National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fort Circle Parks
Washington D.C.

Final
Management Plan

FORT CIRCLE PARKS

Washington, D.C.

Final

Management Plan

September 2004

FORT CIRCLE PARKS

Washington, D.C.

United States Department of the Interior • National Park Service

SUMMARY

The Fort Circle Parks consist of parts of three Washington, D.C., area National Park Service (NPS) units — George Washington Memorial Parkway, Rock Creek Park, and National Capital Parks–East. These parks contain Civil War earthworks that originally were to have been connected by a Fort Circle Drive in accordance with the 1902 *McMillan Commission Report*. Although begun, the drive never was completed, and the forts and parcels of land purchased for the drive were divided among the three parks to manage.

Although the Fort Circle Drive was never completed, the importance of the historic earthworks and the greenbelt of parks along the ridge surrounding the city make this a significant open-space element in the nation's capital.

The park sites contain the remains of forts, batteries, and rifle trenches that deterred the invasion of the nation's capital during the Civil War, including the remains of forts that were engaged in the Battle of Fort Stevens, the only battle that took place in the District of Columbia.

This plan provides broad direction for the use, management, and development of the Fort Circle Parks. An earlier plan, the *Fort Circle Parks Master Plan* of 1968, was developed to provide similar guidance, but it never was fully implemented.

The focus of this document is on managing cultural and natural resources, visitor use, recreation, interpretation, and education. The draft plan presented three alternatives and analyzed the consequences of each alternative. Following review by the public and various agencies, the National Park Service concluded that combining alternatives 2 and 3 into a new preferred alternative would be the best course of action. A finding of no significant impact was then prepared, and the provisions of the preferred alternative became the plan described herein.

The greenbelt of public space provided by the parks enhances the aesthetics of the nation's capital and the quality of life for its citizens. These areas have become part of the cityscape and now serve as community parks.

Significant natural features are preserved in the Fort Circle Parks, including mature hardwood forests, geologic and aquatic resources, and important habitat for plants and animals that are unusual in an urban setting. Natural resources will be managed to maintain the greenbelt around the city for its natural, cultural, and scenic values.

The management of the Fort Circle Parks will continue to be divided among the three parks, but funding and staffing needs will be coordinated among the parks to ensure that the level of maintenance, facilities, and interpretation will be similar across park boundaries. The three superintendents will coordinate efforts to develop a Fort Circle Parks logo and to install similar signs, street furniture, and interpretive materials to let visitors know when they are in the Fort Circle Parks.

Park management will focus on both cultural resources and recreation. The individual parks will tell the stories of the Civil War defenses of Washington and how the nation's capital was protected from attack. Visitors will be able to make personal connections with the historic events these sites commemorate.

The National Park Service will manage recreation and offer interpretation and educational programs so that all visitors can experience the park resources in ways compatible with protecting significant cultural and natural resources.

Recreational opportunities and facilities will be improved. A new trail will be developed to connect the historic earthworks and link most of the fort sites. Brochures and interpretive signs will guide the way, enhancing visitor awareness

of the historic importance of these cultural resources.

Bicycle use will be limited. A visitor center will be developed in the vicinity of Fort Stevens to offer orientation and interpretation.

An education center at Fort Dupont will offer programs in cultural history, natural resources, and environmental education.

More site-specific analyses will be needed as actions are undertaken.

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CONTEXT FOR THE PLAN

PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PLAN

PURPOSE

The purpose of this *Management Plan* for the Fort Circle Parks of Washington, D.C. is to provide a unified management concept for significant historic resources associated with the Civil War defense of Washington that will allow these resources to be preserved for future generations and interpreted in a coherent, easily understandable manner. The plan will guide the management of the parks over the next 10–15 years. This includes the management of cultural and natural resources, visitor use and development, park operations, and land use.

The plan was begun with the understanding that the Fort Circle Parks would be evaluated for inclusion in the national park system as a separately authorized unit. That option is briefly explained in the section on "Alternatives Considered but Not Analyzed Further," page 6.

