the Penn Center, Darrah Hall sits on a landscape lined with Spanish moss-covered oaks that reflect a unique sense of place. Capers Creek marks the western boundary of the Penn Center. The creek is a navigable gut surrounded by tidal flats and wetland vegetation. An NPS-owned portion of the Penn Center around Darrah Hall abuts the creek. The water access and natural resources of the tidal creek that has historically connected the communities around Saint Helena Island remains and provides a further sense of place to visitors of the site.

The entirety of the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District is included in the boundary of Reconstruction Era National Historical Park, but NPS ownership only includes Darrah Hall and its surrounding landscape (see figure 1). Darrah Hall is open to the public and has temporary exhibits. The building requires investment in its preservation, and a thorough historic structure report was completed in 2019 to guide the building's restoration. A general agreement was drafted in January 2018 between the National Park Service and the Penn Center to formalize a partnership for mutual support and management of Darrah Hall and the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District





**Camp Saxton** was established by Federal forces during the American Civil War on the site of the former Smith Plantation in Port Royal. In August 1862, US Brigadier General Rufus Saxton, the military governor of the abandoned plantations in the Department of the South, received permission to recruit 5,000 African Americans, most formerly enslaved, into the US Army. The 1st South Carolina Volunteers, among the first Black regiments mustered into regular service in the United States Army during the Civil War, occupied and trained at Camp Saxton from early November 1862 to late January 1863. Camp Saxton was also the location of elaborate and historic ceremonies on January 1, 1863, to announce and celebrate the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed enslaved people in states then “in rebellion” against the United States. General Saxton himself had attended church services at Brick Baptist Church in the fall of 1862 to recruit troops and to invite everyone, African American and White, “to come to the camp . . . on New Year’s Day and join in the grand celebration.” This Emancipation Proclamation celebration was particularly significant because it occurred in Federal-occupied territory in the South, where unlike elsewhere in the South, that occupation status allowed the provisions of the proclamation to take effect before the end of the war. Contextually, Port Royal had been a location where the US government had been gradually developing federal policy for newly liberated Black people following the capture of Beaufort in 1861, and the final version of the Emancipation Proclamation, issued on January 10, 1863, continued the process of defining African Americans as citizens.

The exact location of the ceremonial reading of the proclamation at Camp Saxton is not known, and there are no historic structures remaining from the Civil War or Reconstruction era, but the location of the Smith Plantation House and some of the outbuildings have been identified on period maps and documented via rigorous searches of contemporary photographs. The modern landscape is lined with live oaks and retains water views that capture the setting and sense of place.

The US Navy maintains the historic property under an integrated cultural resources plan and integrated natural resource management plan. Public access to the Navy-managed portion of the Camp Saxton site can be challenging because of its location in the US Naval Support Facility Beaufort campus. However, part of the site is also located on Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve, immediately adjacent to the naval campus, and is owned and operated by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Beaufort County. The county-owned portion of the heritage preserve provides parking, waterfront access, and vistas of the



Camp Saxton site. On the state-owned portion of the property, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources protects and provides interpretation of Fort Frederick, the oldest surviving tabby fort in South Carolina (18th century), which was abandoned and later incorporated into Camp Saxton in 1862. Waysides interpret both Fort Frederick and Camp Saxton. Fort Frederick's tabby ruins are present on the landscape. Most NPS visitors to Camp Saxton experience the site through a visit to Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve.

The heritage preserve is within walking distance of the "Pinckney-Porters Chapel" in Port Royal's Naval Heritage Park. The Pinckney-Porters Chapel is a replica Reconstruction-era Freedman's Chapel that was recently built in the Naval Heritage Park. Initially, a historic chapel was intended to be moved and reconstructed, but it was too badly damaged and was instead fully rebuilt; it is not considered a historic property by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The chapel is owned by the Town of Port Royal but, through an agreement, is staffed by the National Park Service as a visitor contact station serving Camp Saxton. Most NPS visitors to Camp Saxton begin their experience at the chapel and are guided to the site by NPS rangers.

**Oral histories, archives, and museum collections** preserve and interpret the broader stories and history of the Reconstruction era, and the park staff will need to develop museum collections and archives that include oral histories. Historical scholarship on Reconstruction is extensive, and professional historians continue to deepen our understanding of the period. Across the country, museums, institutions of higher learning, libraries, and nonprofit organizations hold archival materials and museum objects that are significant to the period. National historical park staff will work in collaboration with these entities as they identify resources, build relationships, and develop a museum collection and archives, with a focus on both the local history and the national scope of the Reconstruction era. Understanding what materials are available and providing access to them is essential to building successful educational programs and interpretive materials for the national park. Of particular importance is collecting oral histories that document the firsthand accounts and experiences of African Americans in Sea Island communities who have knowledge of the sites and resources in the national park.

**Partnerships and collaboration** with various entities are essential to collecting the history of the Reconstruction era, which encompasses an area larger than any one location. The importance of these partnerships was affirmed and expanded with the establishment of the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network. Partnering with the City and County of Beaufort, Town of Port Royal, St. Helena Island, Penn Center, US Navy, Mitchelville Freedom Park, Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor, local churches, friends groups, and other organizations in stewarding these resources and interpreting Reconstruction-era history is essential to the national historical park. Partnerships at the federal, state, county, and local municipal levels, as well as nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher learning, churches, and local community organizations, will be required for the Reconstruction Era National Historical Park and National Historic Network to be successful.





## Other Important Resources and Values

The following other important resources and values have been identified for Reconstruction Era National Historical Park per its foundation document (NPS 2019):

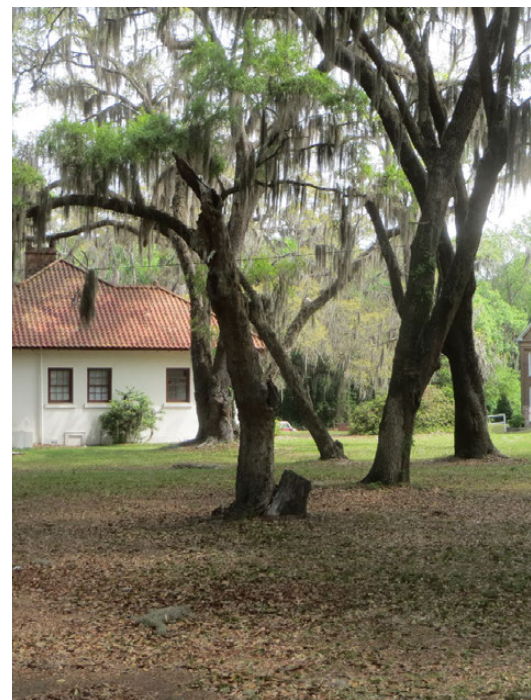
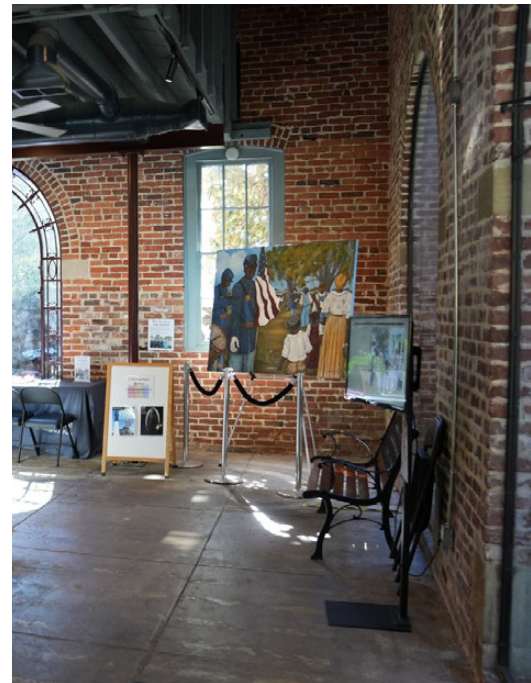
**Old Beaufort Firehouse.** Built around 1911, the Old Beaufort Firehouse stands near the center of downtown Beaufort, across the street from the historic Beaufort Arsenal. Although the firehouse does not date to the historical period of the Reconstruction era, it is centrally located in the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District and serves as the primary initial visitor contact location for the national park. The firehouse is the only historic<sup>1</sup> structure in the district owned by the National Park Service (see figure 1). From the Old Beaufort Firehouse, visitors can walk to many significant Reconstruction-era sites and properties that are not managed by the National Park Service. Several places in close proximity to the Old Beaufort Firehouse are associated with Robert Smalls, the most influential African American politician in South Carolina during the Reconstruction era.

## Related Resources

The following related resources in Beaufort County were identified in the park’s proclamation and have close associations with Reconstruction Era National Historical Park (NPS 2019):

**Penn Center National Historic Landmark District.** Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in on September 9, 1974, and designated as an NHL district on December 2, 1974, the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District (National Register reference number 74001824) includes the campus of Penn Center, Inc. (formerly Penn School) and Brick Baptist Church, historically known as Brick Church. The Penn Center is located on Saint Helena Island, South Carolina. Founded in 1862, the Penn School was one of the first academic schools in the South established by Northern missionaries to provide a formal education for formerly enslaved people. For more than 150 years, the Penn Center has continued to be an important focal point for African American education, historic preservation, and social justice. Today, the mission of the Penn Center is to promote and preserve Penn’s true history and culture through its commitment to education, community development, and social justice.

1. The National Park Service recently acquired the West Street Learning Center (913 West Street), which is inside the historic district boundary but not a contributing structure.



While the 1974 national register and NHL documentation state that the Penn Center Historic District comprises 47-acres and 18 historic structures, the official web page for the Penn Center describes a 50-acre historic district (inclusive of three acres south of the Brick Baptist Church) containing 25 historic structures on St. Helena Island. With the exception of the Brick Church (built 1855) and Darrah Hall (built 1890s), all of the buildings have been built after the Reconstruction era but are linked to the Penn Center's long-standing purpose, which originated in 1862 in the campus's cultural landscape.

As a nonprofit, Penn Center promotes many public programs and presents partnership opportunities for the National Historical Park. The center is open to the public and operates a welcome center and museum, which offers tours and educational programming throughout the year. The Penn Center also operates a conference venue and provides lodging for private and public rental. Penn Center hosts an annual Heritage Days festival in November to celebrate Gullah Geechee culture and offers a variety of programming for the local community, including the following:

- The Program for Academic and Cultural Enrichment focuses on youth education, social, environmental, and cultural development for Sea Island children ages 8 weeks through 17 years.
- The Land Use and Environmental Education Program assists native islanders with issues of land retention and stewardship through education and legal services to help protect the community against land loss along the Gullah Geechee coast. Additionally, the program works closely with the county to protect and preserve valuable cultural and environmental assets through zoning laws and heir's property exemptions.
- Educational Workshops & Resources for Small and Beginning Farmers offers workshops and resources with support from the US Department of Agriculture.
- The Culture and Community at Penn Center National Historic Landmark District Project (a Penn Center Partnership with the University of Georgia Willson Center for the Humanities and Arts funded by the Mellon Foundations) provides annual artist residencies, summer research for college students, and community conversations on issues of relevance to the resident and institutions of the Sea Islands region.

**The Beaufort National Historic Landmark District.** Listed in the national register on December 17, 1969, and designated a national historic landmark on November 7, 1973, the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District (national register reference number 69000159) recognizes the historic significance of the community. The NHL district originally consisted of 162 contributing resources (160 residential and commercial buildings and 2 landscapes), indicated the period of significance as the early 18th century to 1920, and emphasized the historic architecture of the antebellum planter class. While the Northwest Quadrant of Beaufort, an area primarily settled by African Americans during and after the Civil War, was included in the original NHL boundaries, neither African American history nor African American historic resources were mentioned in the nomination.



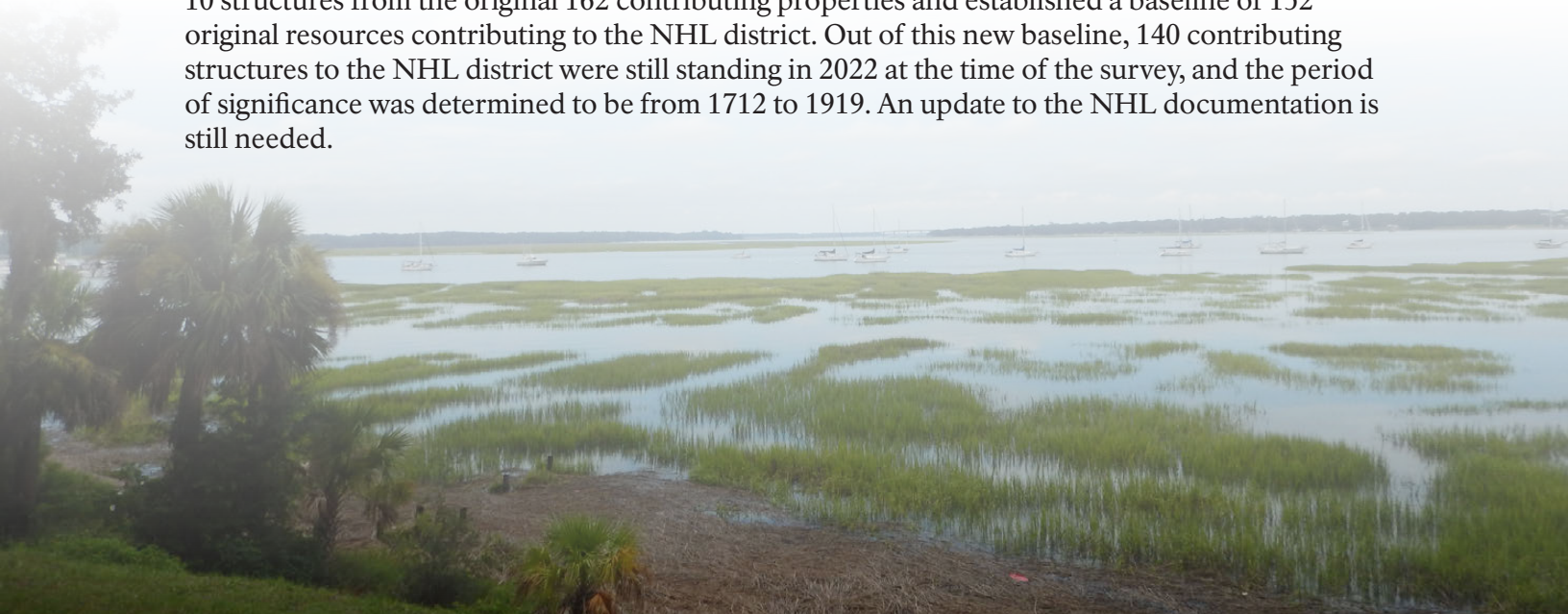


While the NHL documentation has not been updated since 1973, there have been two updates to the national register documentation, in 1986 and 2001. These national register updates extended the date of significance of the historic district through 1950, added areas of significance to include social history and African American heritage, and identified a total of 467 contributing buildings, in addition to the 5 sites, 1 structure, and 1 object also contributing to the national register district (see appendix B). Many of these structures included in the national register updates were built during or historically connected to the Reconstruction era. Despite these national register updates and the national register's overlapping boundaries with the NHL district, only the buildings and landscapes originally listed as part of the NHL district in 1973 are still considered part of the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District.

The district and the surrounding area reflect, perhaps better than any single location in the United States, the political, economic, organizational, and religious transformations that occurred during the Reconstruction era. After the capture of Port Royal in November 1861, Beaufort quickly became a place of refuge for formerly enslaved people from across the Low Country and Sea Islands. Following the Civil War, African Americans not only built thriving agricultural communities but were also professionals, industrialists, merchants, and civic officials who built lasting political, religious, and educational institutions, many of which can be visited today.

As described by Warren Boeschstein in *Historic American Coastal Towns Along the Atlantic Coast*, the landscape surrounding Port Royal Island, where the City of Beaufort is located is defined by “tidal rivers and creeks [that] wind through a maze of grassy marshes and sandy islands to form one of the most intricate patterns of land in water in the world” (Boeschstein 1999, 219, excerpted in Schneider 2000). The city of Beaufort, located on a high bluff at a bend in the Beaufort River, was situated in a readily defensible area and took advantage of the prevailing breezes that come up the river channel and blow across the peninsula formed between the Beaufort River and Pigeon Point Creek. These two waterways also serve as the southern and eastern boundaries of the NHL district and overlapping national register district and have always been of prominent importance to the people who live in the area. Today, the overlapping national register and NHL district boundaries contain a large, dynamic urban area of public and private buildings, as well as commercial spaces and residences.

The *Condition and Integrity Study for the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District* documented the differences between the NHL district and national register district and omissions and contradictions in the original NHL nomination. The report could not identify 10 structures from the original 162 contributing properties and established a baseline of 152 original resources contributing to the NHL district. Out of this new baseline, 140 contributing structures to the NHL district were still standing in 2022 at the time of the survey, and the period of significance was determined to be from 1712 to 1919. An update to the NHL documentation is still needed.



## SPECIAL MANDATES AND AGREEMENTS

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 unit that must be fulfilled. Mandates can be expressed in enabling legislation, in separate legislation following the establishment of a park unit, or through a judicial process. They may expand on park purpose or introduce elements unrelated to the purpose of the park unit. Administrative commitments are, in general, agreements that have been reached through formal, documented processes, often through memoranda of agreement. Examples include easements, rights-of-way, and arrangements for emergency service responses. Special mandates and administrative commitments can support, in many cases, a network of partnerships that helps fulfill park objectives and facilitate working relationships with other organizations. They are an essential component of managing and planning for Reconstruction Era National Historical Park.

### Special Mandates

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Excerpts from the 2017 Presidential Proclamation (NPS 2019) follow:

**Lands within the Park Boundary.** If the Federal Government acquires any lands or interests in lands not owned or controlled by the Federal Government within the boundaries described on the [Presidential Proclamation] accompanying map, such lands and interests in lands shall be reserved as a part of the monument, and objects identified above that are situated upon those lands and interests in lands shall be part of the monument, upon acquisition of ownership or control by the Federal Government.

**Camp Saxton Site.** The Secretary of the Navy, or the Secretary of the Navy's designee, shall continue to have management authority over Department of the Navy lands within the monument boundary at the Camp Saxton site, including the authority to control access to these lands. The Secretaries of the Navy and the Interior shall enter into a memorandum of agreement that identifies and assigns the responsibilities of each agency related to such lands, the implementing actions required of each agency, and the processes for resolving interagency disputes. . . Nothing in this Proclamation precludes the activities and training of the Armed Forces; however, they shall be carried out in a manner consistent with the care and management of the objects to the extent practicable. . . Nothing in this proclamation or any regulation implementing it shall limit or otherwise affect the U.S. Armed Forces' discretion to use, maintain, improve, or manage any real property under the administrative control of a Military Department or otherwise limit the availability of such real property for military mission purposes.

**Boundary Expansion.** The Secretary is authorized to (1) acquire land or interests in land within the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District that has a historic connection to the Reconstruction Era; (2) land and interests in land adjacent to the existing boundary on St. Helena Island, land or interests in land on St. Helena Island that has a historic connection to the Reconstruction Era and; (3) accept administrative jurisdiction of Federal land or interests in Federal land adjacent to the existing boundary at Camp Saxton. Upon finalizing an agreement to acquire land or accept administrative jurisdiction of Federal land or interests in Federal land, the Secretary shall expand the boundary of the historical park to encompass that property or Federal land or interests in Federal land. The Secretary may only acquire land by donation, exchange, or purchase with donated funds.



**Historic Network Establishment and Administration.** The Secretary shall establish, within the National Park Service, a program to be known as the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network and administer the Network through the historical park.

## Agreements

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Reconstruction Era National Historical Park has four agreements in place, including 3 general agreements and 1 philanthropic partnership. These agreements serve the park and its partners by defining roles for management, access, resource preservation, and funding. General agreements are in place with partners that include the First African Baptist Church, Brick Baptist Church, and the Town of Port Royal. General agreements outline the relationship between these organizations and the National Park Service, including, as applicable, collaboration on special events and programs, sharing staff and resources, promoting the understanding of African American history, and providing visitor access to the Pinckney Porters Chapel. The fourth agreement is a philanthropic partnership with Second Founding of America to accomplish mutual goals and leverage resources for the benefit of the park and the public.

Reconstruction Era National Historical Park also has a conservation easement in place for Brick Baptist Church. This easement is for the landscape and exterior of Brick Baptist Church and was created as part of the establishment of the national park.

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## SCOPE OF THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

### PURPOSE AND GOALS

The purpose of this general management plan is to help the national park improve visitor experience, management capabilities, and facilities in a way that is consistent with the character-defining aspects of its associated NHL districts and cultural landscapes and protects the resources within the park boundary in collaboration with partners. The plan addresses administrative uses of existing NPS facilities, visitor use, historic and nonhistoric structures, parking, roads, walkways, and associated infrastructure, including any future development or rehabilitation on park lands.

As detailed in the geographic description section of this plan NPS land and building ownership is limited within the legislative boundary of the park. The primary physical resources under ownership of the National Park Service are Darrah Hall at the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District and the Old Beaufort Firehouse in the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District. The National Park Service does not own Brick Baptist Church or Camp Saxton but works with partners to protect and interpret these resources. Historic structure reports exist for Darrah Hall and the Old Beaufort Firehouse, as does a cultural landscape report documenting the landscapes at Brick Baptist Church, Camp Saxton, around Hall, and at the Old Beaufort Firehouse. This general management plan is intended to formalize the recommendations within these reports, address future development needs, and serve as the implementation plan for the desired conditions and management strategies identified during the plan development process. Furthermore, the park has many community and administrative partners who are critical to accomplishing the park's purpose and often share common goals. The general management plan will serve as a guiding document for formalizing partnership agreements, facilitating collaboration among these partners, and coordinating future management activities.

## **PLANNING ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO BE ADDRESSED**

The following issues and opportunities are addressed in this general management plan:

- development of commitments among park partners
- implementation of relevant cultural resource treatment recommendations
- development of collaborative approaches for providing multimodal visitor access and connectivity to and between sites
- assessing potential modifications to the boundaries of the park
- proposing a long-term NPS administrative and operational footprint
- ensuring a consistent visitor experience and interpretation at the Penn Center
- providing for access and interpretation at Camp Saxton
- establishment of appropriate use and access to the Old Beaufort Firehouse and surroundings

These issues and opportunities were developed through a preliminary project planning process in March 2020 and refined throughout the planning process for the general management plan. They reflect conversations with NPS staff, park partners, and the public. Some issues in the general management plan are addressed on a parkwide scale, such as cultural resource treatment recommendations, and visitor access. Other issues are site-specific, including visitor access and interpretation at the Penn Center and Camp Saxton and appropriate use and access to the Old Beaufort Firehouse and surroundings.

