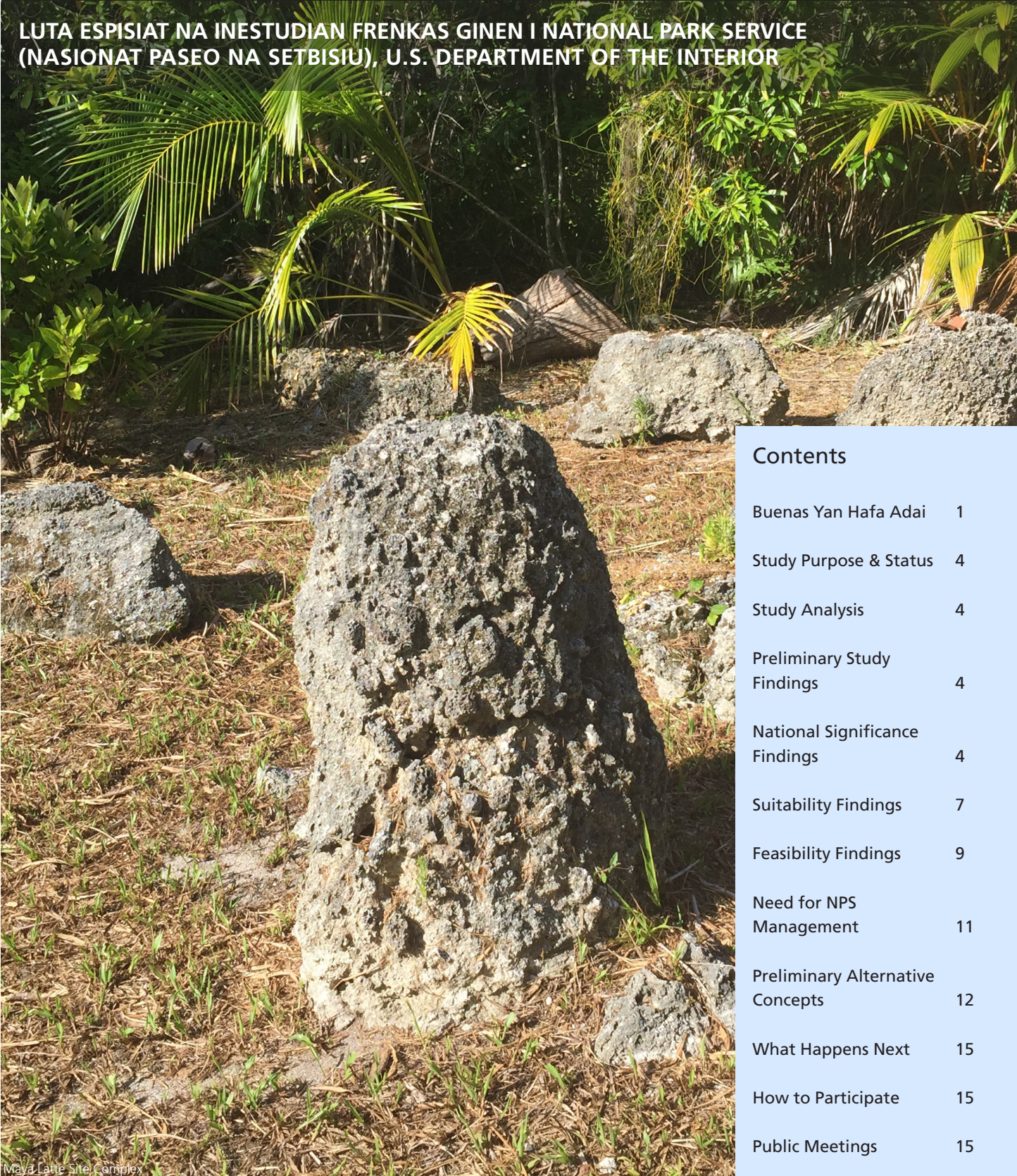




Rota Special Resource Study

LUTA ESPISIAT NA INESTUDIAN FRENKAS GINEN I NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
(NASIONAT PASEO NA SETBISIU), U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



Maya Latte Site, Complex

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Māya Latte Site Complex

Hello and Good Day,

We are happy to report our progress on the Rota Special Resource Study, and we invite your feedback on the preliminary ideas presented in this newsletter. Since you last heard from us, the National Park Service (NPS) has been evaluating the study area to determine whether it contains nationally significant sites that are suitable and feasible for inclusion in the national park system. NPS has completed the preliminary analysis and wants to share the findings. Your feedback at this stage will help NPS complete the analysis.

The NPS introduced the study to the public in 2017 through a newsletter, project website, and meetings with organizations, agencies, elected officials, and the public. The comments received were analyzed and informed the development of the study.

The preliminary findings indicate that Rota is a special place with significant cultural and natural resources. The Chamorro archeological sites, World War II Japanese defensive sites, and limestone forests appear to be nationally significant and suitable for inclusion in the national park system. The preliminary analysis also indicates that these sites would be conditionally feasible for inclusion in the NPS, requiring a partnership based approach for management because of land ownership restrictions on Rota. Based on these preliminary findings, NPS staff developed three alternative concepts for the preservation and public enjoyment of these sites including:

- **Continuation of Current Management:** This “no action” alternative focuses on continuing existing management and includes consideration of a National Historic Landmark on Rota.