> . . . to provide for the preservation and improvement of certain spots of exceptional beauty, like the chain of abandoned forts encircling the District . . . (1902, Senate Park Commission Plan)

NEED

The Fort Circle Parks are a collection of historic Civil War resources and the remnants of what was originally envisioned as a parkway with a historical focus, but that was never completed. (Appendix A contains legislation pertaining to the Fort Circle Parks.) Even in Washington, they are not well known. Individual areas may be heavily used by neighbors but not understood to be a part of the national park system. This plan is needed to help build a consistent image that distinguishes the Fort Circle Parks as a part of the national park system.

The Fort Circle Parks are under the management of three separate units — Rock Creek Park, the National Capital–East, and George Washington Memorial Parkway umbrella of parks. Each has its own staff, management guidance, and priorities. Uniformity of interpretation, maintenance, and recreational activity does not exist among the three units. This plan is needed to provide such guidance to management, allowing a seamless transition from parcel to parcel. Visitors should not see a difference when traveling from one management unit to another.

The *Fort Circle Parks Master Plan.* was completed in 1968 to help guide the management of the parks. Actions proposed in that plan now either have been implemented or are no longer deemed appropriate. This plan will help to ensure that management goals, objectives, and practices will not differ among the three parks and that all actions will be taken in accordance with National Park Service (NPS) policies and guidelines.

The direction for future park management is based on the purpose and significance of the resources described below. These elements in turn are the foundation for the park interpretive topics and management objectives. Collectively, these pieces provide the context and philosophical direction for the alternatives considered. The approved management plan will provide broad direction for park management and allow specific action plans to be developed later to spell out the details for implementation.

Within this framework, the focus of this document is on the management of cultural and natural resources, visitor use, interpretation and education, and recreational services. The National Park Service will comply with applicable laws, executive orders, and regulations (see appendix B).

The draft plan presented and analyzed three alternatives describing different management scenarios. Following review by the public and various agencies, the National Park Service decided that combining alternatives 2 and 3 into a preferred alternative would be the best course of action. A finding of no significant impact was

then prepared. The provisions of the preferred alternative became the plan described herein.

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION POLICIES

The National Capital Planning Commission provides guidance to all federal land managing agencies through its *Comprehensive Plan.* The parks, open space, and natural features element was updated during 1999 and 2000 and was formally adopted on February 1, 2001.

The plan contains the following policies pertaining to Fort Circle Parks:

Protecting Federal Open Space

The regional significance of federal land continues to grow. Many of the federal parks, such as the C&O Canal, Rock Creek Park, Anacostia Park, and the Fort Circle Parks, extend for great distances and are linear in nature. Federal open spaces radiate throughout the Region in a manner that provides regional integration, not only with other federal lands, but also with lands under jurisdiction of neighboring states, local governments, or non-profit entities. These existing and potential greenway interconnections provide significant opportunities for continuous passive and active recreational activities such as bicycling, walking and jogging, and wildlife observation. Various initiatives at the national, regional, and local level are underway to create, preserve, and improve these connections. These efforts are essential to maintaining enjoyment of the green city qualities that distinguish the Nation's Capital.

Natural Features

Encourage and plan for the development of a continuous trail system for pedestrians and bicyclists by connecting the shoreline parks of the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers, Rock Creek Park, the Fort Circle Parks, and other points of interest within the Nation's Capital with other regional, state, and local park systems in the Region as a means of strengthening their recreational and ecological values.

Policies for Historic Parks

The Fort Circle Parks should continue to be enhanced and completed. Development and enhancement of the Fort Circle Parks should be compatible with the important natural features contained within, as well as the important function they serve as a landscape feature as viewed from the Monumental Core. In addition, the important scenic and historic elements of these Civil War Forts and panoramic views should be preserved, where appropriate. Community-oriented recreational opportunities and a well-delineated trail in park-like setting — utilizing the McMIllan Plan park connections — should be provided throughout the system.

Policies for Trail Systems

The Fort Circle Parks trail system should be completed as a continuous trail, linking the historic Civil War Fort sites within the District. Existing street rights-of-way shall be used where delicate cultural and natural features will not support a trail alignment unimpaired. The existing hiking trail through Glover-Archbold Park should be upgraded and link the Fort Circle trail system with the C&O Canal trail, if practicable.