## **PLANNING ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES NOT ADDRESSED**

This document does not provide guidance to address issues and opportunities for the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network, which is managed by park staff at Reconstruction Era National Historical Park. The Reconstruction Era National Historic Network was signed into law on March 12, 2019, through the John D. Dingell Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (Public Law 116-9). As of January 2024, the network includes over 90 distinct sites and programs in 28 US states that are affiliated with the Reconstruction era but not necessarily managed by the National Park Service. The network facilitates and reviews Reconstruction era-related research and collaboration with affiliated sites and programs through agreements and partnerships and provides opportunities for visitors to connect to the stories of Reconstruction. Both public and private entities can join the network. As mentioned, because the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network is a distinct entity from the park, management guidance for the network is not provided here.

## **RELATIONSHIP OF THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN TO OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

As described in Director's Order 2: *Park Planning*, general management planning for units of the national park system is conducted through a "portfolio planning" approach. Rather than relying on one regularly revised comprehensive document to meet a park's statutory requirements for park planning, parks may instead meet individual requirements through more targeted planning efforts that focus on specific sites, uses, or resources. These targeted efforts can either provide entirely new guidance or can update existing guidance. This general management plan will provide comprehensive guidance for all aspects of park management at Reconstruction Era National Historical Park, but it is not the only document in the park's planning portfolio.



The existing guiding documents in the planning portfolio for the park include the foundation document for Reconstruction Era National Historical Park, historic structure reports for the Old Beaufort Firehouse and Darrah Hall, and a parkwide cultural landscape report. These documents identify current conditions, treatment needs, and facility requirements related to the national park. The long-term management guidance in this general management plan is consistent with these existing portfolio documents, and relevant recommendations have been incorporated as part of the proposed management concept in chapter 2 and analyzed in the environmental assessment in part II. More detailed descriptions of the park’s planning portfolio documents are provided below.

### **Reconstruction Era National Historical Park Foundation Document (2019)**

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The foundation document for the park, published in 2019, provides basic guidance for planning and management decisions at the park. The document identifies what is most important about the park through an examination of the enabling legislation (presidential proclamation and subsequent legislation), including its purpose, significance, fundamental resources and values, and interpretive themes. The foundation document also identifies key parkwide issues and future planning and data needed to support park management. This general management plan was informed by the foundation document and incorporates and builds on the identified planning and data needs.

### **Darrah Hall Historic Structure Report (2019)**

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Darrah Hall is a contributing resource to the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District. Its 2019 historic structure report described the history of the building and its generally fair condition. The report noted that the interior was generally in good condition. The overall recommended treatment approach, based on the definitions of *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, for Darrah Hall was rehabilitation, meaning that the historic features of the structure should be retained and preserved to the extent feasible while still making modifications that would allow the building to serve a modern function and accept visitation. The exterior requires maintenance-type repairs to address deteriorated siding and other wood elements; paint failure; deterioration of the stairs at the south porch; damage to the railings at both porches; a missing sash at one window; and failure of glazing putty at window sashes. The interior requires periodic monitoring for signs of deterioration, cleaning and finishing, and repair to the doors and flooring. Unobtrusive and ABAAS-compliant handrails were recommended for the steps to the raised platform. The mechanical system is aged and not working reliably. Darrah Hall is open to the public and currently houses temporary exhibits and ad hoc staff office space. Many of the repairs and maintenance projects identified in the historic structure report are already underway, particularly on the exterior.

### **Old Beaufort Firehouse Historic Structure Report (2019)**

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The Old Beaufort Firehouse is a contributing resource in the national register-listed Beaufort Historic District. The 2019 historic structure report described the history of the building and its condition as generally fair to good. The overall recommended treatment approach, based on the definitions of *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, for the Old Beaufort Firehouse was rehabilitation, and its anticipated use was as a visitor contact center. The building exhibits various conditions on the interior and exterior and requires maintenance-type repairs, such as repointing of mortar joints. More severe deterioration is present in localized areas, such as flooring deterioration at several locations. On the exterior,

deteriorated brick should be removed and replaced; abandoned anchors removed; biological growth removed with a biocide; nonhistoric windows replaced with units more consistent with the building's historic character; window settings, cornices, and missing downspout elements repaired or replaced; and the asphalt shingle roof monitored. On the interior, architectural finishes should be repaired, secured, or replaced as necessary. Nonhistoric hardware on doors should be replaced, and, in general, doors and windows should be repaired, replaced, or repainted, as appropriate. A ramped surface, power-operated door, and other door hardware for Architectural Barriers Act requirements should be considered as necessary. The structure is in use as the park's primary visitor center and also houses office space. Many of the issues identified in the historic structure report have been or will be addressed as the structure is renovated to better serve its visitor contact function.

### **Reconstruction Era National Historical Park Cultural Landscape Report (2023)**

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The park's cultural landscape report includes historic descriptions and modern treatment recommendations, based on the definitions of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, for the historic landscape features within the park's boundary at Camp Saxton, Darrah Hall, Brick Baptist Church, and around the Old Beaufort Firehouse.

The treatment recommended for Darrah Hall's surrounding landscape is *rehabilitation*, with specific treatment recommendations that include selective forest thinning to control the spread of invasive species and partially reestablishing the historic spatial arrangement to the surrounding area. The report also recommends developing an interpretive walking tour, moving the current parking location, considering a small-scale trial of an agricultural field, and providing shaded outdoor seating and limited picnic facilities.

The report also contains a description of the history of Camp Saxton and its treatment recommendation of *rehabilitation*. Specific recommendations include assessing, stabilizing, and preserving historic trees; limiting new features within the park boundary; investigating the cemetery; removing the perimeter fence near Fort Frederick; developing a publicly accessible walking tour; and considering vegetative screening between the public site and US Navy residential area.

The treatment recommended for the Old Beaufort Firehouse landscape is *rehabilitation*, and specific recommendations include removing more recent decorative vegetation and replacing it with native plantings. The landscape at the firehouse is very limited, as the building itself occupies the majority of the federal parcel.

The park's cultural landscape report includes a description of the history of Brick Baptist Church and a treatment recommendation of *rehabilitation* for its landscape features. Treatment recommendations include removing recently installed decorative vegetation, replanting two American sycamore trees, replacing an existing hedge with a native species, contracting with an arborist to assess and treat tree conditions, formalizing parking, improving circulation and wayfinding without new construction and limited signage and other options to be outlined by the master sign plan and other planning studies, removing fencing, and developing a cemetery preservation plan.





## Chapter 2: Proposed Management Concept

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## Chapter 2 | Proposed Management Concept

### KEY COMPONENTS OF THE MANAGEMENT CONCEPT

#### MANAGEMENT VISION

The management vision emphasizes the ideals and goals that the National Park Service hopes to achieve at Reconstruction Era National Historical Park. The goals of this management plan would help achieve this long-term vision through collaboration with partners and the surrounding community.

Reconstruction Era National Historical Park collaborates with its partners to provide leadership in fostering an understanding and appreciation of the time period from 1861 to 1900 when America struggled to extend the promise of life, liberty, and equal protection of the law to millions of newly free African Americans and the opportunity to contemplate and debate the successes and failures of the second founding of America.

#### DESIRED CONDITIONS

Desired conditions are the cornerstone of general management planning. Desired conditions statements provide a foundation for future decision-making by defining end-state goals that support the management vision for the national park—“what” should be achieved, rather than “how” it should be achieved. They are defined as statements of aspiration that describe resource conditions, visitor experiences and opportunities, and facilities and services that an organization strives to achieve and maintain in a particular area. Desired conditions describe what conditions, outcomes, and opportunities are to be achieved and maintained in the future, not necessarily what exists today.

Desired conditions can apply to an entire park unit or specific areas or resources. Typically, desired conditions statements are not changed in future planning processes unless new management



directives are introduced (e.g., legislation) or circumstances at the park unit change significantly, and a new management approach is needed to protect resources and provide for visitor experiences effectively.

Through this planning effort, the planning team identified a need for parkwide and area-specific desired conditions, which articulate the kinds of experiences and opportunities that should be provided across the park and at individual sites.

## **MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

Another important component of the management concept is management strategies. Management strategies are specific actions that park management intends to implement to achieve the desired conditions over the life of the plan—in this case, 15 to 20 years. When a park unit is managed collaboratively with partners, a clear indication of the responsible party exists. This is particularly important at park units that use a partnership park model, where various sites are owned and operated by park partners. While a general management plan may identify a range of actions to be taken outside the direct authority of park management, the National Park Service is only directly responsible for actions on federal property. All other strategies express the interests of park management and a willingness to support partners through a combination of technical and financial assistance, where feasible, to implement identified management strategies for nonfederal areas within the park boundary.

The National Park Service would continue to follow existing agreements, servicewide laws, and policies in implementing the general management plan.

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## **PARKWIDE MANAGEMENT CONCEPT**

### **PARKWIDE DESIRED CONDITIONS**

Desired conditions for the park were developed with partner organizations during the planning process for the general management plan. This section includes desired conditions that are relevant to the park, organized around particular topics or resource areas. Parkwide desired conditions serve to meet the zoning requirement for Reconstruction Era National Historical Park, providing a similar level of guidance and meeting the intent of NPS management zoning policy. This approach recognizes that the National Park Service does not have direct management authority over the entirety of the park's legislated boundary.

### **Partnerships**

- Park partnerships ensure the preservation and public appreciation of Reconstruction-era resources within the park and beyond its boundaries.
- The park works with partners to define roles and interpretive focus for different managers and ensure consistent public messaging, public access, and a full public appreciation of the Reconstruction-era history and resources of Beaufort County.
- Partnerships provide opportunities to use expertise from a wide range of lived experiences to inform the long-term management and interpretation of the resources.
- Partnerships provide the National Park Service and partners with opportunities to engage with and educate visitors about the park and the Reconstruction Era in ways and locations that would not be possible with the Service only operating within and interpreting resources owned by the Service.



## Visitor Use and Experience

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- All visitors can experience the park’s fundamental resources and values regardless of physical abilities.
- Multimodal and sustainable transportation options connect visitors of all abilities to and between sites in a safe manner.
- Trails, infrastructure, and wayfinding provide physical and interpretive connections for visitors within park boundaries and between associated resources outside of boundaries.
- The opportunity to experience and understand the history of a site is not diminished by its ownership and, to the extent feasible, opportunities exist for public access.
- Ranger-led presentations and tours are available for public participation.
- Access to the water exists for recreation and reflection.

## Resource Protection

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- To the extent feasible, development surrounding park property is coordinated among the National Park Service, local governments, adjacent property owners, and park partners to ensure the protection of cultural, historic, and natural landscapes.
- Cultural resources related to the Reconstruction era in the park are protected, and managers of important resources outside the park boundary are provided information on NPS resource preservation standards to apply where possible.

## Facilities, Administration, and Operations

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- Staff represent a wide variety of lived experiences.
- Park facilities are developed and maintained in an environmentally responsible and cost-effective manner that meets visitor and staff needs and promotes long-term fiscal and operational sustainability.
- All park facilities meet or exceed accessibility requirements for diverse visitors, as defined by the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards (ABAAS).
- All park facilities and operations respond to increasing climate risks and are designed to reduce impacts from flooding or storm surge.
- There is sufficient understanding of the history, significance, and conditions of properties within the park boundary, but not managed by the National Park Service, such that NPS acquisitions could be considered where needed to tell a more complete story of Reconstruction or to support park operations and administration.
- To the extent possible, buildings used by the park for maintenance and administration are sited in nonhistoric areas.

## PARKWIDE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Tables 1–4 detail parkwide management strategies to achieve desired conditions for partnerships, visitor use and experience, resources, and facilities administration and operations. These strategies would be executed in coordination with partner organizations. The text notes if a strategy is primarily the responsibility of the National Park Service, a partner organization, or a collaboration between the National Park Service and a partner entity.

Table 1. Partnerships

Category	Strategy Description
Partnership agreements	<p>Partnership agreements would be formalized between Reconstruction Era National Historical Park and managers of associated Reconstruction-era resources in Beaufort County and revisited on a recurring basis. These agreements formalize processes and collaboration in areas of resource protection, coordinated interpretive strategies, access (staff and visitors), research, work planning, and technical and financial assistance, as appropriate. Agreements would be established with the following partners (minimally, but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The secretary of the US Navy or the secretary of the Navy’s designee (a memorandum of agreement between the Department of the Interior and the secretary of the US Navy is mandatory based on the park’s proclamation)</li> <li>• Penn Center and Brick Baptist Church</li> <li>• The Town of Port Royal, Naval Support Facility Beaufort, Beaufort County, and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources</li> <li>• The City of Beaufort</li> <li>• The Second Founding of America</li> <li>• Gullah/Geechee Land Groups</li> </ul> <p>Additional information on partnership opportunities and obligations at individual park sites are captured in tables 5, 6, and 7.</p>





Table 2. Visitor Use and Experience

Category	Strategy Description
Accessibility (Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standard [ABAAS])	The National Park Service would ensure compliance with ABAAS at sites throughout the park and identify access needs for visitors with vision, hearing, mobility, cognitive, and other impairments. The National Park Service would provide technical assistance to its partners, as appropriate, in meeting these standards.
Access and multimodal transportation	<p>Accessible routes would be provided between primary access points and major sites at all park locations.</p> <p>A multimodal access route would be developed in collaboration with partners (City or County of Beaufort or others), to provide safe access between park sites. This could be accomplished through separated multimodal paths, shared roadway markings, or a combination of solutions. Specific design solutions at each park location would be developed in consultation with partners.</p> <p>The National Park Service would support and participate in a partner-lead feasibility study to explore shuttle connectivity between visitor destinations in the county, including access to all park sites and other properties connected to the Reconstruction era.</p>
Wayfinding signage	<p>The National Park Service would implement recommendations of the master sign plan and would evaluate opportunities for additional signage to support multimodal connectivity.</p> <p>The National Park Service would develop regional maps indicating car, bike, and potential shuttle routes.</p>
Water access	<p>Recreational water access points would be promoted and developed at sites throughout the park and at associated partner destinations.</p> <p>The National Park Service would work with partners who own waterfront property within the NPS boundary to identify interpretive and recreational water-based opportunities (including potential commercial opportunities) for visitors to engage with Reconstruction-era history.</p>
Interpretation	The National Park Service would implement recommendations of the park’s long-range interpretive plan on NPS-owned lands and coordinate with site partners to strive for consistent interpretation and application of partner style guides in interpretive media across all operational areas of the park.
Wider Reconstruction-era interpretation	The National Park Service would work with partners, residents, and stakeholders to develop and pursue collaborative interpretive opportunities, a potential NPS presence, and multimodal visitor access to important Reconstruction-era properties on St. Helena Island and in and around the town of Port Royal.
Technical support	When feasible and requested, the National Park Service would provide historic preservation technical support and advice to community partners who own or manage Reconstruction-era properties.

Table 3. Resources

Category	Strategy Description
Preservation of Reconstruction-era resources in Beaufort County	<p>The National Park Service would enter into agreements with partners to ensure the protection and encourage interpretation of Reconstruction era-resources throughout Beaufort County.</p> <p>Strategies to support resource protection at individual park sites are captured in tables 5, 6, and 7.</p>
Preservation and protection of park collections and archives	<p>The National Park Service would use museum storage space at Charles Pinckney National Historic Site and the Southeast Archeological Center to maintain and curate mandated museum collections and archives (archeological materials and federal records). As such, park staff do not anticipate needing full-time curatorial support but would continue to get that support from elsewhere.</p> <p>The National Park Service would not compete with partner organizations on collections acquisitions, which would be documented in the park’s the scope of collections statement (under development). Acquisitions of nonmandated collections would also be maintained at Charles Pinckney National Historic Site or placed on display. The scope of collections statement could be modified in the future (every five years) to adjust to emerging needs.</p>

Table 4. Facilities, Administration, and Operations

Category	Strategy Description
Office space	<p>Primary office space for park staff (approximately 15 personnel) would be consolidated in a centrally located facility in Beaufort. Leases, partnerships, or acquisitions would be considered for facility selection. The National Park Service would determine and enter into the appropriate legal instrument for NPS operations in another party’s facility.</p> <p>Minimal satellite workstations and administrative spaces would be established at key park sites as described in tables 5, 6, and 7.</p>
Maintenance facility needs	<p>A maintenance facility of approximately 40 feet by 75 feet would be established in a central location on a nonhistoric landscape that would accommodate office and workspace for maintenance employees and park storage needs, including equipment to support maintenance activities at all park sites. Leases, partnerships, or acquisitions would be considered for site selection. The National Park Service would determine and enter into the appropriate legal instrument for NPS operations if the facility were not NPS owned.</p>
Staff housing	<p>The National Park Service would consider opportunities to meet housing needs for temporary staff (e.g., volunteers, interns, seasonal staff) by working with local colleges or organizations (e.g., Penn Center, University of South Carolina Beaufort, YMCA).</p>



Category	Strategy Description
Diversity, equity, and inclusion	<p>Equity and inclusion themes would be woven into interpretation and themes throughout the park, including involving and engaging park partners, local businesses, contractors, and residents, as well as potential concession and contracting opportunities.</p> <p>The National Park Service would use nontraditional hiring authorities to increase the diversity of staff and would prioritize outreach efforts to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other programs in association with hiring recruitment, research opportunities, internships, and fellowships.</p> <p>Through relationships with African American history and cultural museums, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, relevant historians and academics, and relationships with Reconstruction Era Network members, the National Park Service would establish itself as a centralized source on Reconstruction era interpretive and educational material.</p>

**LAND ACQUISITION IN THE RECONSTRUCTION ERA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK  
LEGISLATED BOUNDARY**

NPS *Management Policies 2006* (section 3.5) states that “boundary adjustments may be recommended to

- protect significant resources and values, or to enhance opportunities for public enjoyment related to park purposes;
- address operational and management issues, such as the need for access or the need for boundaries to correspond to logical boundary delineations such as topographic or other natural features or roads; or
- otherwise protect park resources that are critical to fulfilling park purposes.”

The legislated boundary of Reconstruction Era National Historical Park is large and includes an existing acquisition authority of any lands adjacent to the park boundary on St. Helena Island (i.e., adjacent to the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District) and any land on St. Helena Island or in the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District with a historic connection to the Reconstruction era. The park can also accept administrative jurisdiction of any federal land adjacent to the existing boundary at Camp Saxton (i.e., the National Park Service could modify the existing park boundary in Naval Support Facility Beaufort to incorporate more of the federally owned landscape).

The general management planning process has identified **no need to recommend an expansion of the legislated boundary of the park**, given the broad acquisition authority described above. However, to ensure consistent consideration of future acquisitions within this authority, this general management plan is proposing criteria for the consideration of future acquisitions within the current boundary that would adhere to reasoning presented in management policies associated with boundary adjustments; such as protecting park resources, enhancing public opportunities to appreciate the history of the Reconstruction era in Beaufort County, and addressing management and operational issues facing the new park.

## Land Acquisition Criteria

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Many parcels and historic structures within the authorized boundary of the park date to or have connections with the Reconstruction era. They are both publicly and privately owned, and many of them have some level of existing public access and opportunity for public appreciation. In nearly all cases, Reconstruction Era National Historic Park staff will seek partnerships with existing or potential nonfederal owners to enhance resource preservation and public appreciation of these properties. Membership in the Reconstruction Era Network would be one avenue for such partnerships, which would provide NPS recognition and support to properties without altering their management or assuming federal ownership. Federal acquisition of new lands within the park's authorized boundary would only be considered under specific circumstances and when properties (1) meet specific levels of national significance and historic integrity, (2) display a uniquely significant connection to the Reconstruction era, and (3) would be practical to acquire and demonstrate a need for federal management to ensure their preservation and availability to the public. All three criteria should be met for an acquisition to be considered.

### Criterion 1: National Significance and Historic Integrity

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National significance displayed in association with the Reconstruction era and the Port Royal Experiment would be required for any potential acquisition. The National Park Service would use criteria established for the designation of "nationally significant" resources as defined in the standards for placement in the National Register of Historic Places. Any property considered for acquisition should meet standards defined for historic integrity by the national register, and the period of significance should reflect the Reconstruction era in Beaufort County.

### Criterion 2: Connection to the Reconstruction Era in Beaufort County

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In addition to retaining historic integrity and displaying national significance associated with the Reconstruction era, any property considered for acquisition should serve to fill gaps in the park's ability to preserve, protect, and interpret the history of the Port Royal Experiment and the Reconstruction era more broadly. Multiple significant properties may be able to illustrate unique aspects of the Reconstruction story, and part of meeting this criterion would include identifying the best among multiple options (in association with the practicality analysis described below).

Singularly outstanding representative properties associated with the following topics could be considered for future acquisition. Some of the following properties may be capable of illustrating multiple topics, increasing their potential:

- a property capable of illustrating the impact of new opportunities for African American property ownership and accumulation of generational wealth that began during Reconstruction (see the discussion of the Robert Smalls House in Table 5. Beaufort National Historical Landmark District – Management Strategies)



- a site that served as school for newly free African American children
- a church established, or serving a congregation, during Reconstruction
- a farm or farmland associated with African American land ownership and stewardship post-emancipation
- a property associated with African American vernacular architecture emerging post-emancipation
- a military site associated with African American service during the Civil War
- a site of governance or federal administration during the Reconstruction era and Port Royal Experiment—particularly sites associated with the management of property auctions and personal financial aspects of the Port Royal Experiment
- undeveloped landscapes and waterfronts illustrating historic conditions of the Beaufort area during Reconstruction

### Criterion 3: Practicality

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The practicality of acquiring any individual property would be based on many factors, including costs associated with acquisition and/or the initial development and operations, the park’s ability to provide public access to the property, and the National Park Service’s ability to protect and preserve a property considering its current condition or external threats. A potential acquisition for the park—which has met the prior two criteria—may also be considered a practical addition if the property can be acquired through donation or donated funds, is in good physical condition, can be made accessible to NPS staff and visitors, and has completed documentation (i.e., historic structure report(s) and/or cultural landscape reports) identifying contributing historic features of the property and treatment recommendations to preserve those features in perpetuity.

Further considerations in the practicality analysis could include the evaluation of a property’s placement and architectural aspects that could serve to improve overall visitor experience or management of the park. The condition of viewsheds, soundscapes, and land uses associated with surrounding properties, as well as potential climate change vulnerabilities, would also be considered as part of this analysis, as would planning for the impact on park operating budgets and staffing.