Buenas Yan Håfa Adai,

Man sen magof ham para bai-en repot I adelantun inestudia pot I espisiat na frenkas giya Luta ya en fafaisen håfa hinason miyu pot esti I primera na ede-hu nai ma presenta guini na gaseta. Ginen I ut-timu nai man adingnan hit, I Nasionat Paseo Na Sitbisiu (NPS), ha ebalu-ha todus I inestudia gi hålom I lugat kao guaha siknifikasion- ña para u ma na’ hålom gi sisteman I Nasionat Paseo Na Sitbisiu.

I Nasionat Paseo Na Sitbisiu (NPS) hana’ funhayan esta I primera na inestudia ya man malagu’ ham para bai-en patti huyung I sinada’ mami. Ginen I nina’ hålom hinason miyu guini na eskalera, siempre ina-yuda I NPS para una’ kumpledu I inestudia.

I Nasionat Paseo Na Sitbisiu (NPS) ha intrudusi esti na inestudia gi publiku gi Dos Mit Disi Sietti Na Sakan (2017) gi gaseta, gi che’cho’ (website), gi hunta siha yan I kuetpon compani-ha, offisinan gobietnu, gi hålom I man ma ilihi siha, yan I hinerat publiku. I man ma resibi siha na mensahi, man ma analisa ya patti guini na inestudia.

I primera na sineda’ ñi-ha, uma anok na Luta espisiat na lugat anai guaha mas siknifikasion I naturat na frenkas kuttura. I lugat antigu na Chamoru, I lugat Chapanis gi geran dos, acho latte gi hålom tånu’ uma anok na I siknifikasion- ña umaya para u hålom gi sisteman Nasionat na Paseo.

Lokue’ I primera nai ma analisa uma anok na debi u guaha kondision para u saonao gi NPS sa’ hanisisita na u guaha ina tungno’ pot asuntun manehantin I lugat yan asuntun dueñun tåno’ gi papa’ attikulu dossi (land alienation). Gi papa’ esti I primera na sineda’, I emple-aun NPS, ma fa’tinas tres na ede-hun komparasion para I konsetba yan gossan I publiku entiramenti:

- **Rota National Historical Park Concept:** This action alternative concentrates on partnerships to foster cooperative planning and management to protect and interpret Chamorro archeological sites. The NPS could assume management of Chamorro sites on public lands through a cooperative agreement or lease and provide interpretation and educational opportunities and maintain the sites. The preliminary analysis indicates this alternative could include approximately 1,300 acres of ancient and historic sites.
- **Rota National Monument or Preserve Concept:** This action alternative concentrates on partnerships to foster cooperative planning and management to protect and interpret the limestone forests, Chamorro archeological sites, and World War II sites. The NPS could assume management of these sites through a cooperative agreement or lease and provide interpretation and educational opportunities and maintain the sites. Preliminary analysis indicates this alternative could include approximately 4,400 acres of limestone forests, ancient, and historic sites.

It is important to hear from the elected officials, stakeholders, and the public about these preliminary findings and concepts. The findings of the study will inform a recommendation by the Secretary of the Interior to the United States Congress. Establishment of a unit of the national park system would require the support of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) government and action by the United States Congress.

Thank You



Limestone forests and cliffs

- **Para ma kontinua I presenti na minane-han I lugat:** Taya' aksion para u ma konsigi lao para uma kontinua-ha' I presenti na konsideraton gi papa' I Nasionat Historik Landmark giya Luta.
- **I Luta Nasionat Estorian Paseo na ede-hu:** Esti na aksion ma akompara I kompani-han dos kuetpo para u mas guaha maolek na ina-ayuda gi asuntun ma pla-ne-ha yan ma mane-ha kosa-ki ta prote-hi yan ta explika I lugat Chamoru gi tiempun antigu. I NPS siña ha asuma I minane-han i lugat Chamoru gi tânu' pupbliku gi hulo' ina ayuda na kontrata osi no ginen i atkilon nai siña nina' guaha opotunidadat para ma eksplika yan para mana' besti i lugat. I primera nai ma analisa uma anak na esti siña ha embrasa pot lumenus (1300) hektaria na tâno' antigu.
- **I Luta Nasionat na Munumentu pat Konsetba na ede-hu:** Esti na aksion ma akompara yan I kompani-han dos kuetpo anai siña guaha mas maolek I planu yan mina neha kosaki ta prote-hi yan ta explika I hâlom tâno' acho' latte, I lugat Chamoru gi tiempun antigu, yan I lugat geran dos. I NPS hana' siña para u mane-ha todú esti siha na lugat gi papa' fotmalidat na kontrata osino, siña ha atkila I lugat ya ha fa'tinas i tapblerun edukasion, I lugat siha ya gi mismu tiempo siña hana' gasgas I lugat siha. I primera na ma analisa, uma anak na esti na lugat gi komparasion, pot lu menus mas ki kuarto mit kuarto sentus ektaria (4,400 acres) na hâlom tâno' acho latte, kaskao yan antigu na lugat.

Pot esu na inpottanti na para ta hungok ginen I man ma ilihi siha na ofisialis, I man gai kabo' I kuminidat, yan I hinerat pupbliku entiramenti pot esti I ta diskukuti guini gi primera na sineda yan ede-hu. I sineda' esti na inestudia para ta fotma I rekomendasion I Sikitarian I Interior na Dipattamentu, Estados Unidos para guatu gi Kongressun Estados Unidos.

I para ma establesi I sisteman I Nasionat Na Paseo gi ya Luta, nisisario na uma supot-ta gi Gubietnamentun I Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands ya u guaha aksion para u inaturisa gi Kongressun Estados Unidos.