LEGISLATION

The act of June 6, 1924, "An Act providing for a comprehensive development of the park and playground system of the National Capital," set up the National Capital Park Commission to acquire lands in the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland for the development of the National Capital park, parkway, and playground system and

> . . . to preserve the flow of water in Rock Creek, to prevent pollution of Rock Creek and the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers, to preserve forests and natural scenery in and about Washington . . .

The Capper-Cramton Act of May 29, 1930, as amended was

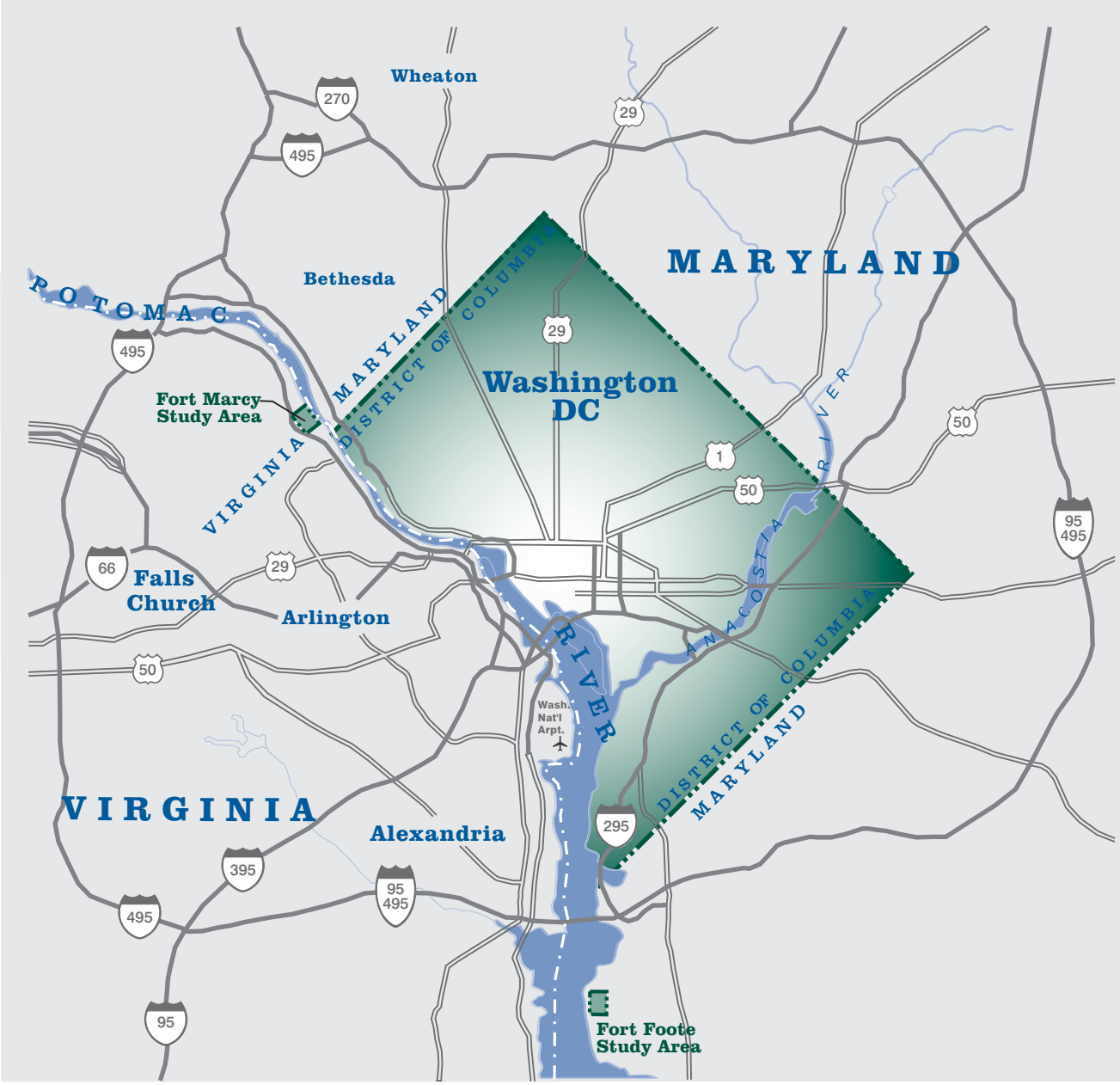
> an Act for the acquisition, establishment, and development of the George Washington Memorial Parkway along the Potomac from Mount Vernon and Fort Washington to the Great Falls, and to provide for the acquisition of lands in the District of Columbia and the states of Maryland and