Furthermore, to ensure a prudent expenditure of public resources associated with federal acquisition and management, a practical acquisition should demonstrate a “need” for management by the National Park Service. As mentioned above, in nearly all cases, the National Park Service prefer to serve the public and local community through partnerships that can provide a variety of management strategies and opportunities for public enjoyment of Reconstruction-era resources. These strategies may vary from direct federal management but still serve the preservation of Reconstruction-era resources, and partnerships could include extending NPS technical expertise to partner organizations, including through use of the Reconstruction Era Network. Many excellent examples exist of the successful management and protection of historic properties in Beaufort County, where partnerships would be preferred to acquisition. Potential park acquisitions would need to display a need for NPS management that is welcomed by a current landowner and be necessary to preserve the resource.





## Administrative and Operational Acquisitions

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Separate from the criteria described above associated with acquisitions of resource-oriented historic properties or landscapes are the park's administrative and operational needs. Current direct federal management at Reconstruction Era National Historical Park is limited to Darrah Hall and the Old Beaufort Firehouse. These historic properties and landscapes cannot provide the necessary space for maintaining and administering the park without compromising their integrity or desired conditions for visitor experience. Leasing may be able to provide the nonhistoric space needed to administer the park for the foreseeable future, but an opportunity for an acquisition would be considered if it would serve these needs, be feasible for park management, and be available for acquisition by donation and with donated funds (see the discussion of the West Street Learning Center in Table 5. Beaufort National Historical Landmark District – Management Strategies).

## AREA-SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS

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### OLD BEAUFORT FIREHOUSE (BEAUFORT NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT) DESIRED CONDITIONS

Desired conditions for the Old Beaufort Firehouse consider both its historic integrity and its function as an anchor for the park's contact with visitors in the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District. Desired conditions were developed with partner organizations during the GMP planning process. This section includes desired conditions that are relevant to the firehouse and the NHL district as a whole.

### Visitor Use and Experience

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- The firehouse provides downtown Beaufort visitors with the opportunity to understand the role of Reconstruction-era stories and legacies in Beaufort County, the Beaufort National Historic Landmark, and throughout the nation.
- Reconstruction-related sites in the NHL district have visitor orientation spaces for tours and self-discovery, and clear wayfinding and pedestrian connectivity exists between them.
- When possible, through acquisition or partnerships, visitors can experience not only exterior views but the interior spaces of buildings in and near the NHL district that are important to the Reconstruction era.



## Resource Protection

The historic fabric and features of the Old Beaufort Firehouse, and its relationship to the broader NHL district, are protected to the extent feasible while using the space to meet administrative, operational, and interpretive needs.

### BEAUFORT NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The management concept for the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District sees the Old Beaufort Firehouse as the primary initial contact point for visitors to Reconstruction Era National Historical Park. From there, visitors would be exposed to the history of the Reconstruction era and its lasting effects on American society. Visitors would also receive wayfinding to connect them with other parts of the park in Port Royal and on St. Helena Island. The firehouse would also be a starting point to experience more aspects of Reconstruction history in Beaufort, through tours of the wider Beaufort National Historic Landmark District. Tours would be NPS-guided, self-guided, or commercially led, and the landscape of the district, particularly zones with high concentrations of Reconstruction-era features, would feature enhanced pedestrian amenities and interpretive waysides.

The management strategies for the Old Beaufort Firehouse incorporate recommendations of its historic structure report (2019). These strategies also present concepts to enhance the appreciation and understanding of Reconstruction-era history in Beaufort. Most of the following strategies (Table 5. Beaufort National Historical Landmark District – Management Strategies) are dependent on partners for execution.

Table 5. Beaufort National Historical Landmark District – Management Strategies

Category	Strategy Description
Resource protection	<p>Develop the Old Beaufort Firehouse to serve as the primary initial visitor contact center at the park, while also providing workspace to support staff operations in the NHL district. The firehouse would be accessible to visitors and staff of all abilities.</p> <p>The National Park Service would implement the recommendations of the Beaufort Firehouse Historic Structure Report (rehabilitation) and the park’s cultural landscape report (rehabilitation) during any construction or remodeling of the building or its grounds.</p>
Parking	<p>Visitor parking in the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District would be provided on the street or in public parking lots. No designated NPS parking would be available. The National Park Service would seek to understand visitation trends as the general management plan is implemented and would continue to share visitation statistics with the City of Beaufort as they are refined.</p> <p>Accessible staff parking would be established via the appropriate instrument with a private or public entity. Approximately 15 spaces, including 24-hour, 7-days-a-week parking spaces for NPS vehicles, would be obtained.</p>

Category	Strategy Description
Expanded interpretation	<p>The National Park Service has identified three areas in the non-NPS-owned Beaufort National Historic Landmark District that contain important resources associated with the Reconstruction era (figure 2). In these areas, park staff would focus on expanded interpretive efforts and work with the city and partners to establish consistent interpretive waysides, pedestrian amenities (e.g., benches, tour stops, wayfinding), and tour operations related to Reconstruction-era history or resources. Other specific properties (figure 2) would also be prioritized for interpretive opportunities via partnerships, including the Robert Smalls House (see appendix B for descriptions of these properties).</p> <p>Tours accessing the interpretive areas may be NPS-led, self-guided, commercial, or otherwise managed by partners. The National Park Service would provide aid to partners and commercial tours in the form of collaboration or training and technical assistance. Park staff would work with the City of Beaufort to ensure that NPS-led tours would not inappropriately compete with commercial tour operations and would account for neighbor/public perspective. The National Park Service would work with the City of Beaufort and commercial tour operators to ensure that NPS-led tour sizes do not exceed visitor capacities for these areas and properties.</p>
Acquisitions	<p>The Robert Smalls House (511 Prince Street) meets the federal acquisition criteria put forth in this plan, though it is currently owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Should the National Park Service acquire the Robert Smalls House, it would seek to develop specific management guidance for the site consistent with planning law and policy, including visitor access, capacity, and use of the property.</p> <p>In its current status, the National Park Service would seek a partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation that would allow for visitor access to the property (see partnerships below).</p>
Partnerships	<p>The National Park Service would enter or maintain formal partnerships with the City of Beaufort, owners of significant Reconstruction era-associated properties, and other relevant stakeholders to provide visitor access to Reconstruction sites. Many sites could be included in these partnerships (see figure 2), but initially, they would comprise sites participating in the Reconstruction Era Network, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robert Smalls House</li> <li>• First African Baptist Church</li> <li>• Tabernacle Baptist Church</li> <li>• Wesley United Methodist Church</li> </ul>







Figure 2. Beaufort National Historic Landmark District Concept Map

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## **DARRAH HALL AND BRICK BAPTIST CHURCH (PENN CENTER NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT) DESIRED CONDITIONS**

The Penn Center National Historic Landmark District is managed by three independent entities: the Penn Center, Brick Baptist Church congregation, and the National Park Service. The National Park Service recognizes the importance of working collaboratively with these entities to preserve resources and tell the important stories associated with the Reconstruction era and the Penn Center National Historic Landmark. Desired conditions for the NHL district consider that while the National Park Service directly manages Darrah Hall and its immediate landscape and has a preservation interest in the landscape and exterior conditions of Brick Baptist Church, the preservation and appreciation of the wider Penn Center National Historic Landmark District is invaluable to preserving the park's significance. Desired conditions were developed with the Penn Center Board of Directors and the Brick Church congregation during the GMP planning process. This section includes desired conditions that are relevant to the federal properties on the Penn Center grounds, as well as the NHL district in its entirety.

### **Visitor Use and Experience**

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- Visitors to the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District can experience the entirety of the district in an unbroken manner, regardless of ownership and management. The district's primary point of visitor contact is at the Penn Center Courtney Siceoff Welcome Center, staffed by Penn Center volunteers and employees. From there, visitors can self-navigate to their desired experiences.
- Consistent wayfinding and interpretive signage exist throughout the entire national historic landmark, allowing self-guided experiences.
- Darrah Hall continues to serve as an important place for the community to gather for events.
- Darrah Hall and other visitor contact points in the NHL district convey the national stories of the Reconstruction era, complimenting existing and future interpretation of the Penn Center and its significant and ongoing importance in the county's history.
- The Penn Center managing entity maintains its independent identity, and visitors understand the link between the democratic aspirations of Reconstruction to those of the modern civil rights movement.
- Visitors can safely access Brick Baptist Church and its landscape and can experience it for its unique history and as an integrated component of the wider Penn Center landscape.
- Opportunities exist for self-directed discovery in the Brick Baptist Church landscape.
- An NPS presence exists at Brick Baptist Church to provide interpretive experiences. Guided access to the interior of the church is available, to the extent possible while respecting the needs of the modern congregation.







## Resource Protection

- The archeological and cultural landscape, including Darrah Hall's and Brick Baptist Church's association with the greater Penn Center, is documented, understood, and protected.
- The Penn Center remains an independent and strong partner, and a collaborative and collective approach exists to managing the NHL district.
- All historic structures and the cultural landscape are treated in a way that is historically accurate and consistent across the entirety of the Penn Center.
- The protection of and access to the natural environment and integrity of cultural landscapes are a priority. Best practices for NHL viewshed protection will be followed whenever possible.
- The importance of water to the history of the site is recognized, and appropriate opportunities exist for recreational and contemplative water access.
- The cemetery, grounds, and other components of the landscape at Brick Baptist Church are maintained or restored to enhance the cultural and natural resources associated with the site.
- The exterior and interior appearance of Brick Baptist Church is aligned with its historic appearance and configuration, as appropriate, and respects the needs of the current congregation.

## PENN CENTER NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The National Park Service is committed to partnerships with the Penn Center and Brick Baptist Church congregation that recognizes and supports their independent management authorities and outlines collaborative opportunities to protect the historic integrity and significance of the NHL district.

With that in mind, the concept for the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District envisions opportunities for a seamless visitor experience across the entire NHL district, where Reconstruction-era stories and resources associated with the Penn Center and Brick Church are the focus of NPS operations and compliment the overall interpretation and use of the district. Wayfinding to and within the district would be clear and consistent, directing visitors to a primary centralized entrance where they would begin their visit at the Penn Center Courtney Sicheloff Welcome Center. There, visitors would be

introduced to the complete history of the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District and its resources. Visitors would then be able to navigate the district, including seeking further exposure to Reconstruction history at Darrah Hall and Brick Baptist Church. NPS programming, interpretation, and management of Darrah Hall and Brick Baptist Church would be complementary to visitor opportunities, the overall protection of the wider Penn Center National Historic Landmark, and the commercial operations of the NHL district.

The management strategies for the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District incorporate recommendations of the historic structure report for Darrah Hall (2019) and Brick Baptist Church (2019), as well as the cultural landscape report for Reconstruction Era National Historical Park (2023). These strategies also present concepts to enhance appreciation and understanding of the history of Darrah Hall, Brick Baptist Church, and the wider Penn Center. Many of the strategies in Table 6. Penn Center National Historic Landmark District – Management Strategies are dependent on partners for implementation.

Table 6. Penn Center National Historic Landmark District – Management Strategies

Category	Strategy Description
<p>Collaboration on joint operations and interpretation</p>	<p>The National Park Service would work with partners in the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District (Penn Center staff and board of directors and the Brick Baptist Church congregation) to establish a collaborative management framework for operations and development in the district. This collaboration would include mutual consultation on development projects, coordination on management activities, communication on interpretive strategies, and collaboration on other issues concerning joint operations throughout the campus. A process would be established to formalize communication and operational agreements between partners.</p> <p>To ensure a coordinated visitor experience, these partners would establish a committee focused on visitor services and communication. Initial objectives of the committee would include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure a coordinated approach to interpretation and programming in the NHL district (e.g., themes, tours, waysides).</li> <li>• Coordinate day-to-day operations and activities across the Penn Center campus, including use of NPS or Penn Center property and staff, parking, and joint operations.</li> <li>• Coordinate and communicate on special events and potential commercial use and building rental (Penn Center). In considering potential special uses, such as special events, and commercial activities on NPS property within the Penn Center, the National Park Service would consult with Penn Center as part of evaluating such activities and would endeavor to avoid conflicts with Penn Center visitation, operations, and special programming. The Penn Center would establish clear communications with the National Park Service on planned events and operations that could affect park operations.</li> <li>• Develop communication strategies to indicate and inform fee-based and non-fee-based areas and opportunities to the public.</li> </ul>



Category	Strategy Description
Public access to Brick Church	In collaboration with the church congregation, hours for NPS-managed public visitation of the interior of the church would be established. Public access to the interior would be via guided tour by NPS staff or congregation members.
Use of the Study House at Brick Church	The relocated and restored Study House on the Brick Church landscape would serve as a visitor contact station and interpretive space, staffed by NPS employees, when the church is open to visitation or during special events. The Study House would also serve as a location for two to three satellite workstations for NPS staff and for minimal storage of administrative and interpretive materials. An appropriate legal instrument would be executed between Brick Baptist Church and the National Park Service for this arrangement.
Resource protection	The National Park Service would implement the recommendations of the Darrah Hall Historic Structure Report (preservation), as well as the park's cultural landscape (rehabilitation) report during any construction or remodeling of Darrah Hall and the immediate landscape. The National Park Service would provide technical expertise and support as needed for development projects on the Penn Center or Brick Church grounds.
Use of Darrah Hall	<p>Visitor services in the building would include guided tours and self-guided appreciation of exhibits. The building would be made available for special events and community programs in direct consultation with the Penn Center (see "Collaboration on joint operations and interpretation" above).</p> <p>NPS administrative operations in Darrah Hall and on the surrounding cultural landscape would be relocated to nonhistoric settings, including removing the modern maintenance shed and relocating workspaces and storage to the Study House at Brick Church.</p>
Connectivity and trails	<p>The National Park Service and its partners would implement the recommendations of the master sign plan to ensure safe and logical visitor routes between important features of the NHL district.</p> <p>A path/trail would be developed leading from Darrah Hall to Capers Creek along the south side of the creek and ending at the Penn Center dock. Waysides would be established along the trail to interpret natural and historic features consistent with the guidance in the Long-Range Interpretive Plan.</p> <p>Park staff and partners would coordinate with the county on needed pedestrian access, traffic calming, and safety improvements along Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, which passes through the center of the district.</p>





Category	Strategy Description
Parking and access to Darrah Hall and Brick Church	<p>Visitor parking at the Penn Center would be consolidated at the primary lot near the Courtney Sicheloff Welcome Center. Pedestrian paths and unpaved roadways (as laid out in the master sign plan) would connect Darrah Hall to the main parking and the rest of the Penn campus.</p> <p>The primary Penn Center entrance would be prominently marked as displayed in figure 3, and visitors would use the primary entrance. The secondary entrance to the east of Darrah Hall would be marked for buses and service vehicles only.</p> <p>Approximately 10 parking spaces for visitors with mobility issues would be provided to the southeast of Darrah Hall and connected via an accessible path to Darrah Hall, the restroom facilities, and the nature trail. Overflow parking for special events and buses would be unmarked but available in the grassy field west of Darrah Hall.</p> <p>Parking at Brick Church would be marked for congregation use only during specific hours/days but available for Penn Center visitors during periods in which the church is open to visitation.</p>



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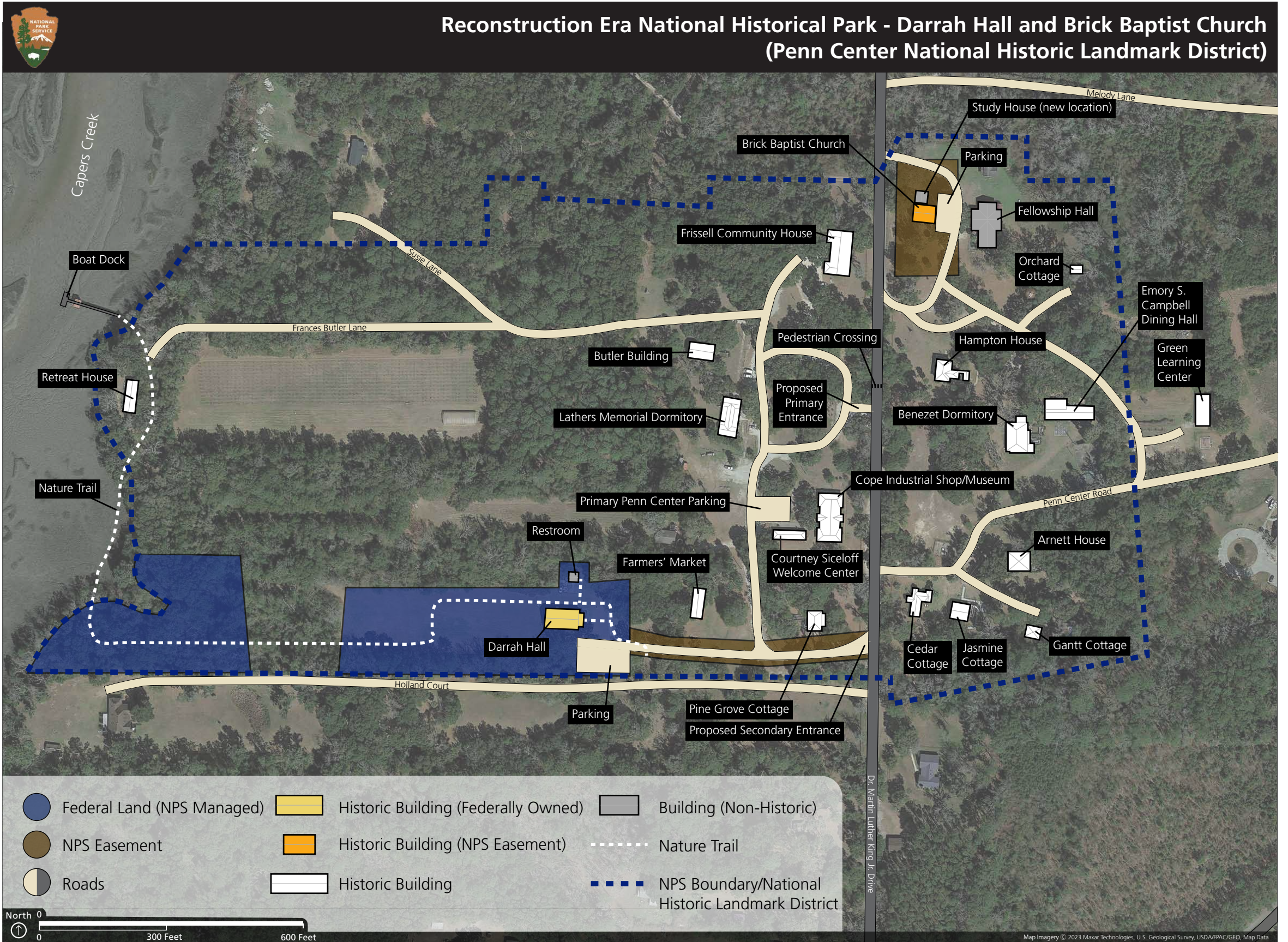


Figure 3. Penn Center National Historic Landmark District Concept Map



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## CAMP SAXTON DESIRED CONDITIONS

Camp Saxton is directly managed by the US Navy at Naval Support Facility Beaufort, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and Beaufort County at Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve. Reconstruction Era National Historical Park interpretive rangers staff the Pinckney-Porters Chapel located in Port Royal's Naval Heritage Park just outside the main gate to Naval Support Facility Beaufort. The Town of Port Royal rebuilt the chapel in late 2020, and through an agreement, Reconstruction Era National Historical Park operates the site as a visitor contact station. Desired conditions for Camp Saxton were developed in consultation with partners (South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, the Navy, the Town of Port Royal, and Beaufort County), considering that NPS operations and interpretation at the site are currently possible only through partnerships and agreements.

### Visitor Use and Experience

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- Recreational opportunities, including low-impact water-based opportunities, exist and expose visitors seeking recreational experiences to the history and cultural significance of the area.
- Visitors have a clear sense of arrival to Camp Saxton that welcomes and helps orient them to the site.
- The park's relationship with the local community, the historic farmers market, and the management of the Pinckney-Porters Chapel is maintained and preserved in a way that fosters a connection between the past and present use of the site.
- Visitor and administrative access to the site is maintained or enhanced while reducing or eliminating impacts on surrounding residents.
- Through a strong partnership, there exist opportunities for access to the Navy-managed portions of Camp Saxton.
- Visitors have clear wayfinding for self-exploration.







## Resource Protection

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- The extent of the archeological and cultural landscape resources at Camp Saxton and the historic freedman community are defined, understood, protected, and interpreted.
- The cultural landscape and archeological resources of the historic Camp Saxton are protected and interpreted regardless of the lead management entity.
- The natural environment is preserved in a manner that is reminiscent of Camp Saxton’s period of historic significance with emblematic elements, such as trees and shoreline, that link visitors to its cultural heritage.
- The national park continues to work with partners to identify opportunities to manage the protection of natural and cultural resources that are directly tied to the story of Reconstruction.
- Resources related to the Reconstruction era in the Navy installation are studied and understood, so in the event the Navy changes operations, park staff are ready to protect important resources and enhance the visitor experience.
- Through efforts of partners and the National Park Service, future impacts on resources as the result of climate change are understood, and when possible, mitigated.

## CAMP SAXTON MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The management concept for Camp Saxton maximizes and improves visitor opportunities for those seeking to experience Reconstruction and Civil War history at the site. Visitors to Camp Saxton would begin their experience with interpretive exhibits and ranger contact at the Pinckney-Porters Chapel Visitor Contact Station. Visitors would then access Camp Saxton via a guided tour along improved sections of Old Shell Road to Old Fort Road and into Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve. Occasional visitor access to the Camp Saxton site from within Naval Support Facility Beaufort would be possible during special events. Resource protection and further historical and archeological research at Camp Saxton would be coordinated with the Navy until, and if, the opportunity occurs for the National Park Service to acquire jurisdiction over the Camp Saxton site.

The management strategies for Camp Saxton incorporate recommendations of the cultural landscape report for Reconstruction Era National Historical Park (2023). The strategies present opportunities to enhance and improve operations,

interpretation, and visitor experience at the site under its current jurisdiction (without direct NPS management) and also include strategies in the event that jurisdiction over the site shifts to the National Park Service at a future date. The strategies presented in the following table below are dependent on the coordination of partners for implementation.