Si Yu'us Måasse'

Special Resource Study Purpose & Status

The 1998 National Parks Omnibus Management Act (54 U.S. Code 100507) established the process for identifying and authorizing studies of new national park units. The authorizing legislation (P.L. 113-291 Section 3051, 12/19/14) directs the NPS to conduct a Special Resource Study of the “prehistoric, historic, and limestone forest sites on the island of Rota.”

The NPS introduced the study in 2017 through a newsletter, project website, and meetings with organizations, agencies, elected officials, and the public. Six meetings were held on Rota, Guam, and Saipan that were attended by over 200 people in February and March 2017, and 25 written comments were received. In addition to public input, the NPS based the analysis and findings on a review of existing literature; information provided by CNMI and NPS experts, scholars, and organizations; analysis of case studies of existing national parks in other locations; and the professional judgment of NPS staff.

Planning Activity	Dates
Project Initiation	2015
Public Start-up & Scoping	2015-2017
Resource Analysis: Significance and Suitability	2016-2018
Feasibility Analysis & Alternatives Development	2019
Public Engagement for Preliminary Findings & Alternative Concepts	2020
Final Report/Transmittal to Congress	2021

Study Analysis

For the NPS to recommend a new unit of the national park system, an area must:

1. Contain nationally significant natural or cultural resources;
2. Be a suitable addition to the national park system;
3. Be a feasible addition to the national park system;
4. Require direct NPS management, instead of alternative protection by others.



Gampapa Latte Village

Preliminary Study Findings National Significance

Does the study area contain nationally significant resources?

The NPS uses the four criteria listed below to evaluate the national significance of sites proposed for inclusion in the national park system.

1. The site is an outstanding example of a particular type of resource.
2. The site possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the natural or cultural themes of our nation’s heritage.
3. The site offers superlative opportunities for public enjoyment, or for scientific study.
4. The site retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of a resource.

As described in the following section, preliminary findings indicate that the natural sites associated with the island’s limestone forests, sites associated with ancestral Chamorro culture, and historic sites associated with World War II meet the national significance criteria.

Limestone Forests



Rota's limestone forests and terraced landscape

Rota's tropical limestone forests are one of the largest intact examples of the ecosystem in the Mariana Islands and are notable due to the species diversity and intact physical structure.

National significance of the island's limestone forests was evaluated using National Natural Landmark (NNL) criteria which considers a natural resource nationally significant if it is one of the best examples of a biological or geological feature considered a characteristic of a natural region.

The limestone forests occupy about 10,943 acres (52% of total island area), and continue to exist in relatively large, ecological functioning stands that have been minimally impacted. Other examples of limestone forests are found on Guam, Saipan, and Tinian, however these

ecosystems have been compromised by invasive species such as the brown tree snake, human clearing for agricultural purposes, development, and destruction associated with World War II battles, resulting in decreased species diversity.

The limestone forests on Rota meet the NNL criteria for national significance and are an illustrative example of a rare functioning ecosystem type that has been less disturbed than other limestone forests. The functioning limestone forest ecosystem on Rota retains notable levels of diversity and value for science and education that support a finding of national significance.

Chamorro Archeological Sites



Lusong, Mochong Latte Village Complex

Rota's Chamorro archeological sites possess exceptional value in illustrating the history and culture of the indigenous Chamorro people of the Mariana Islands. The Rota site complex is unmatched in terms of overall integrity, concentration of unique and individually nationally significant sites, diversity and density of sites, and potential to yield information regarding multiple aspects of traditional Chamorro history and culture.

The NPS used the National Historic Landmark (NHL) criteria to evaluate the national significance of Rota's ancient and historic sites. The approximately 26 Chamorro sites identified by the NPS include latte villages, rock art caves, rock shelters, artifact scatters, and other site types located inland and along the coast. Three sites described below were found to rise to the level of national significance individually.

Mochong Latte Village Complex is one of the largest, best preserved latte village sites in the Mariana Islands, covering approximately 30 acres and containing 53 latte sets. The site features unique examples of latte architecture including

one of the only two known 14-pillar latte sets and a rare "latte wall," a row of stone slabs forming one side of a latte set. Mochong also exhibits a continuous record of settlement extending back to 550 BC, offering opportunities to study continuity and change in culture and environmental interactions over most of the pre-latte and latte periods.

Alaguan Latte Village Complex contains the most extant resources of any documented latte village site in the Mariana Islands, including 58 latte sets. The site is extremely rich in surface materials and, along with Mochong, is considered one of the best preserved village sites in the Mariana Islands. It also features the only



Mochong Latte Village Complex

intact standing capped latte on Rota, one of the few remaining in the islands. First occupied around AD 1200, the Alaguan complex exemplifies Chamorro adaptation to less optimal island environments during a period of population expansion.

As Nieves Latte Quarry contains the largest latte stones known to exist in the Mariana Islands and is considered the best preserved quarry site in the archipelago. The site is also an exceptional expression of latte architecture, offering opportunities for comparative analysis with other examples of megalithic stone construction in Micronesia and the broader Pacific.

While other sites evaluated for this study are not considered nationally significant individually, they form integral parts of an extensive site complex which exceptionally illustrates the way of life of the ancestral Chamorro, offering unique opportunities for public enjoyment, education, and

research in a relatively concentrated area. Because Rota has remained less developed than the other large Mariana Islands and was not as heavily impacted by the events of World War II, the coastal and native limestone forest setting is comparably well-preserved. Many sites have been carefully maintained by the people of Rota for generations and continue to evoke their sacredness and a strong sense of place.



