

Why is this Study Taking Place?

Your input is very important to us. As the study unfolds, we will provide several opportunities for you to comment. Here are some of the ways that you may contribute.

Project Website

The following website will contain updates and other information about the special resource study. Please check in and post a comment to the website anytime you like: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/sero>

Public Scoping

Public scoping meetings for the study are currently scheduled to take place in San Juan in winter 2010. Meeting times and locations will be advertised on the project website and in local media.

Progress Reports

Keep up to date on the project by receiving and reading our progress reports. Two brief reports will be issued — one following public scoping and one following the development of draft alternatives. You may sign up for the mailing list on the project website.

Draft Study Review

Once the draft study is ready, it will be made available on the project website. Please take some time to review the draft and provide comments on the project website. Public meetings will also be held to discuss the draft.



Thank you for your participation!



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Fort San Gerónimo ***Special Resource Study***

What is a Special Resource Study?

The National Park Service was created to conserve unimpaired outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational resources. The treasures in this system have been set aside by the American people to protect, preserve, and share our nation's greatest stories. Usually a new unit of the national park system is established by an act of Congress. Before passing such legislation, Congress requires reliable information about the quality of resources in the area under consideration and the potential for visitor enjoyment and efficient management. The National Park Service (NPS) collects this information and reports its findings to Congress through special resource studies. This process ensures that only those candidate sites that are most deserving of designation are included within the national park system.

Why is this Study Taking Place?

The National Park Service is conducting a special resource study on Fort San Gerónimo, Puerto Rico, which is the last portion of the Old San Juan fortifications, and portions of the city's defensive City Wall. Fort San Gerónimo is located adjacent to the National Park Service's San Juan National Historic Site in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The construction of Fort San Gerónimo ended in 1788 under the direction of Spanish military engineer don Ignacio Mascaró as part of the San Juan defensive system's first line of defense. During the British siege of 1797, Fort San Gerónimo was severely damaged by the artillery. It was reconstructed in 1799 without altering the original facade. The Spanish military occupied the site during the Spanish-American War, and the U.S. acquired the fort when it took possession of Puerto Rico in 1898. Since then, Fort San Gerónimo has been managed by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and has also been used for private functions. The site is currently closed to public access due to disrepair. The U.S. Congress ordered completion of this special resource study in the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, which was signed into law by President Obama.

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Park System

NPS personnel will evaluate Fort San Gerónimo and other related resources according to established criteria for significance, suitability, and feasibility. Applying these criteria consistently helps the National Park Service weigh the relative merits of including these sites as part of the San Juan National Historic Site.

National Significance

A proposed unit will be considered nationally significant if it meets all four of the following standards:

- It is an outstanding example of a particular type of resource.
- It possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the natural or cultural themes of our nation's heritage.
- It offers superlative opportunities for recreation, for public use and enjoyment, or for scientific study.
- It retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of the resource.

Suitability and Feasibility

To be **suitable** for inclusion in the system, a cultural site must represent a theme that is not adequately represented in the national park system or is not represented and protected for public enjoyment by another entity.





To be **feasible** as a unit of the national park system, an area's natural systems and/or historic settings must be of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure long-term protection of the resources and to accommodate public use. The area must also have potential for efficient administration at a reasonable cost.

Direct NPS Management

To be eligible as a unit of the national park system, an area must also require direct NPS management instead of protection by some other agency or by the private sector.

A special resource study may recommend the study sites' inclusion in the NPS San Juan National Historic Site. This typically involves the transfer of lands to the Department of the Interior for protection and operation by the National Park Service. In some cases, a different arrangement may provide adequate protection and opportunity for public enjoyment. Options may include management by another federal agency, local government, nonprofit organization, or the private sector. In these cases, the National Park Service may still be involved by providing technical assistance or other advice. Inclusion in the national park system will not be recommended unless this option is clearly superior.

Special Resource Study Process

Study Process	Key Steps and Outcomes
Information Gathering and Public Scoping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research available data on Fort San Gerónimo, other related resources, and historic/socioeconomic context. • Meet with key stakeholders. • Hold scoping meetings to gather public input.
Prepare Draft Study 	<p>The <i>Draft Special Resource Study</i> will include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • resource description and historical background; • evaluation of national significance; • evaluation of suitability and feasibility as a unit of the national park system; • a range of management alternatives; and • description of affected environment (e.g., cultural resources, visitor experience, socioeconomics).
Public Review of Draft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite local discussion and solicit feedback on the draft study.
Finalize Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider public support for findings. • Revise draft document following public comment and internal review. • Prepare a final determination about whether the study area meets criteria for inclusion as a unit of the national park system. • Recommend action to Congress.
Congressional Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congress takes action on the study recommendation.