Table 7. Camp Saxton – Management Strategies

Category	Strategy Description
Resource protection	<p>Park staff would conduct coordinated resource management activities with the US Navy, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and Beaufort County.</p> <p>Formal agreements would be established for archeological surveys and inventories of the Camp Saxton site for purposes of identifying the extent of existing historic resources. The agreement would also identify the future ownership and curation responsibilities of archeological collections associated with Camp Saxton that would be created or that already exist.</p> <p>Park staff would work with the Navy, the State of South Carolina, and Beaufort County on assessing climate change vulnerability and any adaptation or mitigation actions.</p>
Use of the Pinckney-Porters Chapel Visitor Contact Station	<p>Park staff would continue the collaborative relationship with the Town of Port Royal for use of the Pinckney-Porters Chapel as the primary visitor contact point for Camp Saxton.</p> <p>Park employees would staff the chapel on specified days and times, including during the farmers market events at Naval Heritage Park. The chapel would serve as the starting point for guided tours of Camp Saxton and would continue to house exhibits and one satellite workstation for NPS staff.</p>
Interpretation	<p>Park staff would provide technical assistance to Beaufort County and the Navy to support installation of interpretive waysides about Camp Saxton and Reconstruction history on county and Navy property. Waysides would follow the recommendations of the long-range interpretive plan, and interpretation about the connection between Camp Saxton and the Emancipation Oak would be considered. All interpretive materials would be developed in consultation with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources to ensure there is no conflict with interpretive media at Fort Frederick.</p>
Administrative boundary adjustment	<p>Should the Navy seek to divest of the Naval Support Facility Beaufort property, the park would seek to accept jurisdiction of the areas identified as “NPS jurisdictional interest” in figure 4. These areas are the components of Camp Saxton that are least impacted by modern development. This area could be adjusted if future archeological survey identifies other significant resources in or adjacent to the Navy property.</p> <p>Relevant recommendations of the cultural landscape report would be implemented once the property is under NPS jurisdiction.</p>



Category	Strategy Description
Pedestrian connectivity and visitor experience	<p>Park staff would work with partners to develop a pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Pinckney Boulevard and Old Shell Road to improve safety for pedestrians traveling to and from Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve and the Pinckney-Porters Chapel Visitor Contact Station.</p> <p>Park staff would coordinate with the Town of Port Royal to improve pedestrian connectivity in the public right-of-way between the Pinckney-Porters Chapel and Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve. Coordination could include increased path widths, traffic buffers, surface improvements, and vegetative screening, as feasible.</p> <p>Park staff would work with partners to install temporary wayfinding and exhibits along the route from the Pinckney-Porters Chapel to Camp Saxton/Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve.</p>
Water access	<p>Park staff would work with partners to create recreational water access at the site. Any commercial tours or water-based operations that originate in the park would be officially authorized by the appropriate entity or landowner, as determined by the National Park Service and/or Beaufort County.</p>
Visitor access to Camp Saxton	<p>Working with the Navy, park staff would establish a process for allowing predictable visitor access to Naval Support Facility Beaufort for interpretive programming at the historic Camp Saxton site. This strategy would require an agreement with the Navy and may include access for special events, such as Emancipation Day. Additional access opportunities may be coordinated through the National Park Service by request.</p>



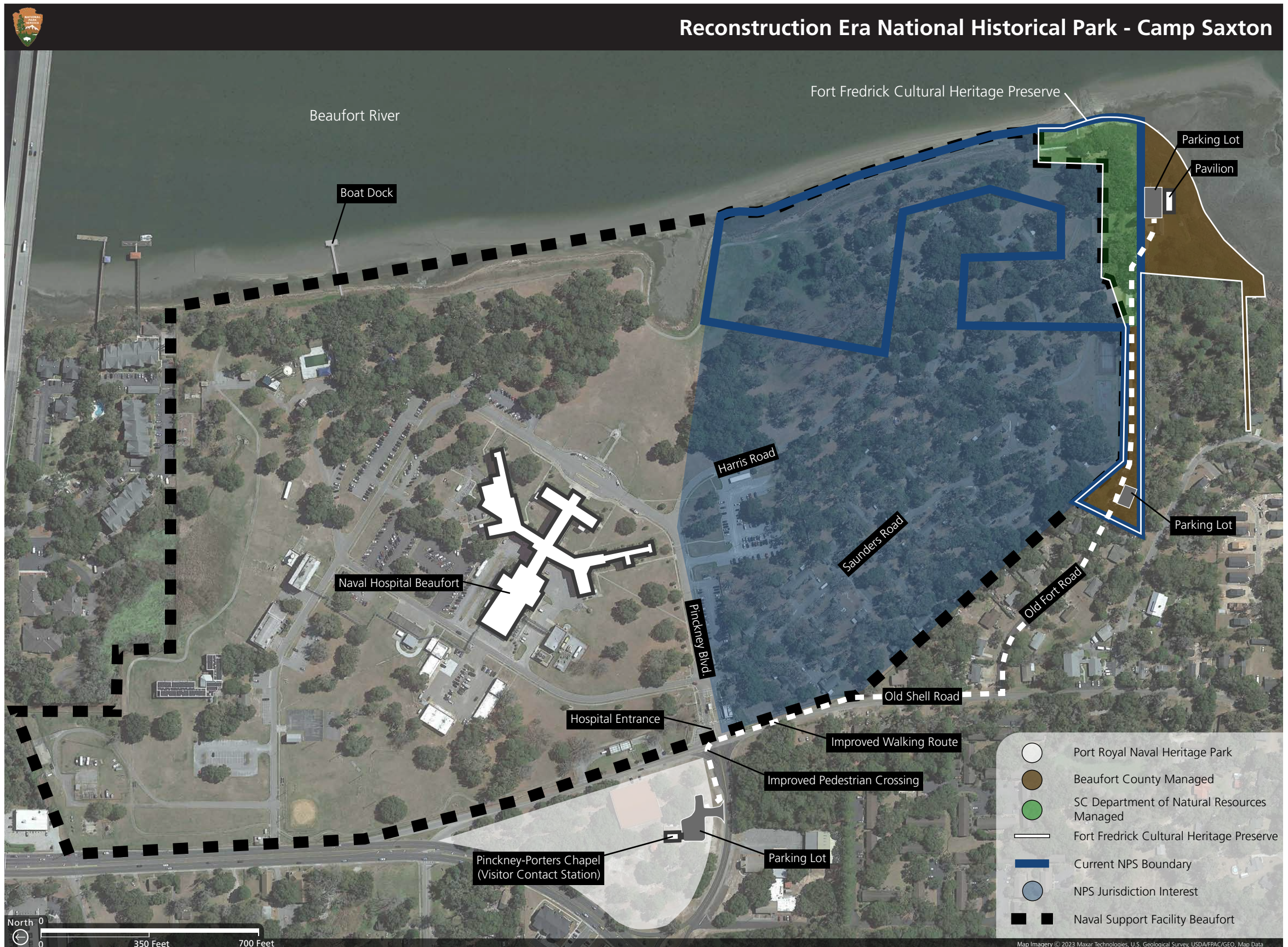


Figure 4. Camp Saxton Concept Map



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## VISITOR USE AND CAPACITY

### OVERVIEW

Monitoring to ensure desired conditions for resources and visitor experiences are tracked, achieved, and maintained over time is essential for the success of the general management plan. The monitoring strategy for this plan was developed based on the principles described in the Interagency Visitor Use Management Council's (IVUMC) *Visitor Use Management Framework and Monitoring Guidebook*. These documents and associated background material are available on the IVUMC website at <https://visitorusemanagement.nps.gov/VUM/Framework>.

Monitoring described in this plan is accomplished through the establishment of “indicators” and “thresholds.” Indicators are specific resource or experiential attributes that can be measured to track changes in conditions so that progress toward achieving and maintaining desired conditions can be assessed. Thresholds are the minimum acceptable conditions associated with each indicator. In some cases, managers may set objectives for increasing information about management strategies, such as visitor safety or partnerships. Objectives should correlate directly with desired conditions, include an indicator, and involve monitoring to detect changes over time. Together, indicators, thresholds, and objectives provide park managers with monitoring protocols to ensure desired conditions for resources and visitor experiences are achieved and maintained over time.

The planning team considered many potential issues and related indicators that would identify impacts of concern, but the two described in this section were ultimately selected because of the importance and vulnerability of the resources and visitor experience. In identifying meaningful indicators, the planning team also reviewed the experiences of other park units with similar issues.

In addition to the management strategies outlined above, the planning team also identified management strategies associated with each indicator. Some of these strategies are currently in use and may be increased in response to changing conditions. Other strategies would be implemented if monitoring indicates that thresholds are being approached or exceeded. Future management strategies would be explored if the management strategies identified did not work. Details of future management strategies would be developed at the time they are needed to ensure that the most effective approach is implemented. The impacts of these future management strategies would be analyzed in future compliance as needed.

The iterative practice of monitoring, implementing management strategies, and then continuing to monitor the effectiveness of management strategies allows park managers to maximize benefits for visitors while achieving and maintaining desired conditions for resources and visitor experiences in a dynamic setting.





## INDICATORS AND THRESHOLDS

**Indicator 1.** Number of visitor comments related to wayfinding and confusion

**Threshold.** The annual number of visitor comments increases no more than 10% when adjusted for increased visitation

**Rationale.** This indicator measures the number of visitor comments related to wayfinding and confusion. Reconstruction Era National Historical Park currently has three distinct visitor use areas that are spread throughout Beaufort County, typically requiring a vehicle to travel from one site to another. Monitoring visitor comments at the Beaufort Firehouse will help NPS staff better understand when visitors are having challenges navigating between and within sites, negatively impacting the visitor experience. Desired conditions related to visitor use and experience at the park strive for multimodal and sustainable transportation options that connect visitors of all abilities to and between sites in a safe manner. Similarly, parkwide desired conditions for visitor use and experience state that trails, infrastructure, and wayfinding provide physical and interpretive connections for visitors. Therefore, monitoring the number of visitor comments related to wayfinding will allow NPS staff to take appropriate management action to address impacts on a key park experience and ensure that desired conditions for visitor use and experience are being maintained. Monitoring of this indicator will allow park staff to collect regular and consistent data to assess whether existing conditions are aligned with desired conditions and, if needed, what type of management action is appropriate.

**Monitoring Protocol.** Staff would initially document visitor comments before implementing the park's master sign plan to establish a baseline. After the sign plan is implemented, staff would continue to monitor comments to determine the effectiveness of the sign plan and if additional management actions are needed.

Initially, this indicator would be monitored specifically at the Beaufort Visitor Center. Visitors could provide written feedback through e-mails, US mail, on-site comment forms, or verbally. National Park Service staff may train volunteers, interns, and seasonal employees on the proper way to document these comments in a centralized database. If data collection suggests the need to expand to other areas of the park, park staff may monitor this indicator at other locations. The frequency and location of monitoring is subject to change.

To account for increasing visitation in a new park unit, these numbers would be adjusted to measure the numbers of comments as a percent of visitation.

After this initial data-gathering period, staff would compare new visitor comments each year relative to a post sign plan implementation baseline.

**Management Strategies.** To keep thresholds from being exceeded, park staff may use one or more of the following management strategies.

- Work with park partners to add additional signage.
- Improve the park's website to better orient visitors.
- Work with partners to use technology (e.g., apps) to help visitors navigate within and between sites.

**Indicator 2.** Instances of visitor-caused ground disturbance (vegetation trampling, social trails, tire rutting) near Darrah Hall

**Threshold.** No more than two instances associated with pedestrian use and no more than five ruts after event parking

**Rationale.** This indicator helps NPS staff address issues of damage to cultural and natural resources, particularly unknown archeological resources, from both intentional and unintentional human actions. Historic resources are nonrenewable, and restoration, replacement, or repairs are not always possible or appropriate. Consistent monitoring of human-related ground disturbance allows managers to help protect the park's fundamental resources and achieve its desired conditions. Visitor use will always cause some impact, but the intent of this indicator is to ensure monitoring to minimize the level of impact on the fullest extent possible. For this reason, the threshold for impact has been established as no more than two instances associated with pedestrian use and no more than five ruts after event parking.

**Monitoring Protocol.** Staff would initially document visitor-caused damage to historic resources under direct NPS management for 12 months to establish a baseline. Damage would be identified by park visitors, staff, volunteers, and local law enforcement. Given that the park is frequently monitored through normal staff duties, such as conducting tours, changes to the resource would be easy to detect.

Damage would be reported to park facilities staff, who would document the issue and resolution in their maintenance record log, the Facility Management Software System, and/or the Cultural Resource Inventory System by recording details about the incident in the work order. National Park Service staff would annually review the data and compare them to the established baseline.

**Management Strategies.** To keep thresholds from being exceeded, park managers may use one or more of the following management strategies:

- Provide visitors with improved and more detailed information regarding the sensitivity of resources and the need to protect them. Staff could accomplish this through a variety of communication approaches, including signs.
- Clearly delineate pedestrian trails and rehabilitate social trails.
- Install additional removable physical barriers, such as posts and rope, to deter visitor use of or access to particularly sensitive or fragile resources.
- Increase the staff and volunteer presence and continue enforcement of park regulations.





**Indicator 3.** Number of joint programs with partners in Beaufort County or affiliated sites included in the Reconstruction Era Network that support the visitor experience

**Threshold.** Number of joint programs that support the visitor experience does not decrease 10% annually from the established baseline

**Objective.** The number of partnerships between the park and programs in Beaufort County and the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network grows in a manner that ensures protection and encourages the interpretation of Reconstruction-era resources throughout Beaufort County

**Rationale.** Desired conditions for partnerships at Reconstruction Era National Historical Park state, “Park partnerships are forged to ensure the preservation and public appreciation of Reconstruction era resources within the park and beyond its boundaries.” The threshold ensures the park does not decrease programs more than 10% annually from the established baseline, and the objective demonstrates the park’s commitment to growing partnerships.

**Monitoring Protocol.** Staff currently track the number of programs offered each fiscal year. Another category would be added to the park’s tracking document for joint programs offered in Beaufort County and at network sites. Each year, the percent change will be calculated.

**Management Strategies.** To keep thresholds from being exceeded and meet objectives, park staff would do the following:

- Proactively seek new partners to tell Reconstruction-era stories in Beaufort County.
- Prioritize staff time for co-developing new programs.

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## VISITOR CAPACITY

### OVERVIEW

This section includes the visitor capacity identification for the general management plan, prepared in accordance with the Interagency *Visitor Use Management Council’s Visitor Use Management Framework and Visitor Capacity Guidebook*. More information about the framework is available at <http://visitorusemanagement.nps.gov/>.

Visitor capacity is defined as “the maximum amounts and types of visitor use that an area can accommodate while achieving and maintaining the desired resource conditions and visitor experiences that are consistent with the purposes for which the area was established” (IVUMC 2016). By establishing visitor capacities for areas of a park unit and implementing them with appropriate management strategies, the National Park Service can help ensure that resources are protected and that visitors have the opportunity for a range of high-quality experiences. The planning team followed the framework’s process for identifying visitor capacity, including the following guidelines: (1) determine the analysis area, (2) review existing direction and knowledge, (3) identify the limiting attribute, and (4) identify visitor capacity.

The concept of the sliding scale of analysis is also a key part of the framework and guides the investment of time and resources related to identifying visitor capacity. The analysis includes four primary components: Issue Uncertainty, Impact Risk, Stakeholder Involvement, and Level of Controversy. Reconstruction Era National Historical Park has a low degree of issue uncertainty; little impact risk due to the minor changes proposed under the management strategies; high stakeholder involvement given the complex array of partnerships; and a low level of controversy. Therefore, the level of analysis is commensurate with the lower end of the sliding scale.

In addition to being an effective management tool, identifying visitor capacities is also directed by legal mandate. The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 requires the National Park Service to identify and implement commitments for visitor capacities for all areas of a park unit. This section includes visitor capacities for land under the direct management control of the park or a direct impact on partner operations and resources occurs where sufficient information is known to inform a meaningful analysis and where the park has direct management authority to plan and implement management strategies to achieve desired conditions and manage use levels to capacity. Visitor capacities for other areas not included in this analysis could be identified in future planning, as appropriate. Further, other guidance in this plan, including desired conditions applied by management areas and the indicators and thresholds, will continue to inform and guide management of the types and levels of visitor use to sustain the quality of park resources and visitor experience consistent with the park's purpose.

Visitor capacities are management decisions based on the best available data and other factors, including professional judgment, staff experience and expertise, lessons learned, and partner input. Visitor capacity identifications, like other management decisions, provide direction. Visitor capacities can be adjusted with appropriate environmental compliance as new information becomes available through further study, analysis, and monitoring.

Future monitoring of use levels and indicators would inform the National Park Service if visitation were at or near established capacities. Implementation of the visitor capacities identified would include the continuation of current management and the implementation of the management strategies described above.

### **Determine the Analysis Areas**

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Visitor capacity is identified for four analysis areas that can be meaningfully evaluated, given sufficient information, and are directly managed by the National Park Service or could have a direct impact on park partner operations or resources. These analysis areas include:

- The Beaufort Firehouse
- Camp Saxton and Pickney-Porters Chapel
- Darrah Hall (including NPS-hosted special events) and surrounding federal property
- Brick Baptist Church



## Review of Existing Direction and Knowledge

During this step, the planning team reviewed desired conditions, indicators and thresholds, key management issues affecting achievement of desired conditions, and information about current visitor use levels.

To identify visitor capacity, there is a need to determine how many visitors are coming to the park, where they are going, and what types of recreation are occurring. The planning team used available visitation data and professional knowledge about the resources to inform this step. Fiscal year 2022 is the best available visitation data for the park (Figure 5. Reconstruction Era National Historical Park Visitation, Fiscal Year 2022). From October 2021 to September 2022, 10,383 people visited the Beaufort Firehouse, 7,969 visited Darrah Hall, and 2,101 visited the contact station at Pickney-Porters Chapel. Currently, the park does not have equipment to track all visitors using all park areas; these numbers only include people who came into visitor centers or contact stations at each location when those areas were staffed. These data are limited but provide insight on trends. In addition to visitor center and contact station contacts during this time frame, park staff engaged 2,824 visitors on walking tours, 1,098 students during school programs, 296 participants in off-site programs, and 1,125 people in virtual programs. March had the highest visitation of any month with 1,576 visitors, followed by April with 1,349 visitors. January was the lowest month for visitation with 434 visitors.

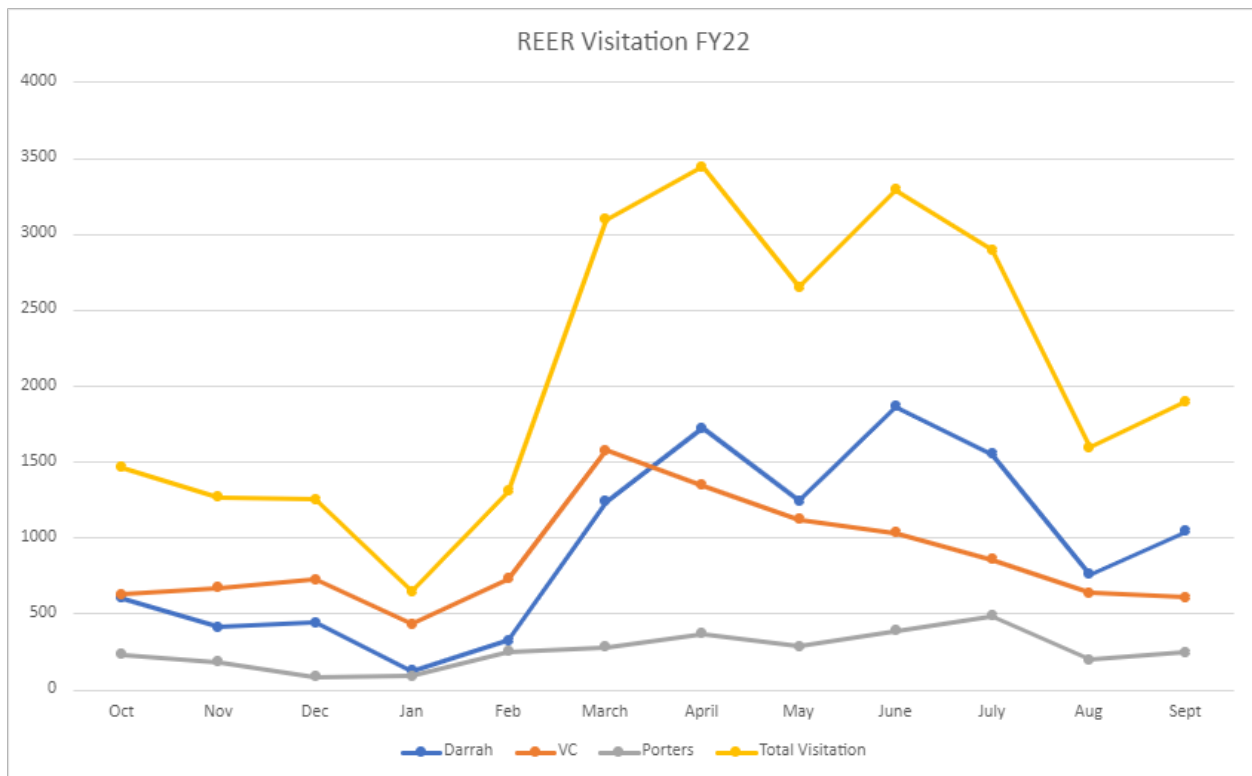


Figure 5. Reconstruction Era National Historical Park Visitation, Fiscal Year 2022

## Identify the Limiting Attribute

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This step requires identifying the limiting attributes that most constrain the analysis area’s ability to accommodate visitor use. The limiting or constraining attributes may vary across the analysis areas and are described below. This step is important to better understand the unique dynamics of visitor use in relation to desired conditions in each analysis area that directly inform the visitor capacity identification.

## Identify Visitor Capacity

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Visitor capacity contains two parts. The first part is the identification of the visitor capacity (maximum amounts and types of use), and second is the identification of management strategies that could be taken to implement visitor capacity to ensure that the amount of visitor use is managed to achieve and maintain desired conditions.

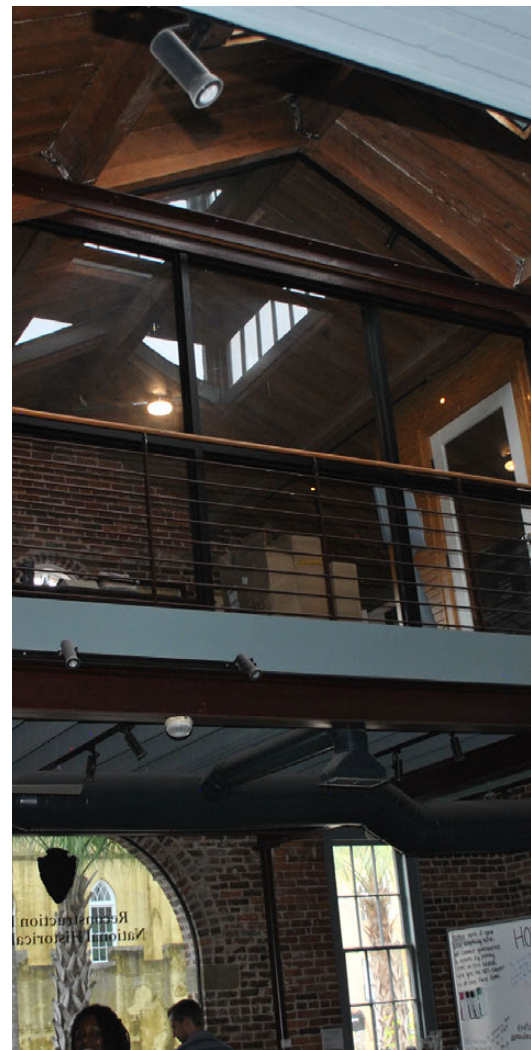
To identify the appropriate amounts and types of use for each of the analysis areas, the previous steps were reviewed to understand current conditions and how they compare to desired conditions for the area. Based on this understanding, the planning team determined whether visitation levels could increase, be maintained at the current level, or decrease to achieve desired conditions. If current conditions are in keeping with desired conditions, the visitor capacity may be at or above current levels. However, if current conditions are not consistent with desired conditions due to issues with the levels of use, the visitor capacity may be below the current use level.