As Nieves Latte Quarry

World War II Japanese Defensive Complexes



Ginalagan Defensive Complex

The two defensive complex sites on Rota are outstanding, intact, and comprehensive examples of Japanese high-ground island defense systems created with local building materials and used in occupied Pacific territories during World War II.

The Ginalagan Defensive Complex and Chudang Palii Defensive Complex were determined to meet NHL criteria for national significance. The archeological site complexes represent broad national patterns in United States history through their association with World War II's Pacific Theater. The sites are outstanding, intact, and comprehensive examples of Japanese fortifications that illustrate the living conditions of the Japanese Army during its occupation of Rota. The complexes incorporate steep limestone cliff faces to create a high-ground island defense strategy and include building materials and construction methods that reflect an architectural type valuable for the study of

the Japanese occupation in the Mariana Islands. The complexes have yielded information during past surveys and are likely to yield additional information through further documentation and research related to the Japanese Army's use of local materials and establishment of defensive positions. The complexes maintain high degrees of integrity in location, setting, association, materials, design, workmanship, and feeling that support the NHL criteria. The World War II Japanese defensive complexes on Rota meet the NHL and study criteria for national significance.

Other Resources Considered



N.K.K. Sugar Mill

Ocean resources:

The ocean waters surrounding Rota and the nearby submerged shipwrecks were not included in the authorizing legislation for the study and were not evaluated.

Other historic sites:

The NPS analyzed more than 40 cultural sites related to the pre-latte period, latte period, Spanish period, Japanese period, World War II, and the Commonwealth

period. Many sites were determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places due to their significance at the local or regional level but did not meet NHL criteria. Additional research and documentation would be needed to properly analyze the national significance of several of the sites.



Ocean resources were not evaluated for inclusion

Suitability Findings

Could the area help fill a crucial gap in the national park system?

An area is considered suitable for addition to the national park system if it represents a natural or cultural resource type that is not already adequately represented or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by other federal agencies, tribal governments, state or local governments, or the private sector.

Preliminary findings indicate that the island's limestone forests, ancient Chamorro sites, and historic World War II Japanese defensive complexes meet the suitability criteria. There are no other comparable examples of limestone forests, unique monumental Chamorro architecture, and Japanese World War II defensive structures found in the United States and its territories.



I'Chenchon Bird Sanctuary

Limestone Forests



Endangered Mariana fruit bat

Rota's limestone forests include examples of both lowland rain forest and montane rain forest. Lowland and montane limestone forests are not adequately represented elsewhere in the national park system, nor are there comparable sites which protect and interpret a similarly intact example of the limestone forest ecosystem. War in the Pacific National Historical Park, an NPS unit on Guam, contains three remnants of limestone forest in the Asan Beach Unit, the Fonte Plateau Unit, and the Mt. Alifan Unit, however two of these sites were devastated during the Battle of Guam and the third contains a small ridgeline forest that is inaccessible

to the public. Though Asan Ridge and Fonte Plateau are considerably recovered today with native plants and animals, they are not comparable to the forests of Rota which did not experience such devastation. Guam National Wildlife Refuge and Anao Conservation Area protect sections of limestone forest, however the brown tree snake has greatly impacted the integrity of the limestone forest ecosystem. The limestone forests of Rota are suitable for inclusion in the national park system because these forests protect the most intact example of this resource type in the United States and its territories, meeting the study criteria for suitability.

Chamorro Archeological Sites



Lusong (mortar) carved from basalt or limestone

Rota's Chamorro archeological sites include an assemblage of architectural, habitation, ceremonial, and spiritual features, unique structures, rich artifacts and midden assemblages that contribute to understanding the more than 3,000 year evolution of the indigenous culture of the Mariana Islands. The Rota study area is distinguished from other archeological site complexes in the Mariana Islands by its exceptionally high level of integrity, diversity and density of sites, and concentration of unique and individual nationally significant sites. Rota's significant archeological sites provide exceptional opportunities for interpretation, education, and enjoyment of ancestral Chamorro culture. Where Chamorro archeological sites are present in the national park system, the sites are fragmented, disturbed, or in small clusters. Chamorro archeological sites exist on United States military reservations in the Mariana Islands and the Guam National Wildlife Refuge, but public access is limited. Ancestral Chamorro sites are found on other public and private lands, yet the sites do not represent the combination

of themes related to ancestral Chamorro culture in comparison to the collective sites on Rota. The Chamorro archeological sites on Rota are some of the best surviving examples of the unique and distinct culture of the native people of the Mariana Islands, an indigenous population that is not adequately represented in the national park system. Rota's Chamorro archeological sites, including Mochong Latte Village Complex, Alaguan Latte Village Complex, and As Nieves Latte Stone Quarry, meet the study criterion for suitability.



Lommok (pestle)

World War II Japanese Defensive Complexes

Many examples of Japanese military defensive sites are found in existing units of the national park system and national historic landmarks on other Mariana Islands—including Guam, Saipan, and Tinian—as well as the Aleutian Islands of Kiska and Attu. The Chudang Palii and Ginalagan World War II Japanese Defensive Complexes on Rota are the most intact and best remaining examples of extensive inland defense structures constructed out of the natural landscape by the Japanese Army in the United States. The Rota defensive complexes support other Japanese World War II sites in units of the national park system by providing an in depth representation of how the native Chamorro people were impacted by the Japanese occupation and how activities in the Pacific Theater affected

the landscapes of the Mariana Islands. The World War II Japanese defensive complexes meet the study criterion for suitability by representing the best example of this resource type and the opportunity to enhance protection and interpretation related to Japanese defensive complexes in the Pacific.