## BEAUFORT FIREHOUSE

### Existing Direction and Knowledge

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This analysis area includes the interior space of the Beaufort Firehouse. The firehouse is located at 706 Craven Street and is currently open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. The firehouse provides downtown Beaufort visitors the opportunity to understand the role of Reconstruction-era stories and legacies in Beaufort County, the Beaufort National Historic Landmark, and throughout the nation. The historic fabric and features of the Old Beaufort Firehouse, and its relationship to the broader NHL district, are protected to the extent feasible while using the space to meet administrative, operational, and interpretive needs. On the first floor, there is a visitor contact area where people view exhibits, a small gift shop, a ranger contact desk, and a restroom. Park staff lead walking tours that originate from the firehouse. Upstairs is office space, and the area is for administrative use only. Park staff note there is a high visitor







turnover at this location, meaning visitors do not spend a lot of time here. With limited space, the turnover rate helps manage the number of people inside; however, buses occasionally drop off many passengers at one time, leading to concentrated use and congestion inside the building. Staff observations indicate that lines in the firehouse occur on busier days, which can degrade the visitor experience and cause confusion.

### Limiting Attribute

The most limiting attribute at the Beaufort Firehouse is the visitor experience. Desired conditions for the firehouse include orientation spaces for tours and self-discovery. If the building is too crowded, the ability for visitors to connect with the stories and park staff is limited and noise can make communication difficult.

### Visitor Capacity

Based on observations, park staff have determined that current conditions and visitor use patterns in the firehouse generally achieve desired conditions to allow visitors to move freely in the space and allow park staff to provide interpretive services and communicate with visitors. With its current configuration, the visitor capacity of the Beaufort Firehouse is identified as 30 people at one time. This capacity would allow for up to 5 staff upstairs and behind the visitor center desk and 25 visitors in the exhibit space and gift shop area.

### Management Strategies

The following potential strategies may be implemented as needed to manage to visitor capacity. Future compliance would be completed, if needed.

- Schedule groups so that they do not enter the visitor center during the same time a ranger is leading a scheduled tour.
- Actively manage the capacity (estimating 20–25 people at one time) at the door.
- Explore design options that allows park staff to use the space to better accommodate more visitors.
- Design exhibits that allow visitors to experience the story but encourage them to move on quickly to keep turnover high.
- Ensure that park staff have regular communication with city’s visitor center across the street (as a relief option for crowding).
- Distribute visitors spatially by offering a program outside when the building is nearing capacity.
- Collaborate with partners in identifying capacity for walking tours originating from the firehouse to ensure quality visitor experiences and good partner relationships.



## CAMP SAXTON AND PICKNEY-PORTERS CHAPEL

### Existing Direction and Knowledge

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This analysis area includes the interior space of Pickney-Porters Chapel and the lands of Camp Saxton in the Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve. The analysis does not include Camp Saxton lands currently in Naval Support Facility Beaufort. If jurisdictional management changes allowing visitors more regular access to the lands inside the Naval hospital, additional analysis could occur. Pickney-Porters Chapel is located in the Naval Heritage Park just outside the entrance to Naval Support Facility Beaufort. The chapel is a Reconstruction-era structure that was relocated and rehabilitated by the Town of Port Royal for use by the National Park Service as a visitor contact station. Most Camp Saxton programs begin at the chapel and walk along a public road and through a residential neighborhood to Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve, a passive park owned and maintained by the State of South Carolina and Beaufort County. A picnic pavilion is available to visitors on a first-come, first-served basis, waysides about Fort Frederick and Camp Saxton are present, and the site has a total of eight parking spots between the upper and lower lots.

### Limiting Attribute

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The most limiting attributes for this analysis area are the sensitivity of cultural resources and the visitor experience. Both above and below ground, cultural resources are present at this site. Respecting the privacy of residents in the surrounding neighborhood is also a factor.

### Visitor Capacity

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Based on observations, park staff have determined that current conditions and visitor use patterns in Camp Saxton and Pickney-Porters Chapel generally achieve desired conditions. The visitor capacity of Camp Saxton and Pickney-Porters Chapel is 50 people at one time. The capacity inside the chapel is 8 people at one time. During school programs, the capacity is 100 people at one time at Pickney-Porters Chapel and Camp Saxton when directly managed by NPS or county staff.

### Management Strategies in Cooperation with County and State Partners

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- Create formalized agreements for park operations at Camp Saxton.
- Formalize bus parking.
- Provide training and orientation for park staff with conditional “if/when” situations to preserve resources/provide visitor experience.
- Increase staff operational presence.
- Promote scheduled school visits.
- Explore opportunities for pedestrian safety on route.
- Install engineering controls to prevent resource damage (in partnership) (e.g., formal trails).
- Establish tour group sizes.







## DARRAH HALL

### Existing Direction and Knowledge

This analysis area includes the interior of Darrah Hall and surrounding federally owned lands. Darrah Hall currently serves as the NPS visitor contact station in the Penn Center Historic District and had the highest visitor use numbers of any NPS site in Reconstruction Era National Historical Park. The visitor contact station is currently open Tuesday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Desired conditions note the importance of Darrah Hall as a space for the community to gather for events. Currently, temporary and traveling exhibits are on display and can be moved during events. There is parking for four cars near Darrah Hall, but most parking is located at the Penn Center Visitor Center. The restrooms outside Darrah Hall are the only public restrooms on the grounds of the Penn Center. Behind Darrah Hall is a large field that is occasionally used for bus parking during special events. A pedestrian trail leading from Darrah Hall to the Penn Center dock on Capers Creek cuts through the field before becoming more defined once it enters the wooded area west of Darrah Hall. Park tours of the Penn Center currently originate at Darrah Hall. Staff note two main user groups who come to Darrah Hall—families and tour groups. Currently, no limits on tour group size exist. Known archeological sites are on the grounds near Darrah Hall.



### Limiting Attribute

The attributes most limiting visitor use at the site is the visitor experience and the protection of archeological resources, especially during wet conditions.

### Visitor Capacity

Based on observations, park staff have determined that current conditions and visitor use patterns in the Darrah Hall analysis area generally achieve desired conditions. With exhibits in place and during normal operations, Darrah Hall and surrounding NPS lands can accommodate 60 people at one time. When the area is set up for special events (exhibits moved and NPS operationally prepared) Darrah Hall and surrounding NPS lands can accommodate 150 people at one time. The visitor experience during special events is social, and the protection of archeological resources will be managed through the ground disturbance indicator. Maximum tour size for NPS-led tours is 20 people at one time. This size allows everyone to hear and interact with the ranger in an outside environment.



## Management Strategies in Cooperation with the Penn Center

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- Work with tour groups to manage visitor arrival.
- Establish tour capacities for each route.
- Encourage spatial distribution through ranger-led tours and establish a ranger presence at Brick Baptist Church.
- Work with county tourism organizations to manage interactions with private tour companies.
- Consider commercial use authorizations for tour operators.
- Communicate updates to partners regarding use of the area on a daily/weekly basis.
- Consider renting the extra bathrooms during special events.

## BRICK BAPTIST CHURCH

### Existing Direction and Knowledge

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This analysis includes NPS-led guided tours of Brick Baptist Church. Currently, the National Park Service conducts very limited tours inside the church but is working with church leadership to increase appropriate access to the interior of the building. Some NPS tours starting from Darrah Hall enter the church, but most currently share the story of Brick Baptist Church from the exterior. The church continues to be actively used by a modern congregation. The National Park Service has an easement on the exterior of the building for historic preservation. Historic items are in the church, including 150-year-old pews.

### Limiting Attribute

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The most limiting attribute is the church's importance as both historic and contemporary sacred space. Desired conditions note the importance of respecting the needs of the modern congregation while providing access to the unique history.

### Visitor Capacity

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Based on staff observations, the visitor capacity for NPS-led tours in Brick Baptist Church is 15 people at one time. On occasion, the National Park Service would provide access to slightly larger school groups with additional chaperones. Park staff would reach out to church leadership in advance for this type of tour. The National Park Service will not provide visitor access to the interior of the building except through guided tours. This capacity applies to NPS visitor access only and does not apply to the congregation and their continued use of the building for services or special events.





## Management Strategies

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- Restrict tours from accessing the interior if group size exceeds capacity, or split the group split between rangers.
- Ensure all groups are kept together and monitored while inside the building.
- Provide training and orientation for park staff with conditional “if/when” situations to preserve resources/provide visitor experience.
- Work with the church congregation to develop and periodically update the workplan between the National Park Service and the church.





## Chapter 3: Next Steps









## Chapter 3 | Next Steps

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### FINALIZING THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

After distribution of the general management plan, the public will have 30 days to review and comment on the general management plan and environmental assessment (part II). After this time, the NPS planning team will evaluate comments from other federal agencies, organizations, businesses, and individuals regarding the general management plan and make revisions, as appropriate. After this public review, the plan may be approved with a “finding of no significant impact” on the environmental assessment, assuming there are no significant impacts identified during public review. If significant impacts are identified, a notice of intent to initiate an environmental impact statement may be prepared. A finding of no significant impact would document the NPS selection of one of the alternatives evaluated in the environmental assessment for implementation. Once the finding of no significant impact is signed, the planning process is complete, and the selected alternative would become the management plan for the park to be implemented over the next 15 to 20 years. Not all the management strategies and treatment recommendations outlined in the general management plan and supporting plans would necessarily be implemented immediately.

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### IMPLEMENTING THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Estimated costs to implement the management concepts described above approximate \$1.3 million. Of this total, approximately \$78,000 would be shared with Reconstruction Era National Historical Park partners. This cost estimate includes the following:

- Acquisition and renovation of the West Street Learning Center and a 20-year lease for office space



- Additional costs for desired trails, traffic, parking, and access upgrades at the Penn Center
- Improvements to pedestrian access at Camp Saxton
- Interpretation improvements in downtown Beaufort

Other aspects of the plan that would have associated costs but are not currently defined to the extent necessary to estimate would include the establishment of a dedicated maintenance facility and changes in jurisdiction and management at Camp Saxton.

Reconstruction Era National Historical Park's close collaboration with partner organizations requires nuanced communication around cost-sharing agreements. The approval of this general management plan does not guarantee that the funding and staffing needed to implement the plan will be forthcoming. Implementation of the approved plan would depend on future NPS funding levels, servicewide priorities, and partnership funds, time, and effort. Implementation could be affected by factors such as changes in NPS staffing, visitor use patterns, and unanticipated environmental changes. The National Park Service may conclude, after analyzing the best information available, that certain elements of the general management plan requiring significant financial investment need to be modified or not pursued. Regardless, full implementation of the general management plan could be many years in the future. Once the general management plan has been approved, additional studies and more detailed planning, cultural resources documentation, and consultation would be completed, as appropriate, before certain management strategies can be carried out. Ongoing and future consultation with the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer, associated Tribes and other traditionally associated groups, and other concerned parties would occur, per section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, regarding undertakings affecting historic properties.

Future program and implementation plans describing specific actions that managers intend to undertake and accomplish would tier from the desired conditions and management strategies set forth in this general management plan.




# Appendixes

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# Appendix A | Presidential Proclamation and Enabling Legislation

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## ESTABLISHMENT OF THE RECONSTRUCTION ERA NATIONAL MONUMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, A PROCLAMATION

The Reconstruction Era, a period spanning the early Civil War years until the start of Jim Crow racial segregation in the 1890s, was a time of significant transformation in the United States, as the Nation grappled with the challenge of integrating millions of newly freed African Americans into its social, political, and economic life. It was in many ways the Nation's Second Founding, as Americans abolished slavery and struggled earnestly, if not always successfully, to build a nation of free and equal citizens. During Reconstruction, Congress passed the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth constitutional amendments that abolished slavery, guaranteed due process and equal protection under the law, and gave all males the ability to vote by prohibiting voter discrimination based on race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Ultimately, the unmet promises of Reconstruction led to the modern civil rights movement a century later.

The Reconstruction Era began when the first United States soldiers arrived in slaveholding territories, and enslaved people on plantations and farms and in cities escaped from their owners and sought refuge with Union forces or in free states. This happened in November 1861 in the Sea Islands or "Lowcountry" of southeastern South Carolina, and Beaufort County in particular. Just seven months after the start of the Civil War, Admiral Samuel F. DuPont led a successful attack on Port Royal Sound and brought a swath of this South Carolina coast under Union control. The white residents (less than twenty percent of the population), including the wealthy owners of rice and cotton plantations, quickly abandoned their country plantations and their homes in the town of Beaufort as Union forces came ashore. More than 10,000 African Americans -- about one-third of the enslaved population of the Sea Islands at the time -- refused to flee the area with their owners.



Beaufort County became one of the first places in the United States where formerly enslaved people could begin integrating themselves into free society. While the Civil War raged in the background, Beaufort County became the birthplace of Reconstruction, or what historian Willie Lee Rose called a “rehearsal for Reconstruction.” With Federal forces in charge of the Sea Islands, the Department of the Treasury, with the support of President Lincoln and the War Department, decided to turn the military occupation into a novel social experiment, known as the Port Royal Experiment, to help former enslaved people become self-sufficient. They enlisted antislavery and religious societies in the North to raise resources and recruit volunteers for the effort. Missionary organizations headquartered in the Northeast established outposts in Beaufort County.

In and around Beaufort County during Reconstruction, the first African Americans enlisted as soldiers, the first African American schools were founded, early efforts to distribute land to former enslaved people took place, and many of the Reconstruction Era’s most significant African American politicians, including Robert Smalls, came to prominence. African American political influence and land ownership endured there long after setbacks in other regions. In short, events and people from Beaufort County illustrate the most important challenges of Reconstruction – crucial questions related to land, labor, education, and politics after the destruction of slavery – and some early hopeful efforts to address them. The significant historical events that transpired in Beaufort County make it an ideal place to tell stories of experimentation, potential transformation, hope, accomplishment, and disappointment. In Beaufort County, including St. Helena Island, the town of Port Royal, and the city of Beaufort, many existing historic objects demonstrate the transformative effect of emancipation and Reconstruction.

Freed people hungered for education, as South Carolina had long forbidden teaching enslaved people to read and write. In 1862, Laura M. Towne and Ellen Murray from Pennsylvania were among the first northern teachers to arrive as part of the Port Royal Experiment. They established a partnership as educators at the Penn School on St. Helena Island that lasted for four decades. Charlotte Forten, a well-educated African American woman from a prominent abolitionist family in Philadelphia, joined the faculty later that year. The first classes for the former enslaved people were held at The Oaks plantation house, headquarters of the occupying US military forces in the region. In 1863, Murray and Towne moved their school into Brick Church, a Baptist church near the center of the island. In the spring of 1864, supporters in Philadelphia purchased school buildings for Towne and Murray, and construction of Penn School began across the field from Brick Church on 50 acres of property donated by Hastings Gantt, an African American landowner.

Penn School helped many African Americans gain self-respect and self-reliance and integrate into free society. Towne and Murray strove to provide an education comparable to that offered in the best northern schools. The faculty also provided other support, including medical care, social services, and employment assistance. Penn School would evolve into the Penn Center in the 20th century, and remain a crucial place for education, community, and political organizing for decades to come. As a meeting place in the 1950s and 60s for civil rights leaders, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the staff of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, this historic place links the democratic aspirations of Reconstruction to those of the modern civil rights movement. Darrah Hall is the oldest standing structure on the site of the Penn School grounds. Students and community members built it around 1903, during the transition in the South from the Reconstruction Era to an era of racial segregation and political disenfranchisement.

The Brick Church where Towne and Murray held classes in 1863-64 is today the oldest church on St. Helena Island. Once freed from their owners, African Americans in Beaufort County wanted to worship in churches and join organizations they controlled. The Brick Baptist Church—also known as Brick Church—was built by enslaved people in 1855 for the white planters on St. Helena Island. When the white population fled from the Sea Islands in 1861, the suddenly freed African Americans made the church their own. The Brick Church has been a place of worship and gathering ever since and continues to serve the spiritual needs of the community to this day.

Camp Saxton in Port Royal -- formerly the site of a plantation owned by John Joyner Smith -- is where the First South Carolina Regiment Volunteers mustered into the US Army and trained from November 1862 to January 1863. In August 1862, US Brigadier General Rufus Saxton, the military governor of the abandoned plantations in the Department of the South, received permission to recruit five thousand African Americans, mostly former enslaved people, into the Union Army. The former enslaved people assumed that military service would lead to rights of citizenship. Saxton selected Captain Thomas Wentworth Higginson of the 51st Massachusetts, a former Unitarian minister, abolitionist, and human rights activist, to command the regiment. An important ally of Higginson and the African American troops was Harriet Tubman, the famed conductor on the Underground Railroad, who in May of 1862 arrived in Beaufort as part of the Port Royal Experiment and who served skillfully as a nurse at Camp Saxton.

Camp Saxton was also the location of elaborate and historic ceremonies on January 1, 1863, to announce and celebrate the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed all enslaved people in states then “in rebellion” against the United States. General Saxton himself had attended church services at the Brick Church in the fall of 1862 to recruit troops and to invite everyone, African American and white, “to come to the camp...on New Year’s Day, and join in the grand celebration.” This Emancipation Proclamation celebration was particularly significant because it occurred in Union-occupied territory in the South where the provisions of the Proclamation would actually take effect before the end of the war.

Over five thousand people, including freed men, women, and children, Union military officials, guest speakers, and missionary teachers, gathered around the speakers’ platform built in a grove of live oaks near the Smith plantation house. One of the majestic witness trees has become known as the Emancipation Oak. Of all the prayers, hymns, and speeches during the three-hour ceremony, one of the most moving was the spontaneous singing of “My country, tis of thee; Sweet land of liberty” when the American flag was presented to Higginson. As part of the celebration, the military had prepared a feast of roasted oxen for all to enjoy.

The town of Beaufort was the center of the County’s social, political, cultural, and economic life during the Reconstruction Era. Before the Battle of Port Royal Sound in November 1861, Beaufort was where the planters spent the summer months in their grand homes. Beaufort served as the depot for plantation supplies transported there by steamship. The Old Beaufort Firehouse, built around 1912, stands near the heart of Reconstruction Era Beaufort, across the street from the Beaufort Arsenal, and within walking distance of over fifty historic places. The Beaufort Arsenal, the location today of the Beaufort History Museum, was built in 1799, rebuilt in 1852, and renovated by the Works Progress Administration in 1934, and served historically as the home of the Beaufort Volunteer Artillery Company that fought in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars.



Several historic Beaufort properties within walking distance of the Firehouse are associated with Robert Smalls, the most influential African American politician in South Carolina during the Reconstruction Era. Robert Smalls was born in Beaufort in 1839, the son of enslaved African Americans of the Henry McKee family. When Smalls was twelve years old, his owner hired him out to work in Charleston, where he learned to sail, rig, and pilot ships. In May 1862, Smalls navigated the CSS Planter, a Confederate ship, through Charleston harbor, past the guns of Fort Sumter, and turned it over to Union forces. This courageous escape made him an instant hero for the Union, and he soon began working as a pilot for the US Navy. Smalls and his family used prize money awarded for the Planter to purchase the house in Beaufort once owned by the family that had owned him.

In 1864, Smalls was named to a delegation of African American South Carolinians to the Republican National Convention in Baltimore, where the delegation unsuccessfully petitioned the party to make African American enfranchisement part of its platform. Elected to the Beaufort County School Board in 1867, Smalls began his advocacy for education as the key to African American success in the new political and economic order.

In the years immediately following the end of the Civil War, the United States fiercely debated issues critical to Reconstruction. Southern Democrats tried to regain the power they held before the Civil War. The Republican majorities in the US Congress rebuffed them, and proceeded to pass legislation and constitutional amendments to implement the principles of the Union victory. In 1867, Congress passed the Military Reconstruction Acts that called for military administration of southern states and new state constitutions. Voters elected Robert Smalls as a delegate to the South Carolina Constitutional Convention that met in Charleston in January 1868, where he successfully advocated for public education with compulsory attendance. The resulting constitution also provided for universal male suffrage and racial, political, and legal equality. In this new political order, Robert Smalls was elected to the South Carolina General Assembly from 1868 to 1874, first as a representative and then as a senator. In 1874, Smalls was elected to the US House of Representatives, where he served five terms.

The success of Smalls and other African American lawmakers who had been enslaved only a handful of years before infuriated South Carolina's Democrats. Some of them turned to violence, carried out by the Ku Klux Klan and others. On more than one occasion, a homegrown vigilante group known as the Red Shirts terrorized Robert Smalls.

As a result of the contested Presidential and South Carolina gubernatorial elections of 1876, deals were made that effectively ended political and military Reconstruction in 1877. Smalls, however, continued to serve in Congress until 1886. He then returned to Beaufort, and served for many years as the Presidentially appointed customs collector for the Port of Beaufort.

In 1895, Smalls was elected a delegate to his second South Carolina Constitutional Convention. Twenty years after Democrats had regained control of the State government, they had figured out how to take back African Americans' rights as citizens. Smalls spoke eloquently at the Convention against this blow to democracy and representative government, but ultimately rights hard won three decades before were struck down. South Carolina voters ratified a new constitution that effectively eliminated African Americans from electoral politics and codified racial segregation in law for decades to come.

Even as Jim Crow laws and customs limited political participation and access to public accommodations, African Americans maintained visions of freedom and built strong community institutions. Ownership of land, access to education, and churches and civic organizations that took root during the Reconstruction Era laid the foundation for the modern civil rights movement.

The many objects of historic interest described above stand testament to the formative role of the Reconstruction Era -- and the enormous contributions of those who made it possible -- in our shared history.

WHEREAS, section 320301 of title 54, United States Code (known as the “Antiquities Act”), authorizes the President, in his discretion, to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are situated upon the lands owned or controlled by the Federal Government to be national monuments, and to reserve as a part thereof parcels of land, the limits of which shall be confined to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected;

WHEREAS, the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District, which contains many objects of historic interest including the Old Beaufort Firehouse, was designated in 1973; and the Penn School National Historic Landmark District, which also contains many objects of historic interest including Darrah Hall and the Brick Baptist Church, was designated in 1974;

WHEREAS, the Camp Saxton Site was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1995;

WHEREAS, portions of the former Camp Saxton Site are located today on lands administered by the U.S. Department of the Navy at Naval Support Facility Beaufort, South Carolina;

WHEREAS, Penn Center, Inc., has donated to the United States fee title to Darrah Hall at Penn Center, St. Helena Island, South Carolina, with appurtenant easements, totaling approximately 3.78 acres of land and interests in land;

WHEREAS, Brick Baptist Church has donated to the United States a historic preservation easement in the Brick Baptist Church and associated cemetery located on St. Helena Island, South Carolina, an interest in land of approximately 0.84 acres;

WHEREAS, the Paul H. Keyserling Revocable Trust and Beaufort Works, LLC, have donated to the United States fee title to the Old Beaufort Firehouse at 706 Craven Street, Beaufort, South Carolina, approximately 0.08 acres of land;

WHEREAS, the designation of a national monument to be administered by the National Park Service would recognize the historic significance of Brick Baptist Church, Darrah Hall, Camp Saxton, and the Old Beaufort Firehouse, and provide a national platform for telling the story of Reconstruction;

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest to preserve and protect these sites;



NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by section 320301 of title 54, United States Code, hereby proclaim the objects identified above that are situated upon lands and interests in lands owned or controlled by the Federal Government to be the Reconstruction Era National Monument (monument) and, for the purpose of protecting those objects, reserve as a part thereof all lands and interests in lands owned or controlled by the Federal Government within the boundaries described on the accompanying map, which is attached to and forms a part of this proclamation. The reserved Federal lands and interests in lands encompass approximately 15.56 acres. The boundaries described on the accompanying map are confined to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected.

All Federal lands and interests in lands within the boundaries described on the accompanying map are hereby appropriated and withdrawn from all forms of entry, location, selection, sale, or other disposition under the public land laws, from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws, and from disposition under all laws relating to mineral and geothermal leasing.

The establishment of the monument is subject to valid existing rights. If the Federal Government acquires any lands or interests in lands not owned or controlled by the Federal Government within the boundaries described on the accompanying map, such lands and interests in lands shall be reserved as a part of the monument, and objects identified above that are situated upon those lands and interests in lands shall be part of the monument, upon acquisition of ownership or control by the Federal Government.

The Secretary of the Interior shall manage the monument through the National Park Service, pursuant to applicable legal authorities, consistent with the purposes and provisions of this proclamation. The Secretary of the Interior shall prepare a management plan within 3 years of the date of this proclamation, with full public involvement, and to include coordination with Penn Center, Inc., Brick Baptist Church, the Department of the Navy, Atlantic Marine Corps Communities, LLC, the City of Beaufort, and the Town of Port Royal. The management plan shall ensure that the monument fulfills the following purposes for the benefit of present and future generations: (1) to preserve and protect the objects of historic interest associated with the monument, and (2) to interpret the objects, resources, and values related to the Reconstruction Era. The management plan shall, among other things, set forth the desired relationship of the monument to other related resources, programs, and organizations, both within and outside the National Park System.

The Secretary of the Navy, or the Secretary of the Navy's designee, shall continue to have management authority over Department of the Navy lands within the monument boundary at the Camp Saxton site, including the authority to control access to these lands. The Secretaries of the Navy and the Interior shall enter into a memorandum of agreement that identifies and assigns the responsibilities of each agency related to such lands, the implementing actions required of each agency, and the processes for resolving interagency disputes.

The National Park Service is directed to use applicable authorities to seek to enter into agreements with others to address common interests and promote management efficiencies, including provision of visitor services, interpretation and education, establishment and care of museum collections, and preservation of historic objects.

Given the location of portions of the monument on an operating military facility, the following provisions concern U.S. Armed Forces actions by a Military Department, including those carried out by the United States Coast Guard:

1. Nothing in this Proclamation precludes the activities and training of the Armed Forces; however, they shall be carried out in a manner consistent with the care and management of the objects to the extent practicable.
2. In the event of threatened or actual destruction of, loss of, or injury to a monument resource or quality resulting from an incident caused by a component of the Department of Defense or any other Federal agency, the appropriate Secretary or agency head shall promptly coordinate with the Secretary of the Interior for the purpose of taking appropriate action to respond to and mitigate the harm and, if possible, restore or replace the monument resource or quality.
3. Nothing in this proclamation or any regulation implementing it shall limit or otherwise affect the U.S. Armed Forces' discretion to use, maintain, improve, or manage any real property under the administrative control of a Military Department or otherwise limit the availability of such real property for military mission purposes.

Nothing in this proclamation shall be deemed to revoke any existing withdrawal, reservation, or appropriation; however, the monument shall be the dominant reservation.

Nothing in this proclamation shall be construed to alter the authority or responsibility of any party with respect to emergency response activities within the monument.

Warning is hereby given to all unauthorized persons not to appropriate, injure, destroy, or remove any feature of this monument and not to locate or settle upon any of the lands thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this

twelfth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand seventeen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-first.

**Barack Obama**



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## JOHN D. DINGELL, JR. CONSERVATION, MANAGEMENT, AND RECREATION ACT, 2019

### SEC. 2204. RECONSTRUCTION ERA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND RECONSTRUCTION ERA NATIONAL HISTORIC NETWORK.

(a) Definitions.—In this section:

(1) HISTORICAL PARK.—The term “historical park” means the Reconstruction Era National Historical Park.

(2) MAP.—The term “Map” means the maps entitled “Reconstruction Era National Monument Old Beaufort Firehouse”, numbered 550/135,755, and dated January 2017; “Reconstruction Era National Monument Darrah Hall and Brick Baptist Church”, numbered 550/135,756, and dated January 2017; and “Reconstruction Era National Monument Camp Saxton”, numbered 550/135,757, and dated January 2017, collectively.

(3) NETWORK.—The term “Network” means the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network established pursuant to this section.

(b) Reconstruction Era National Historical Park.—

(1) REDESIGNATION OF RECONSTRUCTION ERA NATIONAL MONUMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Reconstruction Era National Monument is redesignated as the Reconstruction Era National Historical Park, as generally depicted on the Map.

(B) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Any funds available for the purposes of the Reconstruction Era National Monument shall be available for the purposes of the historical park.

(C) REFERENCES.—Any references in a law, regulation, document, record, map, or other paper of the United States to the Reconstruction Era National Monument shall be considered to be a reference to the historical park.

(2) BOUNDARY EXPANSION.—

(A) BEAUFORT NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT.—Subject to subparagraph (D), the Secretary is authorized to acquire land or interests in land within the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District that has historic connection to the Reconstruction Era. Upon finalizing an agreement to acquire land, the Secretary shall expand the boundary of the historical park to encompass the property.

(B) ST. HELENA ISLAND.—Subject to subparagraph (D), the Secretary is authorized to acquire the following and shall expand the boundary of the historical park to include acquisitions under this authority:

(i) Land and interests in land adjacent to the existing boundary on St. Helena Island, South Carolina, as reflected on the Map.

(ii) Land or interests in land on St. Helena Island, South Carolina, that has a historic connection to the Reconstruction Era.

(C) CAMP SAXTON.—Subject to subparagraph (D), the Secretary is authorized to accept administrative jurisdiction of Federal land or interests in Federal land adjacent to the existing boundary at Camp Saxton, as reflected on the Map. Upon finalizing an agreement to accept administrative jurisdiction of Federal land or interests in Federal land, the Secretary shall expand the boundary of the historical park to encompass that Federal land or interests in Federal land.

(D) LAND ACQUISITION AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may only acquire land under this section by donation, exchange, or purchase with donated funds.

(3) ADMINISTRATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall administer the historical park in accordance with this section and with the laws generally applicable to units of the National Park System.

(B) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—If the management plan for the Reconstruction Era National Monument—

(i) has not been completed on or before the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall incorporate all provisions of this section into the planning process and complete a management plan for the historical park within 3 years; and

(ii) has been completed on or before the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall update the plan incorporating the provisions of this section.

(c) Reconstruction Era National Historic Network.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

(A) establish, within the National Park Service, a program to be known as the “Reconstruction Era National Historic Network”;

(B) not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, solicit proposals from sites interested in being a part of the Network; and

(C) administer the Network through the historical park.



(2) DUTIES OF SECRETARY.—In carrying out the Network, the Secretary shall—

(A) review studies and reports to complement and not duplicate studies of the historical importance of Reconstruction Era that may be underway or completed, such as the National Park Service Reconstruction Handbook and the National Park Service Theme Study on Reconstruction;

(B) produce and disseminate appropriate educational and promotional materials relating to the Reconstruction Era and the sites in the Network, such as handbooks, maps, interpretive guides, or electronic information;

(C) enter into appropriate cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding to provide technical assistance;

(D)

(i) create and adopt an official, uniform symbol or device for the Network; and

(ii) issue regulations for the use of the symbol or device adopted under clause (i); and

(E) conduct research relating to Reconstruction and the Reconstruction Era.

(3) ELEMENTS.—The Network shall encompass the following elements:

(A) All units and programs of the National Park Service that are determined by the Secretary to relate to the Reconstruction Era.

(B) Other Federal, State, local, and privately owned properties that the Secretary determines—

(i) relate to the Reconstruction Era; and

(ii) are included in, or determined by the Secretary to be eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places.

(C) Other governmental and nongovernmental sites, facilities, and programs of an educational, research, or interpretive nature that are directly related to the Reconstruction Era.

(4) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING.—To achieve the purposes of this section and to ensure effective coordination of the Federal and non-Federal elements of the Network and units and programs of the National Park Service, the Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding with, and provide technical assistance to, the heads of other Federal agencies, States, units of local government, regional governmental bodies, and private entities.



# Appendix B | Beaufort National Register and National Historic Landmark District Contributing Properties

Of those contributing properties in the Beaufort National Register of Historic Places District reflecting the period of significance from 1712 to 1950, more than half were constructed from 1865 to 1913. Many of those properties are assumed to have connections to Beaufort's large African American population and events associated with the Reconstruction era. The large-scale and historic integrity of the national register district presents many opportunities for public programming, interpretation, tours, and partnerships, particularly in interpreting the Reconstruction era.

Some of the most significant Reconstruction-era properties contributing to the national register district include the following:

- **511 Prince Street – Robert Smalls House.** The property, built around 1834, is an example of Early Classical Revival architectural style sharing characteristics of both the Greek Revival and Federal styles. The Robert Smalls House is one of the most representative structures of the impact of African American property ownership and changes that allowed the acquisition of African American generational wealth after Reconstruction. The house was first owned by Henry McKee and is where Robert Smalls, a well-known figure of the Reconstruction era, is said to have been born into slavery. Smalls lived in the house as an enslaved man until 1851 and then purchased it at a tax sale as a free man in 1863. He and his descendants lived in the house for over 90 years. Smalls' famous history began during the Civil War when he commandeered and piloted the Confederate ship Planter through Confederate waters to the US blockade, where he turned it over to Federal forces and used his subsequent reward to purchase the house in which he had been enslaved. During Reconstruction, he established himself as a political and economic leader in Beaufort and the nation. He served on two state constitutional conventions, in the legislature, in Congress, and as the collector of customs. The Robert Smalls



House was individually designated a national historic landmark on May 30, 1974 (national register reference number 74001823), and was recently purchased by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

- **601 New Street – First African Baptist Church.** The church was first funded in 1863 as a praise house, which served as a place of worship, for social events, and for the education of African Americans. The two-story frame church was constructed in 1865 and is an example of vernacular Gothic Revival architecture. In 1865, the church had 134 members. Robert Smalls and his family attended First African Baptist Church. Smalls was baptized here, financially supported the pastor, and his funeral was held here in 1915.
- **706 Newcastle Street – Grand Army of the Republic Hall.** The hall was constructed in 1896 by the David Hunter Post #9 of the Grand Army of the Republic, which was founded by Beaufort’s Black Civil War veterans in 1888. The Grand Army of the Republic Hall serves as an event site, hosting occasions ranging from weddings to meetings. The building is maintained by private groups, including the Union Veterans of the Civil War and the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War.
- **911 Craven Street – Tabernacle Baptist Church.** Originally constructed in the 1840s, the church was rededicated for an African American congregation in 1863 after Federal occupation of the town during the Civil War. In 1867, the congregation purchased the church from the Baptist Church of Beaufort. The building was damaged in an 1893 hurricane and was substantially remodeled to its present form. Robert Smalls is buried in the churchyard. The church continues to serve an active modern congregation.
- **713 Craven Street – Beaufort Arsenal.** The arsenal, constructed in 1798, housed the county militia and was the site of some Civil War-era training and other related activities. The arsenal also housed weapons for three consecutive political regimes: the Confederacy and postwar government, Republicans, and Democratic “redeemers.” Beaufort Arsenal is the site of drilling and weapon storage that reflects the militarized tenor of South Carolina politics of the era. Importantly, it provided lodging for African American militia units during Reconstruction and served as a polling location in the 1867 election of delegates to the 1868 Constitutional Convention. The arsenal is the modern-day home of the Beaufort History Museum, which is open to the public daily.
- **803 Carteret Street – Beaufort College Building.** Constructed in 1851, the Greek Revival building served various functions during the Civil War and Reconstruction. Beaufort College closed its doors in 1861 when Beaufort was occupied by Federal troops. For the rest of the Civil War, the building was a school for formerly enslaved people and part of a hospital complex serving both freedmen and Federal soldiers. The building also served as headquarters for the local Freedmen’s Bureau during Reconstruction. The Beaufort College Building is owned and operated as part of the University of South Carolina Beaufort campus.
- **920 Bay Street – The Old Beaufort Custom House.** Originally constructed in 1857 and known as the Abraham Cockcroft House, the two-story brick building became a custom house in 1868 and was an important site of Federal power, particularly after the Democratic Party regained control in the state governments and the democratic experiment came to an end. Robert Smalls worked in the custom house until his retirement in 1912, reflecting the continuing significance of Federal-level Republican Party patronage for local elite African Americans. The custom house is now called the Thomas Law Building and is a private commercial building, with storefronts rented out to a real estate company and a retailer.

- **310 New Street – Berners Barnwell Sams House #1/“Contraband Hospital.”** The hospital was in operation in the early months and summer of 1863 for African American patients, including those suffering wounds received while escaping the bonds of slavery. The building was built in 1816 in the Federal style and extensively remodeled around 1835 in the Greek Revival style. This site is the earliest of Beaufort’s Greek Revival residences. The building retains the T form of its earlier Federal period construction, and unlike several of the other Federal examples, its rear T wings have not been compromised by later second-story additions. According to local tradition, Harriet Tubman is said to have provided aid on the grounds of the “contraband” hospital.
- **1313 Congress Street – Stokes Freedman’s Cottage.** Built around 1870, this building is an example of a hall or parlor house, distinguished by its floorplan, which typically consists of two rooms separated by a central hallway. Many of these houses also have original or later wings to the rear that may take the form of an “L,” “T,” or “U.” This house, built in the Northwest Quadrant of Beaufort, is similar to the “Freedman’s Cottages” documented in the rural areas of South Carolina’s coastal region. The home is representative of the style that was often rectangular and one room deep. The Northwest Quadrant was settled almost entirely by African Americans during and following the Civil War. Vernacular and folk architecture characterize the Northwest Quadrant neighborhood, which remains largely residential. Some residents of the Northwest Quadrant neighborhood are descendants of the original owners of the homes, and additional research is needed to determine if this is true for this property.
- **1406 Duke Street– Freedman’s Cottage.** This one-story frame dwelling was built in 1890. The frame construction of the dwelling is a major character-defining element, as frame construction was used for more than 80% of the district’s contributing buildings. The building is also an example of the more than 50% of the district’s buildings built during the city’s extended Reconstruction period (1865–1913), when African Americans held a three-to-one majority of the population. Finally, the structure is an example of the one-third of all resources in the Northwest Quadrant neighborhood, predominately settled by African Americans during and following the Civil War, that were constructed for African Americans. The building is an example of the vernacular and folk architecture that characterize the neighborhood’s buildings, particularly the “Freedman’s Cottage” style that was a distinctive one-story structure with a front porch. Some residents of the Northwest Quadrant neighborhood are descendants of the original owners of the homes, and additional research is needed to determine if this is true for this property.
- **1501 Bay Street– Federal Courthouse.** This two-story stucco courthouse has an extensive history dating to the Revolutionary period. Remnants of this history exist below the courthouse and include fragments of tabby foundation walls that belonged to the Barnwell Castle, the home of Edward and Robert Barnwell. During the Civil War, the US Army confiscated the Barnwell Castle and used the structure as Hospital Number 5 for Federal troops and as a home for some Federal officers. After the Civil War, the building was used as the Beaufort County Courthouse until it was consumed by fire in the early 1880s. In 1883, the cornerstone for a new courthouse was laid, and construction completed in the following year. This new courthouse, built in a Victorian design, was set atop the foundation of the Barnwell Castle. The courthouse was substantially remodeled in 1936 in an Art Deco or Art Moderne style with the support of the Public Works Administration funds to its present form.

- **1113 Craven Street – Secession House.** This Federal-style house was built circa 1813 for Milton Maxcy and extensively renovated in the Greek Revival style when purchased around 1845 by Edmund Rhett, a lawyer, planter, and statesman. Rhett extensively remodeled the house and gave it a new south porch around 1845. The porch is accessed by marble steps on the east of the porch that curve upward from the street to its raised first-floor level. Rhett and his brother, Robert Barnwell Rhett, were outspoken for Southern nationalism, and the house was the location of many meetings in the 1850s advocating for secession from the United States. During Reconstruction, the house served as the direct tax commissioner’s office.
- **607 West Street– Social Hall.** This two-story frame lodge building was built around 1900 and is the meeting place for the Sons of Beaufort Lodge No. 36, chartered in 1896. Robert Smalls was a member of this Masonic Lodge, and the lodge survives with an active membership. The building is one of several African American social, fraternal, military, and benevolent societies formed after the Civil War.
- **411 Craven Street – Hospital Number 6.** Also known as “the Castle,” this building was built for Dr. Joseph Johnson House in 1861, the house is two stories high and is raised on piers and made of stuccoed bricks, which were made at Dr. Johnson’s plantation. The home was under construction when Federal troops occupied the town in 1861 and was used as a military hospital (Hospital Number #6, included the Joseph Hazel House to the north) for African American soldiers. Many of the soldiers in the 54th Massachusetts Infantry who were wounded at Fort Wagner on July 18, 1863, were brought to this hospital.
- **907 Bay Street – Freedman’s Bank Building.** Originally a single dwelling built sometime in the late 1760s or early 1770s, this two-story tabby dwelling was known as the Chisholm House (905–907 Bay Street), and it is the only surviving example of the mid-18th-century house form in Beaufort. In 1863, the house was occupied by the post treasurer during the US Army’s occupation of Beaufort. In 1864, General Rufus Saxton created the Military Savings Bank, which eventually became known as the South Carolina Freedmen’s Savings Bank to secure the deposits of African American soldiers and civilians. This building was used as the Freedman’s Bank Building until 1873, when the branch closed.
- **701 West Street – Wesley United Methodist Church.** Built in the 1830s, the church became an important site for African American life in Beaufort during the Reconstruction era. The church was used as a school in 1863, possibly beginning in 1862, before the Emancipation Proclamation. Education was one of the most important elements of the Port Royal Experiment and the Reconstruction era in general. Black churches also were an important aspect of social and political life. The church retains an active congregation and maintains a historic cemetery.



Of the 162 contributing properties in the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District, reflecting the period of significance from 1712 to 1919, 152 properties were identified, and 140 properties were still standing in 2022 at the time of the survey. These properties emphasize the historic architecture of the antebellum planter class, and neither African American history nor cultural resources were mentioned in the NHL nomination. Despite changes to the buildings and landscape over time, the Condition and Integrity Study for the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District, found that the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District's original contributing resources retain a high degree of integrity, while the district's historically overlooked African American resources in the Northwest Quadrant have experienced the largest loss. The loss of these buildings that would now likely be considered contributing resources represents a disparity within the national historical landmark. An update to the NHL documentation is needed to reflect these changes.

Some of the most significant Reconstruction-era properties contributing to the national register district, listed above, also contribute to the NHL district, such as the following properties:

- 511 Prince Street – Robert Smalls House
- 601 New Street – First African Baptist Church
- 706 Newcastle Street – Grand Army of the Republic Hall
- 911 Craven Street – Tabernacle Baptist Church
- 713 Craven Street – Beaufort Arsenal
- 803 Carteret Street – Beaufort College Building
- 920 Bay Street – The Old Beaufort Custom House
- 310 New Street – Berners Barnwell Sams House #1/“Contraband Hospital”
- 1113 Craven Street – Secession House
- 411 Craven Street – Hospital Number 6
- 907 Bay Street – Freedman’s Bank Building

The following significant Reconstruction era properties are located outside of the national register district and NHL district:

- **The Beaufort National Cemetery.** The cemetery includes more than 18,500 interred soldiers, including members of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry and an 1870s Union Soldiers Monument erected in honor of 174 unknown Federal dead buried at there. The cemetery first interred US Army troops in 1861 and was dedicated as a national cemetery in 1863. The site was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1997. The cemetery continues to operate as a national cemetery, managed by the US Department of Veteran Affairs.
- **Elizabeth Smalls Bampfield Burial Site.** Elizabeth Smalls Bampfield was the daughter of Robert and Hannah Smalls and escaped from Charleston aboard the *CSS Planter* with them in 1862. She attended the Penn School when she was six years old and then studied at a boarding school in Massachusetts. Smalls Bampfield worked as her father’s clerk during

the first year of his first term in Congress. In 1877, she married Samuel Jones Bampfield, an attorney, state representative, and editor of the *Beaufort New South*. The Bampfields lived at 414 New Street beginning in 1877, and the house is where all their children were born. Following her husband's death in 1899, Smalls Bampfield was appointed postmistress by President Theodore Roosevelt and served two terms in that position until 1908. Smalls Bampfield then became secretary to Mrs. Rossa B. Cooley, principal of Penn Normal and Industrial School on St. Helena Island. Smalls Bampfield died in 1959 at the age of 101 and was buried in Mercy Cemetery (National Trust for Historic Preservation 2023).