WWII gun at Chudang Palii Defensive Complex



Ginalagan Defensive Complex



Ginalagan Defensive Complex

Feasibility Findings

Could the area be efficiently and effectively managed by the NPS?

To be feasible as a unit of the national park system, an area must be:

1. Of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure sustainable resource protection and visitor enjoyment (taking into account current and potential impacts from sources beyond proposed park boundaries), and
2. Capable of efficient administration by the NPS at a reasonable cost

Preliminary analysis indicates that the limestone forests, Chamorro archeological sites, and Japanese World War II defensive complexes meet feasibility criteria for additions to the national park system on a conditional basis, dependent on establishment of appropriate land and resource management agreements with the CNMI and Rota Municipal government, support from the CNMI government, and further analysis of the costs. In evaluating feasibility, the NPS considers a variety of factors from *NPS Management Policies 2006* most of which are discussed in the following section.



Limestone cliff

Land Ownership Patterns

Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution states that only persons of Northern Mariana Islands descent can own land in the CNMI. Thus land on Rota could not be owned by the United States government and if included in a unit of the national park system would need to be leased from the CNMI government or managed through a cooperative agreement. Establishment of a national park system unit on Rota would depend upon approval of the CNMI and the Rota Municipal government because of land ownership restrictions and the overlap of CNMI-owned land and nationally significant sites.



Agricultural homestead plot

Current and Potential Use of Study Area and Surrounding Lands

Sites considered for inclusion in the national park system through this study are owned by the CNMI government and zoned either “Undesignated/Not in Use Public Land” or “Designated/In Use Public Land”. The zones are part of the homestead and farmstead program or designated conservation areas. Some public lands that are currently designated for the Rota homestead and farmstead program might be considered for conversion to a unit of the national park system if there were general support from the people of Rota and the CNMI government.



Cows grazing on edge of forest

Public Enjoyment Potential

Visitors to Rota can currently visit many of the Chamorro archeological sites and experience the limestone forests and native wildlife at the I'Chenchon Park Bird Sanctuary. Future visitor experiences could include a trail system, additional interpretation, and guided hikes and tours of the natural and cultural sites associated with the limestone forests, Chamorro culture, and Japanese World War II defensive sites. Public enjoyment could be enhanced through NPS interpretive programs benefiting both visitors and residents of Rota.



Group visiting As Nieves Latte Quarry

Access

Limited charter flights are available to Rota from Saipan and Guam. Once on Rota, visitors may rent a car and travel the primarily dirt roads to limestone forests and many of the Chamorro sites identified in the study. Other sites are currently difficult to access due to geography, overgrown vegetation, and private property crossings. The NPS could improve access through active vegetation management, trail building, and access agreements, or enhance the understanding of the sites through remote viewing areas and interpretation.



Hike to Chudang Palii Defensive Complex



Dirt road leading to limestone forests

Current and Potential Threats to Resources

Invasive species, such as the brown tree snake, are a threat to the ecosystem of Rota's limestone forests. More visitors coming to the island could increase the risk of invasive species reaching the island. Natural disasters, such as typhoons, and sea level rise also present threats to Rota's nationally significant resources, potentially resulting in devastating effects and expensive recovery efforts. Current agricultural practices including unrestricted grazing and fires to reduce tree cover affect forest land adjacent to farmsteads. Future tourist-related growth could also have negative effects through encroachment or inappropriate visitor behaviors.

Costs and Socioeconomic Impacts of Designation

A careful look at costs is required in order to effectively address the fiscal impact of adding new units and/or management responsibilities to the national park system. Costs associated with a national park unit include annual operations costs and costs related to lands, facilities, and resource protection. A new national park unit on Rota could have social and economic impacts on island and in the CNMI. The economic feasibility and socioeconomic impacts of a new unit of the national park system will be evaluated further in the final study.

General Level of Support

There appears to be considerable local and political support for a new unit of the national park system to be established on Rota. Politicians and business owners view a new unit of the national park system as a driver of tourism on Rota where there are limited economic opportunities. Overall, residents who attended public meetings and/or provided comments viewed a unit of the national park system on Rota as beneficial and supported NPS management and programming of the nationally significant sites. There were also concerns expressed that federal regulations will conflict with traditional hunting, collecting, and agricultural practices that are used for both subsistence and economic purposes and that there is no immediate need for protection of the sites.

Need for NPS Management

There are many excellent examples of the successful management of important natural and cultural resources by other public agencies, private conservation organizations, and individuals. Unless direct NPS management of a studied area is identified as the clearly superior approach, the NPS will find it most appropriate that one or more of these other entities assume a lead management role, and that the area not receive national park system status. Alternatives to NPS management might adequately protect resources even if they are significant, suitable, and feasible additions to the System.

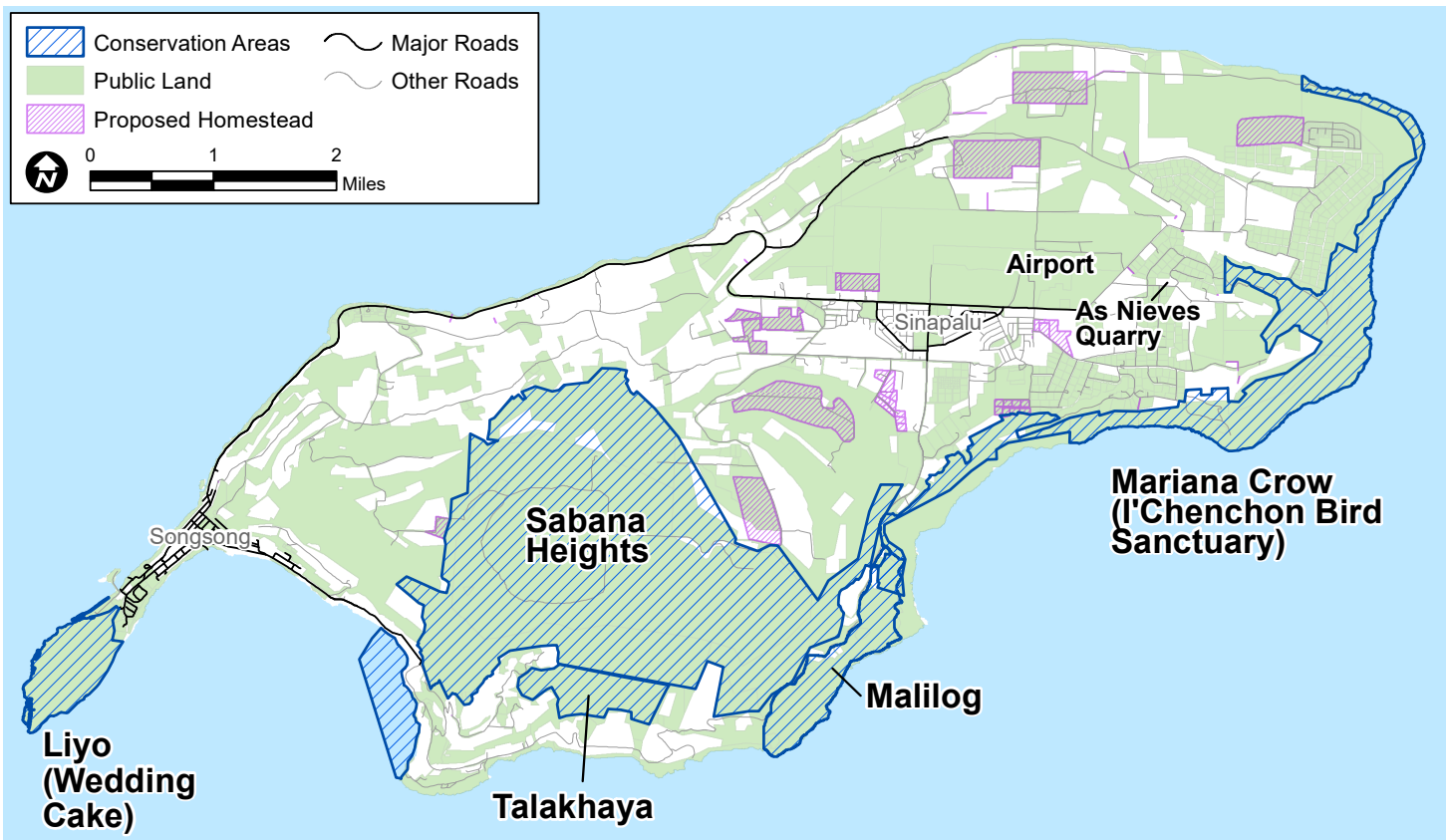
The limestone forests, Chamorro archeological sites, and Japanese World War II defensive complexes are managed and preserved by CNMI programs and divisions of the Rota Municipal government, both of which have limited staff, organizational capacity, and resource management funding. The local agencies and people of Rota are good stewards of the land and it is likely that local government entities could continue, but not expand visitor amenities, interpretation, and preservation programs. NPS management, in partnership with CNMI and Rota, could enhance the interpretation of Chamorro culture through programs and events, protect and study the historic sites, and preserve the limestone forests.

Preliminary Alternative Concepts

These preliminary concepts illustrate different means to provide protection and public enjoyment of sites that have been identified as nationally significant, suitable, and feasible to be included in the national park system. The concepts presented in this newsletter demonstrate a variety of options and serve as a starting point for discussion and public input. Each preliminary alternative concept could stand independently or components of different alternatives could be combined into new ideas. The common factor in the preliminary alternatives is an emphasis on cooperative management of existing public lands. Any future management framework would need to be supported by the CNMI government, Rota Municipal government, and NPS.

Three different preliminary alternative concepts are included: a “no action” alternative and two “action alternatives” which present different approaches for land management and partnership initiatives. Each of the action alternatives seeks to enhance the capabilities of existing agencies by leveraging resources, sharing information, and cooperative planning.