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## Part 2: Environmental Assessment

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# Chapter 1 | Purpose and Need

## INTRODUCTION

The National Park Service (NPS) is preparing a general management plan (plan or GMP) for Reconstruction Era National Historical Park (park) in South Carolina. The park was designated a national monument by presidential proclamation on January 12, 2017, to recognize the role Beaufort County, South Carolina, played in shaping the historic period of Reconstruction. In March 2019, Public Law 116-9 redesignated the park from a national monument to a national historical park, expanded the park boundary, and created the park-administered Reconstruction Era National Historic Network. The network includes a nationwide collection of public and private sites and programs associated with the Reconstruction era. As a new national park system unit, the park requires a general management plan—a broad document, specific to the park, that identifies long-term goals for the park and guides the management of the visitor experience, resource preservation, facilities, and operations. The ultimate outcome of general management planning for park units is an agreement among the National Park Service, its partners, and the public on why each area is managed as part of the national park system, what resource conditions and visitor experiences should exist, and how those conditions can best be achieved and maintained over time.

This environmental assessment evaluates the environmental impacts of the actions proposed in the general management plan.<sup>1</sup> Following the environmental assessment comment period, the National Park Service will revise both it (through errata) and the draft plan, as appropriate, before issuing a decision document for the general management plan.

1. While general management plans are actions that generally require an environmental impact statement, consistent with NPS NEPA Handbook, 2015, section 1.5 E, an environmental assessment may be prepared if significant effects from implementing any of the proposed actions are unlikely. The National Park Service anticipates minimal environmental impacts associated with the proposed actions and little likelihood for significant effects and, therefore, has prepared an environmental assessment to aid that determination.

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## PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

Following is the purpose of this planning effort:

- Improve visitor experience, management capabilities, and facilities in a way consistent with the character-defining aspects of the park's associated national historic landmark (NHL) districts and cultural landscapes, and protect the resources within the park boundary in collaboration with partners.
- Address administrative uses of existing NPS facilities, visitor use, historic and nonhistoric structures, parking, roads, walkways, and associated infrastructure, including any future development or rehabilitation on park-managed lands in the park.
- Define and strengthen the partnerships between the National Park Service and key stakeholders to protect and interpret resources not under direct NPS management.
- Incorporate the recommendations in the historic structure reports for Darrah Hall and Brick Baptist Church and the park's cultural landscape report, identify and propose future development needs, and serve as the implementation plan for the desired conditions and management strategies identified in the general management plan.
- Provide guidance to park managers for formalizing partnerships with the park's many community and administrative partners with agreements to facilitate collaboration and coordinate future activities. The collaboration and coordination will accomplish the park's purpose and shared goals, including resource protection, consistent visitor experiences, accessibility, interpretation strategies and programming, transportation and wayfinding, and connectivity between resources.

A general management plan is needed to fulfill a park planning priority for resource protection, access, use, and development and to address legal and policy requirements identified in the following:

- Public Law 116-9, which established Reconstruction Era National Historical Park
- 54 United States Code 100502 (General Management Plans)

The general management plan will provide needed guidance for addressing parkwide issues and opportunities, including the preservation of cultural and natural resources; facilities and infrastructure; climate change response; visitor use and experience; and partnerships, all within the context of the park's purpose, significance, and special mandates.

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## PROJECT AREA

The park boundary includes approximately 65 acres of land in three discontinuous locations in Beaufort County. Of that, the federal government only owns and/or directly manages approximately 20 acres—some of that through preservation easements. The collection of historic sites in Beaufort County, South Carolina, along with other nationally significant sites outside NHL boundaries, provide a unique opportunity for visitors to understand the complex history and explore places associated with the Reconstruction era (see figure 1 in chapter 1 of the general management plan). Public Law 116-9 established the park’s current authorized boundary on March 12, 2019. The project area encompasses the historic districts and sites described below.

### BEAUFORT NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT

The Beaufort National Register of Historic Places Historic District and the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District comprise a dynamic urban area (approximately 304 acres) of public and private buildings, as well as commercial spaces and residences. While the NHL documentation has not been updated since 1973, there have been two updates to the national register documentation, in 1986 and 2001. These national register updates extended the date of significance of the historic district through 1950, added areas of significance to include social history and African American heritage, and identified a total of 467 contributing buildings, 5 sites, 1 structure, and 1 contributing object. Many of the structures included in the national register updates were built during or historically connected to the Reconstruction era. There are 162 contributing resources to the NHL district, 140 of which are still standing as of 2022 (Fenwick et al. 2023), and the period of significance for this district is 1712–1919.

The historic district and the surrounding area reflect, perhaps better than any single location in the United States, the political, economic, organizational, and religious transformations that occurred during the Reconstruction era. The National Park Service directly manages the Old Beaufort Firehouse (approximately 0.10 acre) within the boundaries of the Beaufort national register and NHL district in downtown Beaufort. There are other significant Reconstruction-era properties not managed by the National Park Service but to which the Service would provide interpretive opportunities under the general management plan. These sites are within the national register and/or NHL districts’ boundaries, contribute to one or both historic districts, or are located just outside of the districts’ boundaries. The properties are listed below and are described in more detail in appendix B of the general management plan and shown in a map in figure 2 in chapter 2 of the general management plan:

- 511 Prince Street – Robert Smalls House
- 601 New Street – First African Baptist Church
- 706 Newcastle Street – Grand Army of the Republic Hall
- 911 Craven Street – Tabernacle Baptist Church
- 713 Craven Street – Beaufort Arsenal
- 803 Carteret Street – College Building
- 920 Bay Street – The Old Beaufort Custom House
- 310 New Street – Berners Barnwell Sams House #1 / “Contraband Hospital “



- 1313 Congress Street – Stokes Freedman’s Cottage
- 1406 Duke Street – Freedman’s Cottage
- 1501 Bay Street – Federal Courthouse
- 1113 Craven Street – Secession House
- 607 West Street – Social Hall
- 411 Craven Street – Hospital Number 6
- 907 Bay Street – Freedman’s Bank Building
- 701 West Street – Wesley United Methodist Church
- Beaufort National Cemetery
- Elizabeth Smalls Bampfield Burial Site

#### **PENN CENTER NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT**

The 1974 national register and NHL documentation state that the Penn Center Historic District comprises 47 acres and 18 historic structures. However, the official web page for the Penn Center describes a 50-acre historic district (inclusive of three acres south of the Brick Baptist Church) that includes 25 historic structures on the St. Helena Island, campus of Penn Center, Inc. (formerly Penn School), and Brick Baptist Church (1855). Except for Brick Baptist Church, all of the buildings have been built after the Reconstruction era but are linked to the Penn Center’s long-standing purpose, which originated in 1862 within the campus’s cultural landscape. Three independent entities manage the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District: the Penn Center, Brick Baptist Church, and the National Park Service. The National Park Service directly manages Darrah Hall (1901) and has an associated easement (approximately 4 acres) and the Service directly manages land abutting Capers Creek west of Darrah Hall (approximately 3 acres). The National Park Service also holds a historic preservation easement around Brick Baptist Church and its associated cemetery (approximately 1 acre). The preservation and appreciation of the wider Penn Center National Historic Landmark District is invaluable to preserving the significance of the national park (see figure 3 in chapter 2 of the general management plan).

## CAMP SAXTON

The park boundary includes portions of Naval Support Facility Beaufort and Fort Frederick Heritage Cultural Preserve. Within that boundary are two properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places: the Camp Saxton site (1862–1863) and Fort Frederick (1732–1734). Established by Federal forces during the Civil War, Camp Saxton was on the site of the former Smith Plantation. No historic structures from Camp Saxton remain from the Civil War or Reconstruction era, but the location of the Smith Plantation House and some of the outbuildings have been identified on period maps and documented via rigorous searches of contemporary photographs. Much of the historic Camp Saxton is located in Naval Support Facility Beaufort, managed by the US Navy. Approximately 12 acres of the naval property is within the park’s boundary but remains under the administrative jurisdiction of the US Navy. Naval Support Facility Beaufort includes a hospital, opened in 1949, and residential facilities on 127 acres of land. Through a partnership with the US Navy and the National Park Service, park staff occasionally take visitors on tours of sites for their historical salience in Naval Support Facility Beaufort.

South of Naval Support Facility Beaufort is adjacent to nonfederal land. This land is Fort Frederick Heritage Cultural Preserve (6 acres), managed collaboratively with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Beaufort County (see figure 4 in chapter 2 of the general management plan). The Fort Frederick Heritage Cultural Preserve protects and interprets the tabby ruins of Fort Frederick, the oldest surviving tabby fort in South Carolina. Built by the British colonial government (1732–1734) to protect Beaufort inhabitants, the fort was abandoned in 1758. The fort was later incorporated (1862) into Camp Saxton during the Civil War and Reconstruction and is where people walked across a dock at the top of Fort Frederick to hear the first reading of the Emancipation Proclamation in the Southern states on January 1, 1863. Through a partnership with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and the National Park Service, park staff take visitors on tours of this site.

Finally, just outside of the main gate to Naval Support Facility Beaufort is Naval Heritage Park. Within this park is the Pinckney-Porters Chapel, a relocated and rehabilitated Reconstruction-era Freedman’s Chapel. The Town of Port Royal moved the church from the corner of Old Shell Road and 16th Street in 2019 and restored the chapel in late 2020 at its new location in Naval Heritage Park. Through an agreement, the National Park Service operates the site as a visitor contact station. Temporary exhibits are included inside and NPS Camp Saxton programs begin at this location.

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## Chapter 2 | Proposed Action

The proposed action includes the designation of management areas and their desired conditions and management actions and strategies to achieve and maintain those desired conditions. For visitor use and experience actions, the proposed action also identifies indicators, thresholds, and visitor capacities. A more thorough description is included in chapter 2 of the general management plan. The management strategies and actions described here are likely to be implemented in the foreseeable future and are sufficiently developed to allow a programmatic analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act. Other management strategies and actions from the general management plan that are not included in the proposed action are listed at the end of this section; additional compliance would be completed for these strategies and actions when details and locations are known.

This document includes all required content for an environmental assessment according to 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 36.310(a) and 40 CFR 1501.5. Consistent with 43 CFR 46.310(b), the National Park Service has not included a no-action alternative because it would not be analytically useful here, and there are no unresolved conflicts about the proposed action with respect to alternative uses of available resources.

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## MANAGEMENT AREAS AND DESIRED CONDITIONS

The park's general management plan identifies management areas and defines their desired conditions, which are the specific resource conditions and visitor experiences that the park strives to achieve and maintain. Each management area applies to different geographic locations (see the descriptions below and figures 2, 3, and 4 in chapter 2 of the general management plan) and is associated with a general level of management guidance or direction, including the types of activities and facilities that are appropriate in that management area. A detailed description of the desired conditions for each management area is included in chapter 2 of the general management plan and is incorporated by reference.

### **OLD BEAUFORT FIREHOUSE MANAGEMENT AREA**

Within the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District, this management area would include the Old Beaufort Firehouse (approximately 0.10 acre), which is federal property managed by the National Park Service. The desired conditions for this management area would preserve the historic fabric and features of the firehouse and its relationship to the broader NHL district while the building is rehabilitated for contemporary park needs and visitor orientation and education.

### **DARRAH HALL AND BRICK BAPTIST CHURCH MANAGEMENT AREA**

Within the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District, this management area would include Darrah Hall (approximately 4 acres) and land abutting Capers Creek west of Darrah Hall (approximately 3 acres), outside of the NHL district. The National Park Service owns both parcels. The desired conditions for this management area would preserve the historic fabric and cultural landscape of Darrah Hall and its relationship to the broader NHL district. Partnerships with the Penn Center and the Brick Baptist Church congregation, who own parcels in the NHL district, would preserve historic structures and the cultural landscape, provide for contemporary Brick Baptist Church congregation needs, and improve visitor orientation, experience, and understanding of the NHL district.

### **CAMP SAXTON MANAGEMENT AREA**

This management area would encompass portions of federal land managed by the US Navy, as well as South Carolina state land, Beaufort County land, and land owned by the Town of Port Royal. Naval Support Facility Beaufort is federal land managed by the US Navy, and the Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve includes both state and county property managed by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and by Beaufort County. The Pinckney-Porters Chapel owned by the Town of Port Royal but operated exclusively by the National Park Service. The National Park Service would work in partnership with these agencies to preserve and interpret the cultural and natural resources in these areas. The desired conditions for this management area would encompass recreational experiences and improved visitor access, orientation, and understanding of the history and cultural significance of the area.

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## MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE DESIRED CONDITIONS

A detailed description of management strategies and actions to achieve desired conditions is included in chapter 2 of the general management plan and is incorporated by reference. The management strategies and actions focus on partnerships, visitor use and experience (including interpretive and educational programs, recreation, wayfinding, circulation, and visitor information), cultural and natural resource protection, facilities, administration, and operations.

As described in the plan, strategies and actions are first discussed as general actions common to all or multiple park sites. The plan then describes management actions and strategies specific to individual management areas. The following summarizes the strategies and actions presented in the plan that are analyzed in this environmental assessment.

### PARKWIDE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- Enter into partnerships and agreements for the stewardship of cultural and natural resources, improvements to park programs and visitor services, recreational opportunities, research and work planning, technical and financial assistance (as appropriate), and access for visitors.
- Develop and maintain NPS facilities in a manner that is compliant with Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Act standards (ABBA) and is accessible, environmentally responsible, and cost-effective, according to *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, when appropriate.
- Prepare research and planning and baseline and inventory documents for cultural resource management, exhibits, and facilities management, including adaptation plans related to climate change mitigation.
- Implement existing planning guidance for resource protection, adaptive use, and wayfinding.
- Promote water access points and explore concession or commercial opportunities for water-based recreation and tours focused on Reconstruction-era history.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR OLD BEAUFORT FIREHOUSE MANAGEMENT AREA (BEAUFORT NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT)

- Implement treatment actions, as appropriate, from inventories and reports (e.g., cultural landscape report, historic structure report) for cultural resources at the Old Beaufort Firehouse.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR DARRAH HALL AND BRICK BAPTIST CHURCH MANAGEMENT AREA

- Implement treatment actions, as appropriate, from inventories and reports (e.g., cultural landscape report, historic structure report) for cultural resources at Darrah Hall and Brick Baptist Church.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR CAMP SAXTON MANAGEMENT AREA

- Implement treatment actions, as appropriate, from inventories and reports (e.g., cultural landscape report) for cultural resources at Camp Saxton.



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## MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS FOR WHICH FUTURE COMPLIANCE IS REQUIRED

The following strategies and activities included in chapter 2 of the general management plan are not included in the environmental assessment's proposed action because the strategy described has no potential to impact the natural or human environment, the strategies are not sufficiently developed to analyze impacts, or the strategies are programmatic in nature. Additional appropriate compliance, including with the Beaufort Historic District Review Board as necessary, would be completed when details and locations are known.

### PARKWIDE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- Develop a multimodal access route to provide safe access between park sites with partners.
- Support and participate in a partner-led feasibility study to explore shuttle connectivity between visitor destinations in the county, other properties connected to the Reconstruction era, and the park sites.
- Provide technical and financial support (as appropriate) to partners.
- Explore operationally and financially sustainable options, including NPS-owned and unowned properties, to establish a facility at a central location in a nonhistoric landscape that meets the needs of the park facilities and maintenance program, including adequate space for maintenance employees and equipment storage. Leases, partnerships, or acquisitions would be considered for site selection.
- Consider opportunities to meet housing needs for temporary staff through partnerships with local colleges or organizations.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR OLD BEAUFORT FIREHOUSE MANAGEMENT AREA (BEAUFORT NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT)

- Coordinate with partners and other landowners in Beaufort for expanded interpretation of Reconstruction properties, tours, enhanced pedestrian amenities, and interpretive waysides.
- Remodel the West Street Learning Center.
- Provide for visitor use and access to the Robert Smalls House.

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR DARRAH HALL AND BRICK BAPTIST CHURCH MANAGEMENT AREA

Implement the recommendations in the master sign plan and long-range interpretive plan.

Consider potential parameters for special-use activities, and establish coordination and communication with the Penn Center to ensure that special-use activities do not conflict with Penn Center or park operations.


Coordinate with the county on pedestrian access, traffic calming, and safety improvements along Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

## **MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR CAMP SAXTON MANAGEMENT AREA**

- Improve the sense of arrival and orientation at Camp Saxton.
- Coordinate with partners to supplement visitor recreational opportunities with the history and cultural significance of the area.
- Maintain or enhance visitor and administrative access to the site while reducing or eliminating impacts on surrounding residents.
- Provide technical and financial support (as appropriate) to partners to protect the cultural and natural resources directly tied to the story of Reconstruction.

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# Chapter 3 | Impacts on Park Resources

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## INTRODUCTION

According to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, an environmental assessment should “briefly provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an environmental impact statement or a finding of no significant impact” (1501.5[c][1]). To support this analysis, the National Park Service reviewed resources that may be present in the project area and identified those resources that may be impacted by the proposed action. Impact topics that were considered but dismissed from further analysis in this environmental assessment are listed below along with the reasons for dismissal. Following the dismissals, this chapter assesses effects to resources that are present and could be impacted by the proposed action.

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## ISSUES CONSIDERED BUT DISMISSED (RESOURCES THAT ARE PRESENT IN THE PROJECT AREA BUT NOT EXPECTED TO BE IMPACTED)

### ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Presidential Executive Order 12898, “General Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations” requires all federal agencies to identify and address the disproportionately high and/or adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs and policies on minorities and low-income populations and communities. According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, environmental justice is the

*... fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including a racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group, should bear a*

*disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies.*

Many minority and low-income populations and communities live in the area surrounding the three sites that comprise the park (USEPA 2023). The National Park Service determined that the proposed action would not result in any identified effects that would be specific to any minority or low-income community. Restrictions on travel or access to any area of the park that might result from the proposed action would be equally applied to all visitors, regardless of race or socioeconomic standing. The proposed action would not result in destruction or disruption of community cohesion and economic vitality, displacement of public and private facilities and services, increased traffic congestion, and/or exclusion or separation of minority or low-income populations from the broader community. For these reasons, environmental justice was not carried forward for analysis.

### **FEDERALLY LISTED THREATENED OR ENDANGERED SPECIES**

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, directs all federal agencies to use their existing authorities to conserve federally listed threatened and endangered species and to ensure that actions they fund, authorize, permit, or otherwise carry out will not jeopardize the continued existence of any listed species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitats.

Via the Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) website for the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the National Park Service requested the most recent list of species and their designated critical habitat protected under the Endangered Species Act that may be impacted by projects in the park. The National Park Service pulled IPaC species lists for the three geographic areas covered by Reconstruction Era National Historical Park: Port Royal, South Carolina, St. Helena Island, South Carolina, and Downtown Beaufort, South Carolina, under the respective project codes (2023-0131575), (2023-0131581), and (2023-0131573).

A total of 16 threatened, endangered, or candidate species were found on the species lists as being potentially present in the project area. The species lists were identical for each geographic area. The list identified four mammals: the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), an endangered species; the tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*), a proposed endangered species; and the West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*), a threatened species. Five bird species were identified: the eastern black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis ssp. Jamaicensis*), a threatened species; the piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), a threatened species; the red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*), a threatened species; the red-cockaded woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*), an endangered species; and the wood stork (*Mycteria americana*), a threatened species. Four reptile species were identified: the green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), a threatened species; Kemp's ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*), an endangered species; the leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), an endangered species; and the loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), a threatened species. One insect species was identified: the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), a candidate species. And finally, three flowering plants were identified: the American chaffseed (*Schwalbea americana*), an endangered species; the Canby's dropword (*Oxypolis canbyi*), an endangered species; and the pondberry (*Lindera melissifolia*), an endangered species.

The report found no critical habitats exist in the project area under USFWS jurisdiction. The actions proposed in the general management plan do not include any activities that would alter suitable roosting habitat, foraging habitat, or bat hibernacula or cause changes in noise levels or visual disturbance in an area. The proposed actions do not include any activities that would impact habitat for the marine mammals and reptiles listed in this report. Furthermore, the proposed action does not include any activities that would alter suitable habitat for monarch butterflies, expose monarch butterflies to insecticides, or otherwise cause direct injury or mortality.

While Reconstruction Era National Historical Park does not have any natural resource baseline studies on bird species, park staff provided written confirmation that the actions proposed would have minimal to no impact on the listed bird species; eastern black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis ssp. Jamaicensis*), piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*), red-cockaded woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*), and wood stork (*Mycteria americana*) in the area. Several bird species, such as piping plover and red knot, are not suspected to be present within park boundaries. While none of the proposed activities would alter or disrupt habitat for the listed bird species, precautions would be taken to avoid any potential disruption, such as avoiding construction activities during sensitive seasons and avoiding activities near potential nesting areas. Fish and Wildlife Service Standard Protection Measures would be implemented for all activities.

While Reconstruction Era National Historical Park does not have any natural resource baseline studies on flowering plant species, the park staff provided written confirmation that the actions proposed would have minimal to no impact on the listed flowering plant species; American chaffseed (*Schwalbea americana*), Canby's dropword (*Oxypolis canbyi*), and pondberry (*Lindera melissifolia*). Additionally, regional Invasive Plant Management Teams have worked at Reconstruction Era National Historical Park for treatments and did not document any encounters with the three flowering plants that were identified in the IPaC report. Fish and Wildlife Service Standard Protection Measures would be implemented for all activities.

Given the above, there would be no effect on federally listed threatened and endangered species from implementing management actions and strategies described in the general management plan.

The National Park Service would consult with the US Fish and Wildlife Service on any proposed future actions in the park with the potential to adversely affect the listed species. For these reasons, federally listed threatened or endangered species were not carried forward for analysis.



## SOILS AND VEGETATION

The proposed action does not include any construction that would disturb soils or remove vegetation. At Darrah Hall and its surrounding landscape at the Penn Center, minimal landscaping and maintenance activities would continue as currently conducted. The existing nature trail would continue to be maintained as it is currently, and much of the remaining area is manicured lawn consistent with the cultural landscape. Property identified for accessible parking and managed by the National Park Service would be minimally improved and already serves as parking areas. Therefore, limited disturbance to native vegetation from maintenance activities would occur. Additionally, new signs and waysides may be installed under the proposed action to enhance the visitor experience and to provide educational opportunities and wayfinding for visitors. The installation of signs and waysides may require some vegetation removal and/or soil disturbance; however, site analysis and appropriate compliance would be completed at the time of implementation. Therefore, soils and vegetation were not carried forward for analysis.

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## POTENTIALLY IMPACTED RESOURCES

- The following resources are present and could be impacted by the proposed action:
- Visitor Use and Experience
- Historic Structures
- Cultural Landscapes
- Archeological Resources

The following section provides a brief description of the current condition of park resources and how the proposed actions may change their condition.

## VISITOR USE AND EXPERIENCE

### Affected Environment

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Within the park boundary is a mix of federal, state, county, and private partner land ownership. Because of the multiple landowners, strong partnerships are critical to ensure a meaningful visitor experience. The National Park Service administers geographically dispersed park sites in and around Beaufort, South Carolina, that preserve and commemorate activities during the Reconstruction era.