Continuation of Current Management

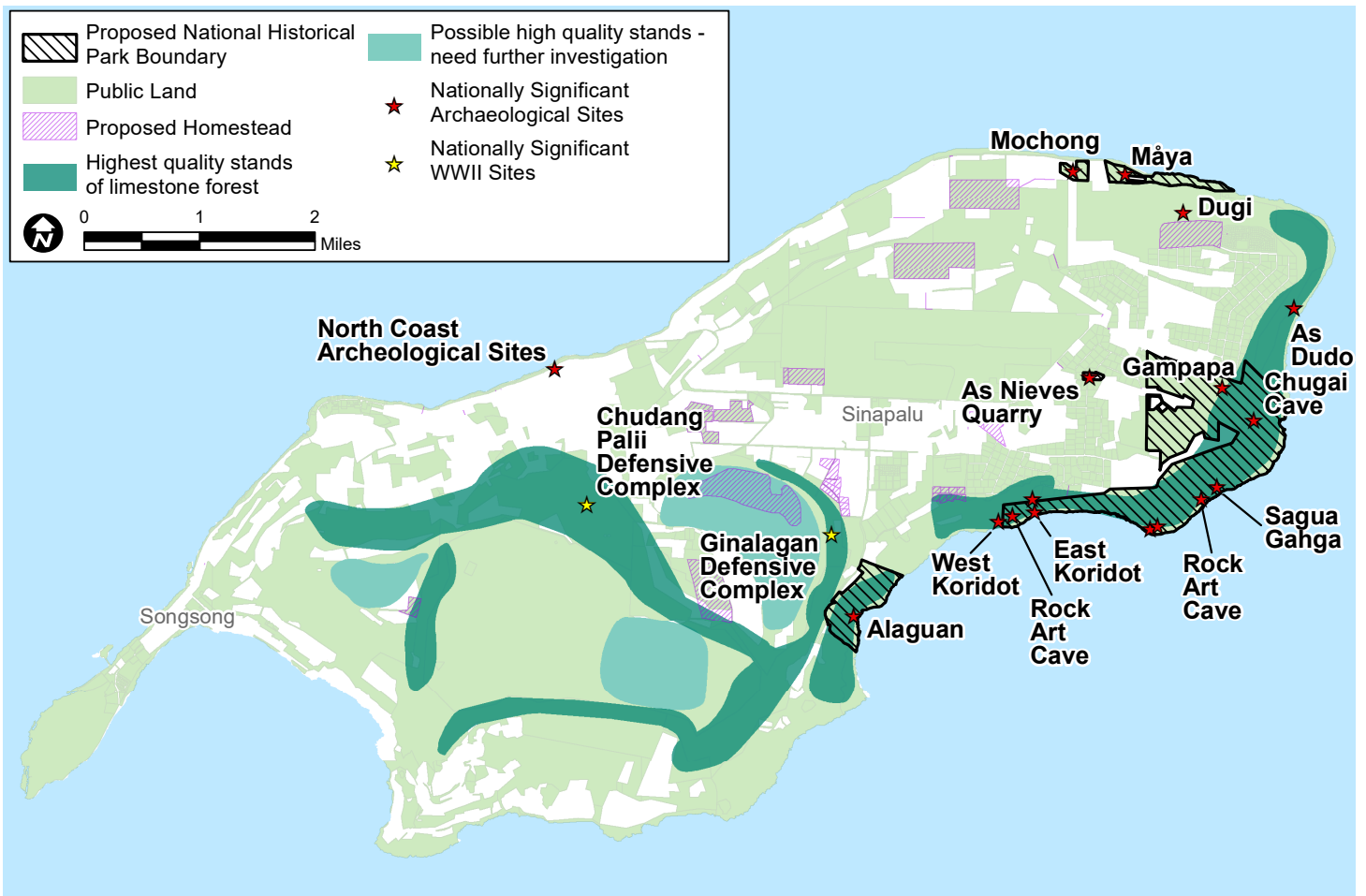


Current management

This “no action” alternative focuses on existing management and authorities. This concept would not expand federal regulations or management to any additional areas on the island. This management concept would rely on CNMI agencies and Rota programs to continue management of the island’s natural and cultural sites. Current visitor access at Mochong Latte Village Complex, As Nieves Latte Quarry Site, Måya Latte Village, Chugai Pictograph Cave, and I’Chenchon Park Bird Sanctuary would continue. The CNMI government would continue to receive funding and support from the United States Insular Affairs Program, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for invasive species and endangered species management, and the NPS through the CNMI territorial historic preservation office. This alternative could also include the designation of a national historic landmark on Rota to recognize and help preserve the important Chamorro archeological sites. This alternative assumes that these resources would continue to be managed and preserved by CNMI and local Rota programs and divisions, at current levels.

Rota National Historical Park Concept

This action alternative concentrates on partnerships to foster cooperative planning and management to protect and interpret Chamorro archeological sites. The NPS could assume management of public lands that include the Mochong Latte Village Complex, Alaguan Latte Village Complex, Chugai Pictograph Cave, As Nieves Latte Quarry, and the P'Chenchon Park Bird Sanctuary through a cooperative agreement or lease. The NPS could provide interpretation and educational opportunities and maintain the sites. Sites considered for inclusion in the national park system through this study are owned by the CNMI government and zoned either "Undesignated/Not in Use Public Land" or "Designated/In Use Public Land". The preliminary analysis indicates this alternative could include approximately 1,300 acres of ancient and historic sites. CNMI agencies and local Rota programs would continue management of the island's limestone forest ecosystem and World War II sites.

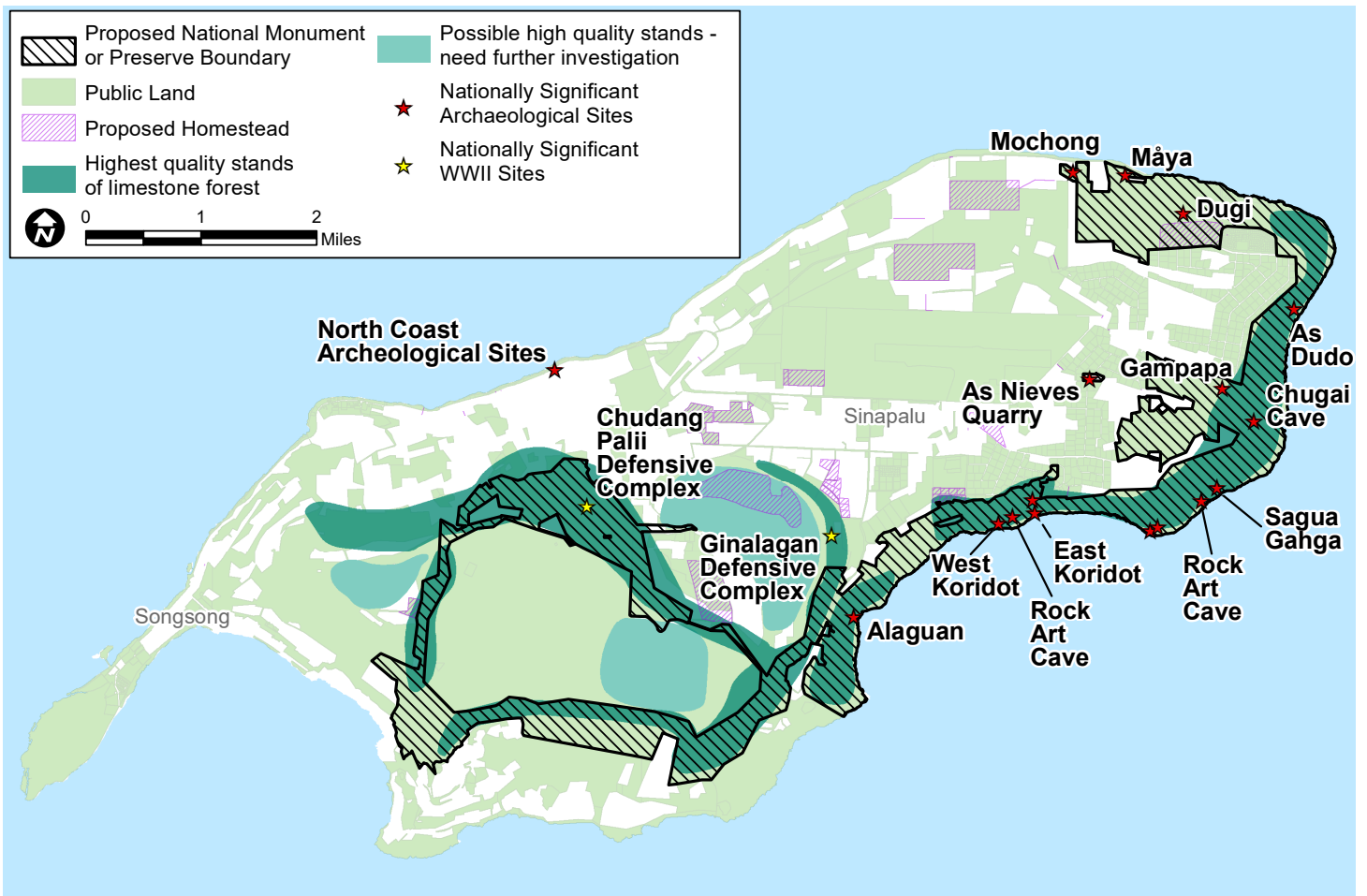


Rota National Historical Park Concept

The data on the maps is derived from the CNMI government and other agencies. The National Park Service gives no warranty, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of the maps and is not liable for positioning inaccuracies, subsequent updates, errors, or unintentional omissions of data. These graphics are not legal documents and are not intended to be used as such. Suggestions for improvement or error notifications are welcome to improve the accuracy of maps for the Rota Special Resource Study.

Rota National Monument or Preserve Concept

This action alternative concentrates on partnerships to foster cooperative planning and management to protect and interpret the limestone forests, Chamorro archeological sites, and World War II sites. The NPS could assume management of these sites through a cooperative agreement or lease and provide interpretation and educational opportunities and maintain the sites. Sites considered for inclusion in the national park system through this study are owned by the CNMI government and zoned either “Undesignated/Not in Use Public Land” or “Designated/In Use Public Land”. Preliminary analysis indicates this alternative could include approximately 4,400 acres of limestone forests, ancient, and historic sites.



Rota National Monument or Preserve Concept

What Happens Next

After collecting public feedback, the NPS will complete the study report, which will include a determination of the alternative that in the professional judgment of the Director of the NPS would be most effective and efficient in protecting significant resources and providing for public enjoyment.

The last step in the study process is transmittal of the study report and its findings to Congress, along with any recommendations from the Secretary. There is no timeline or requirement for subsequent action by the United States Congress. Coordination among the CNMI government, the Rota Municipal government, and United States government, as well as Congressional action, would be required for the establishment of a unit of the national park system on Rota.



As Nieves Latte Quarry

How to Participate

We encourage you to learn more about the special resource study process and share your ideas. Here are some ways to do so:

- Visit the study website: parkplanning.nps.gov/rotastudy
- Sign-up for the study mailing list by visiting the "Links" page on the study website.
- Send us your thoughts, comments, and information by e-mail (Rota_Study@nps.gov), through the study website, or using the enclosed form.
- Attend a virtual public meeting

Please provide your comments by
October 26, 2020

Public Meetings

Given the evolving nature of the COVID-19 travel and quarantine guidance from national and local public health officials, we are pivoting to conducting virtual public outreach for the Rota Special Resource Study. The safety of the participants and our staff is our highest priority. We are targeting September for virtual public meetings as we work through the technological challenges of making our outreach accessible to as many participants as possible across platforms, time zones, and languages.

Please see the website for virtual public meeting information:
parkplanning.nps.gov/rotastudy

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