- **Old Beaufort Firehouse.** Visitors can engage with park staff in the official park visitor center or take a guided walking tour of downtown Beaufort Reconstruction-era sites.
- **Camp Saxton and Pickney-Porters Chapel.** Visitors can learn about the site from park staff at Pickney-Porters Chapel, view temporary exhibits at a visitor contact station, or take a walking tour to Camp Saxton. Park staff noted that many visitors may not intentionally visit a national park at this site but discover the park while visiting the farmers market.
- **Darrah Hall and Brick Baptist Church.** Currently, visitors can interact with park staff and learn about the site at Darrah Hall, which functions as the NPS visitor contact station at the Penn Center. A visitor contact station in the Study House near the Brick Baptist Church is under development, along with regular ranger-led tours inside the building.

Creating a cohesive experience that allows visitors to draw connections between sites is challenging due to the discontinuous nature of the park boundary, multiple landowners, and the necessity of having an automobile to access most locations.

Broad factors not specific to the park may increase or decrease future visitation, including population changes, economic trends, travel costs, leisure time availability, future disposable income, climate change impacts, and changes in recreation preferences.

Reasonably foreseeable future actions in the project area that may impact visitor use and experience include the following:

- establishing water access at sites and water-based commercial tours
- administrative and operational changes at Naval Support Facility Beaufort, including operating as an “open” base and divesting areas identified in the general management plan to the National Park Service
- implementing the master sign plan
- establishing and staffing a visitor contact station at the Study House at Brick Baptist Church
- developing a safer pedestrian connectivity from Pickney-Porters Chapel to Camp Saxton
- establishing public access to Brick Baptist Church
- consolidating parking and access to Darrah Hall and Brick Baptist Church
- safety improvements along Martin Luther King Jr. Drive at the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District
- expanding the Reconstruction Era National Historical Network

### **Impacts of Proposed Action**

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Establishing management areas, desired conditions, indicators and thresholds, and visitor capacities, along with management strategies and actions to achieve desired conditions, would improve the visitor experience at the park by increasing visitor understanding and appreciation of the park’s resources, improving wayfinding and visitor safety, and enhancing learning and recreational opportunities. Over time, park staff would use the desired conditions and management strategies outlined in the proposed action to strategically assess existing visitor opportunities and experiences and respond proactively to new opportunities and trends. These actions would, in turn, enhance visitors’ connection with and understanding of the significance and fundamental resources and values of the park.

The park is not currently experiencing overcrowding, and most visitors appear to have successful visits. However, if desired conditions were not being achieved, additional management actions, such as additional tours, engineering controls, and established group sizes, could be implemented to ensure continued quality visitor experiences while protecting park resources. Managing to the visitor capacities identified in the proposed action (which are at or above current use levels) could one day adversely impact visitors who cannot visit on their desired day or who may be temporarily displaced from their location; however, these measures would be implemented to improve the overall visitor experience. Overall, impacts on visitor use and experience from implementation of the proposed action would be small and largely beneficial.

The impacts of reasonably foreseeable future actions, which are included in the affected environment, would likely lead increased visitor access and opportunities especially related to water-based recreation. Under the proposed action, enhanced and expanded opportunities would exist to recreate at the park and learn about and connect with park resources. The effects of the proposed action, when combined with the effects of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, would contribute beneficial impacts on the overall conditions in visitor use and experience.

## HISTORIC STRUCTURES

### Affected Environment

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The Beaufort Historic District was originally listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1969. The nomination documents the district's significance in American architecture, commerce, education, landscape architecture, literature, military history, Native American history, politics, religion and philosophy, and urban planning. The nomination was prepared at a time before current standards had been published, including establishing a period of significance and an inventory of contributing and noncontributing properties. While the periods of significance indicated are the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, the period of significance for the original national register nomination should be treated as 1712–1919, 50 years prior to the district being placed in the national register (Fenwick et al. 2023).

The secretary of the interior designated the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District in 1973 using the National Register nomination, an acceptable method at the time. In 1986, the National Register documentation was amended to expand the period of significance to 1935. However, this update did not apply to the NHL documentation. Due to a discrepancy between the written and illustrated boundary, additional documentation in the form of a boundary map was approved for the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District in 1994 (Shull 1994). The map gave the district a precise NHL boundary as part of the boundary study project since early nominations did not have defined boundaries, but there was no update to the NHL documentation. In 2001, the national register documentation was again updated to extend the period of significance to 1950, add social history and African American heritage as areas of significance, and provide a count of 475 contributing properties. Although the 2001 national register documentation states that it is a revised nomination for the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District, this is not true as there were separate forms by that time.

Within the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District, the National Park Service directly manages and protects, to the extent feasible, the historic fabric and features of the Old Beaufort Firehouse and its relationship to the broader historic district while using the building to meet administrative, operational, and interpretive needs. The Old Beaufort Firehouse serves as the primary initial contact point for park visitors. Visitors receive wayfinding information to connect them with other parts of the park and to tour the wider Beaufort National Historic Landmark District.

The **Penn Center National Historic Landmark District** was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 9, 1974. The nomination documents the district's significance in American education, politics, social/humanitarian themes, and Black history. The nomination was prepared at a time before current standards had been published, including establishing a period of significance. The secretary of the interior designated the Penn School National Historic Landmark District on December 2, 1974.



Within the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District, the federal government owns, and the National Park Service directly manages and protects, to the extent feasible, the historic fabric and features of Darrah Hall (contributing) and several acres of land surrounding it. The National Park Service also holds a preservation easement at Brick Baptist Church (contributing) and its associated cemetery. Brick Baptist Church, the cemetery, and the soon-to-be-moved and restored Deacon's Study House (in the Brick Baptist Church landscape) are not owned by the federal government. The National Park Service uses the space at Darrah Hall and Brick Baptist Church to meet administrative, operational, and interpretive needs. The National Park Service also has an interest in protecting these properties and their relationship to the broader historic district. Visitors to Darrah Hall and Brick Baptist Church could experience NPS programming and interpretation that would be complementary to visitor opportunities, overall protection, and commercial operations in the NHL district. Once moved and restored (an ongoing project with separate compliance), the Deacon's Study House would serve as a visitor contact station, interpretive space, and minimal administrative space and storage for NPS staff.

Within Camp Saxton are two national register properties: the Camp Saxton site (1862–1863) and Fort Frederick (1732–1734). The Camp Saxton site (38BU163) was listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its national significance under criterion A for its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Camp Saxton's area of significance was Black ethnic heritage, and its period of significance was from 1862–1863. No historic structures from the Civil War or Reconstruction era remain from Camp Saxton. However, the location of Camp Saxton is known based on documentation and research of the Smith Plantation, upon which Camp Saxton was established. A portion of historic Camp Saxton (approximately 12 acres) is part of the park but within Naval Support Facility Beaufort and under the administrative jurisdiction of the US Navy.

The cultural landscape of Camp Saxton has been modified since the area's period of significance, primarily by the development of Naval Support Facility Beaufort. The Naval Hospital Beaufort (opened in 1949) and associated structures, roads, parking areas, cleared areas, and other development dominate the northern area of the support facility. The southern area of the support facility is characterized by a developed, tree-covered residential area with roads, private homes, and recreational facilities. Within this residential area is the NPS park boundary, which also extends south of Naval Support Facility Beaufort's southern boundary into Fort Frederick Cultural Heritage Preserve, managed by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Beaufort County.

The Fort Frederick Heritage Cultural Preserve is a 6-acre property within which the tabby ruins of Fort Frederick are preserved and interpreted. Fort Frederick was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 for its areas of significance in history, architecture, education, military, and politics. The fort's period of significance was listed as the 18th century, with the years of its construction (1732–1734) specifically noted. Visitors may walk freely around the preserve's cultural landscape, characterized by the tabby ruins and interpretive signs. The area around the ruins and signs is mowed and maintained. The ruins are situated among live oak trees, and vistas offers views of the Camp Saxton site, the Beaufort River, and shoreline. Modern development is also visible (e.g., homes, bridges, boat launches) from the preserve.

Located in the Town of Port Royal's Naval Heritage Park, the Pinckney-Porters Chapel is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Originally located at Old Shell Road and 16th Street, the chapel was moved to its present location in 2019. The chapel was restored in late 2020. The chapel lacks integrity of setting in its present location, and the cultural landscape around the chapel is characterized by modern development and recreational use (e.g., skatepark, farmers market, walking trails).

Both historical trends and future projections suggest future increases in temperature, precipitation levels, and intensity of severe weather events. Park managers would monitor the Old Beaufort Firehouse and Darrah Hall for any deterioration caused by climate change and take adaptive action while maintaining the treatment recommendations in the historic structure reports as appropriate. At Camp Saxton, Fort Frederick and the surrounding landscape could become more susceptible to storm damage and sea-level rise submersion. Though the National Park Service does not directly manage the park, park managers would work with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Beaufort County, and the Navy to better understand these impacts and mitigate effects where feasible.

### **IMPACTS OF PROPOSED ACTION**

The general management plan reiterates that the National Park Service would implement the recommendations of the Old Beaufort Firehouse Historic Structure Report (2019). The historic structure report recommended *rehabilitation* for the firehouse's use as a visitor contact center, with maintenance type repairs, such as removal, replacement, repair, and monitoring, to ensure long-term preservation and consistency with the historic character. Consideration was also given to accessibility improvements to meet ABBA requirements. Rehabilitation has started under a separate compliance process under the general management plan, but the general management plan formalizes the continued management of the firehouse under the historic structure report's treatment recommendation. Overall, the continued management of the firehouse under the historic structure report's treatment recommendation would result in beneficial impacts on this historic structure.

The general management plan also reiterates that the National Park Service would implement the recommendations of the Darrah Hall Historic Structure Report (2019). The historic structure report recommended *preservation* for Darrah Hall but noted the general management plan could also identify programmatic uses for Darrah Hall such that *rehabilitation* may be appropriate. Under the preservation guidelines for Darrah Hall, the report recommended repair and replacement, as necessary, to match existing historic fabric, monitoring for deterioration and early maintenance to prevent widespread damage. Exterior *preservation* work at Darrah Hall is underway (under a separate compliance process) that follows the recommended treatments presented in the historic structure report. The general management plan formalizes the recommendation of preservation for Darrah Hall. Implementation of the general management plan does not necessitate rehabilitation or changes to the historic features of the exterior or interior of the building. Overall, formalizing the historic structure report's treatment recommendation for Darrah Hall would result in beneficial impacts on this historic structure. Continuing to provide visitor access to Darrah Hall via regular public visitation and special events introduces the potential that the structure could be adversely affected. However, the National Park Service would perform regular monitoring and take adaptive management actions to prevent deterioration of the historic fabric that result from visitor access and use. Thus, no adverse impacts are anticipated in continuing to provide visitor access to Darrah Hall.

The National Park Service has focused on formalizing its partnership with the congregation of Brick Baptist Church in the general management plan. Since the National Park Service does not own the Brick Baptist Church, any actions presented in the general management plan would depend on partners for implementation. However, no actions outlined in the plan would cause negative impacts on the historic structure.

Since the National Park Service does not directly manage any property at Camp Saxton, any actions presented in the general management plan would depend on partners for implementation. The National Park Service would coordinate with the US Navy, the State of South Carolina, and Beaufort County to assess climate change vulnerability and to take any subsequent adaptation or mitigation actions. The National Park Service would continue the collaborative relationship with the Town of Port Royal to use the Pinckney-Porters Chapel as the primary visitor contact point for Camp Saxton and improve pedestrian safety and connectivity. While the historic tabby remains of Fort Frederick could be adversely affected through continued visitor use, there are no threats to the structure as a result of actions from the general management plan. Under the provisions of the general management plan, the fort would benefit from regular monitoring by NPS staff in addition to the partners at South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Beaufort County, and jointly implemented adaptive management actions would be executed with partners to prevent the deterioration of the historic fabric from visitor use.

## **CULTURAL LANDSCAPES**

### **Affected Environment**

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As noted above, in the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District, the National Park Service directly manages and protects, to the extent feasible, the historic fabric and features of the Old Beaufort Firehouse (contributing) and its relationship to the broader historic district while using the structure to meet administrative, operational, and interpretive needs. The Old Beaufort Firehouse serves as the primary initial contact point for visitors to Reconstruction Era National Historical Park. Visitors receive wayfinding information to connect them with other parts of the park and tour the wider Beaufort National Historic Landmark District, if they desire.

Also noted above, in the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District, the National Park Service directly manages and protects, to the extent feasible, the historic fabric and features of Darrah Hall (contributing), several acres of the cultural landscape surrounding Darrah Hall, and, via an easement, the exterior of Brick Baptist Church and its immediate cultural landscape (including the cemetery). The National Park Service also has an interest in protecting these properties and their relationship to the broader historic district at the Penn Center. Visitors could experience NPS programming and interpretation at Darrah Hall and Brick Baptist Church that would be complementary to visitor opportunities, overall protection, and commercial operations in the NHL district. The Deacon's Study House at Brick Baptist Church would serve as a visitor contact station, interpretive space, and minimal administrative space and storage for NPS staff.

At Camp Saxton, the National Park Service does not directly manage any of the cultural landscape. Instead, the park partners with the US Navy, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Beaufort County, and the Town of Port Royal to provide visitor orientation and interpretation and space for NPS administrative operations.



Both historical trends and future projections suggest future increases in temperature, precipitation levels, and intensity of severe weather events. Increased tidal impacts at Capers Creek and erosion at Camp Saxton are occurring on partner land. Park managers would assist partners in monitoring for climate change impacts on the cultural landscapes and provide technical assistance as appropriate.

### Impacts of Proposed Action

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The general management plan reiterates that the National Park Service would implement the recommendations of the park's cultural landscape report during any construction or remodeling of Old Beaufort Firehouse building or grounds. The cultural landscape report recommends the treatment of *rehabilitation* for the Old Beaufort Firehouse and the limited footprint of landscape immediately surrounding the firehouse. The treatment recommendations for cultural landscapes follow NPS policy, including Director's Order 28: *Cultural Resource Management Guideline and The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. Treatment recommendations for the Old Beaufort Firehouse and its immediate landscape include removing the brick circular planters in the plaza, removing nandina shrubs prior to or as part of a planting bed redesign, removing plantings to the east and south of the building and selectively thinning the area, and replacing the installed vegetation with native species. Additionally, treatment recommendations included potential mitigations to periodic stormwater flooding of the plaza and enclosing the privacy fence. Overall, formalizing the cultural landscape report's treatment recommendation for the Old Beaufort Firehouse in this general management plan would result in beneficial impacts on this cultural landscape.

Tours of the associated Reconstruction properties in the Beaufort National Historic Landmark District; whether self-guided, park-guided, or commercially guided; would feature enhanced pedestrian amenities (e.g., benches, tour stops, wayfinding) and interpretive waysides. The park's cultural landscape report would assist in developing the design and placement of these amenities. However, the installation of these enhanced amenities and waysides would depend on partners for design and implementation; they would not occur on federal property. Thus, there are no actions associated with the general management plan that would have an effect on historic properties managed by the National Park Service. If the actions are implemented at a future time, these amenities and waysides would be new features introduced into the NHL district. Additional compliance may be needed to ensure that the amenities would be compatibly designed to minimize impacts on the cultural landscape.

The general management plan also reiterates that the National Park Service would implement the recommendations of the park's cultural landscape report during any construction or remodeling of Darrah Hall or the Penn Center landscape surrounding it. The cultural landscape report recommended the treatment of *rehabilitation* for the Darrah Hall cultural landscape, and the general management plan formalizes this treatment recommendation. Rehabilitation protects the significant historic features that contribute to the integrity of the property while allowing for necessary improvements. The overall goal is to improve the interpretation of the Darrah Hall cultural landscape by restoring, preserving, and/or rehabilitating the character-defining elements of the cultural landscape as they existed during the period of significance. Overall, however, the site does not currently reflect historic conditions when the cultural landscape was a residence, farm, and active part of the Penn School campus. Thus, rehabilitation would focus on improving

visitor orientation, access, and circulation. The cultural landscape report additionally provides some guidance to landscape treatment issues such as vegetation management with selective forest thinning, monitoring for tree health, and developing a flexible and nuanced mowing plan. Some revegetation may be required to manage the southern boundary of the site as a living fence; however, the report does not recommend any new plantings for site beautification purposes. Overall, formalizing the cultural landscape report's treatment recommendation for Darrah Hall or the Penn Center landscape would result in beneficial impacts on this cultural landscape.

Finally, the general management plan reiterates that the National Park Service would implement the recommendations of the cultural landscape report for Brick Baptist Church. The draft report recommended the treatment of *rehabilitation* for the Brick Baptist Church cultural landscape, and the general management plan formalizes this treatment recommendation. With partner implementation, rehabilitation protects the significant historic features that contribute to the integrity of the property while allowing for necessary improvements. Rehabilitation also provides for the continued use of the property through alterations and additions that do not damage the character-defining features. The site largely reflects historic conditions, including historic period land uses. Treatment recommendations include removing recently installed cultural vegetation, replanting two American sycamore trees west of the church, replacing an existing hedge with a native species, assessing and treating tree conditions with an arborist, formalizing parking, improving circulation and wayfinding without new construction and limited signage and other options to be outlined by the master sign plan and other planning studies, removing fencing, and developing a cemetery preservation plan. Overall, formalizing the cultural landscape report's treatment recommendation for Brick Baptist Church would result in beneficial impacts on this cultural landscape.

Relocating NPS operations from Darrah Hall to nonhistoric settings, removing a modern maintenance shed, and relocating workspace and storage to the new location of the Deacon's Study House would be a beneficial impact on Darrah Hall and the cultural landscape by removing nonhistoric elements from a historic area. The National Park Service would also implement the recommendations of the master sign plan (draft) and the guidance in the long-range interpretive plan (draft) to formalize the trail from Darrah Hall to Capers Creek by establishing interpretive waysides. The addition of waysides would introduce new features into the cultural landscape, but they would be compatibly designed to minimize impacts and would primarily be on the periphery of the landscape in a wooded environment. Implementing the forthcoming recommendations are anticipated to either have a beneficial impact on the cultural landscape or have no impact on the cultural landscape.

Parking for staff and visitors with mobility issues at Darrah Hall would remain, and an accessible path would formalize ABBAS accessibility. Pedestrian paths and unpaved roads, as outlined in the master sign plan, would connect Darrah Hall to the main parking area and the rest of the Penn Center campus. Overflow parking for special events and buses would be unmarked but available on the grassy field west of Darrah Hall. Parking in this area would have a temporary impact on the cultural landscape while vehicles are present but would result in no other impacts on the cultural landscape.

Since the National Park Service does not directly manage any property at Camp Saxton, actions presented in the general management plan depend on partners for implementation. The general management plan reiterates that the National Park Service would work with the US Navy to implement the recommendations of the park's cultural landscape report. The report recommended the treatment of *rehabilitation* for the Camp Saxton cultural landscape, and the general management plan formalizes this treatment recommendation. The overall treatment goal is to improve the interpretation of the Camp Saxton cultural landscape by restoring, preserving, and/or rehabilitating the character-defining elements of the cultural landscape as they existed during the period of significance. Treatment recommendations include coordinating with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and the US Navy to assess, stabilize, and preserve the historic and presumed historic trees on site and go limit the addition of new site features within the park boundary. Other vegetation management, including mowing, are maintained by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, the US Navy, and Beaufort County on their respective properties through other agreements. Overall, formalizing the cultural landscape report's treatment recommendation for Camp Saxton would result in no impacts on this cultural landscape since implementation requires partner action.

## ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

### Affected Environment

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The implementation of actions suggested by historic structure reports and cultural landscape reports would warrant additional compliance for those recommended actions outside of this general management plan. Actions in this general management plan that could impact partner properties would require partner implementation. Because of this, no actions that may occur on partner properties were included in this analysis. Additional compliance may be needed if and when partner actions are implemented. The affected environment for archeological resources is limited to the area of Darrah Hall, an NPS-owned property, at the Penn Center. This area was surveyed by the NPS Southeast Archeological Center in 2022, and a draft report of the survey results indicates the presence of archeological resources and modern refuse in the area. The draft report noted that the clearing for the nature trail to Capers Creek would have no adverse effect on archeological resources.

Both historical trends and future projections suggest future increases in temperature, precipitation levels, and intensity of severe weather events. Climate change impacts may occur at Camp Saxton, on partner land, as a result of erosion. Other climate change impacts on archeological resources may present themselves in the future. Park managers would monitor for climate change impacts on archeological resources, assist partners in monitoring, and provide technical assistance as appropriate.

### Impacts of Proposed Action


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The removal of the modern maintenance shed near Darrah Hall would not impact archeological resources. Future development of the area, such as planting vegetation, may, however, adversely impact archeological resources, and archeological survey would precede any action. The results of this future survey would inform the final project design and location so that adverse impacts on archeological resources are avoided, minimized, or mitigated. The formalization of the trail from Darrah Hall to Capers Creek would not result in any additional ground disturbance for trail construction, but the installation of waysides along this trail would. Survey conducted by the



Southeast Archeological Center in 2022 revealed no presence of archeological resources along the route of the trail, so no archeological resources would be impacted by installing signage and waysides along the trail corridor. Overflow parking for special events and buses west of Darrah Hall may inadvertently cause subsurface ground disturbance, such as gouging and rutting, especially if the area is wet. The additional weight of large vehicles may also cause compaction or soil displacement, potentially damaging archeological resources in the area. Monitoring the field conditions and setting thresholds and limitations for parking in this area would be a mitigation effort, and therefore, there are no anticipated adverse impacts on archeological resources by implementing the actions of the general management plan.

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## Chapter 4 | Tribal and Agency Consultation

The National Park Service consulted with various Tribes and agencies in preparing the general management plan and environmental assessment. The process of consultation and coordination is an important component of this plan. The National Park Service sent consultation invitations to the following Tribes:

- Absentee Shawnee Tribe
- Catawba Indian Nation
- Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
- Eastern Shawnee of Oklahoma
- Muscogee (Creek) Nation
- Poarch Band of Creek Indians
- Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
- Seminole Tribe of Florida
- Shawnee Tribe
- Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
- Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town
- Kialegee Tribal Town
- Miccosukee Tribe of Indians
- Tuscarora Nation

The National Park Service did not receive responses from the Tribes.

The National Park Service also consulted with the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and representatives of the Gullah Geechee community.



The National Park Service will continue to consult and communicate with Tribes, agencies, partners, stakeholders, the Beaufort Historic District Review Board, and the public as actions identified in the plan advance toward more detailed design development and implementation stages. Park managers will complete any additional compliance and permitting requirements, including compliance with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, for project-specific undertakings.

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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 US administration.



**General Management Plan  
Reconstruction Era National Historical Park**

May 2024