> Virginia requisite to the comprehensive park, parkway, and playground system of the National Capital.

The Capper-Cramton Act, as it relates to the Fort Circle Parks, appropriated funds for the further acquisition of

> . . . such lands in the District of Columbia as are necessary and desirable for the suitable development of the National Capital park, parkway, and playground system . . .

Executive Orders 6166 and 6228 of June 10, 1933, and July 28, 1933, transferred to the National Park Service the jurisdiction of Battleground National Cemetery and the functions of various commissions and agencies, among which were the public buildings and public parks of the National Capital.



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FORT CIRCLE PARKS

United States Department of the Interior • National Park Service
DSC • 832 • 20,030A • March 2004

Historic Map of 1865

CIVIL WAR DEFENSES OF WASHINGTON

United States Department of the Interior • National Park Service
DSC • 832 • 20,041 • September 2002

INTRODUCTION

THE FORT CIRCLE

With the outbreak of the Civil War, Washington turned into the training ground, arsenal, supply depot, and nerve center for the Union's cause. Newly formed regiments encamped in every quarter and streets reverberated under the wheels of cannon. Cattle for meat grazed on the Mall; sacks of flour, stacked against siege, surrounded the U.S. Treasury. To protect the city and vital supply routes from enemy hands, the Union army built a ring of earthen fortifications on the ridges surrounding it.

The remains of those fortifications, preserved by the National Park Service, make up the Fort Circle Parks. When constructed in the 1860s, the system of forts and connecting roads were on the city's edge. The development of the city and nearby neighborhoods ultimately absorbed most of the sites, but the names of neighborhoods, playgrounds, parks, and other places throughout the area have origins in the Civil War fortifications.

When the Civil War began, only one fortification served as the capital's defense. Fort Washington, nearly 12 miles down the Potomac River, was built to guard against enemy ships following the War of 1812. It took the rout of federal forces at Manassas in July 1861 to reveal how truly vulnerable the city was. Taking command of and reorganizing the Army of the Potomac, Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan appointed Maj. John G. Barnard of the Corps of Engineers to build new forts to protect the city of Washington.

Selecting sites a few miles outside the city limits, Barnard's engineers picked high points that overlooked major turnpikes, railroads, and shipping lanes. Natural fords upriver from the city, allowing the enemy to cross the Potomac during low water, spurred the building of more forts and batteries. Rifle pits filled in the gaps.

By spring 1865 the defense system totaled 68 forts and 93 batteries, with 807 cannons and 98 mortars in place. Twenty miles of rifle trenches flanked the bristling strongholds, joined by more than 30 miles of military roads over which companies of soldiers and guns could move as reinforcements. Washington, D.C., had become the most heavily fortified city in the world. As a result, only once during the war were Washington's defenses tested and that occurred at Fort Stevens.

Today, 0.5 mile north of Fort Stevens on Georgia Avenue (the Seventh Street Road that carried Early's men to the assault), Battleground National Cemetery, one of the smallest national cemeteries, has 41 headstones for victims and veterans of the 1864 action near the fort. Regimental memorials honor the soldiers from New York, Pennsylvania, and other northern states, who fell on July 11 and 12 fighting to save the nation's capital.

At the war's end in 1865 the forts and batteries were dismantled, the lumber and other materials were sold at auction, and much of the land was returned to prewar owners. Fort Foote, an active army post until it was abandoned as a fort in 1878, was the last of the city's Civil War defenses to close.

FORT CIRCLE PARKS
National Park Service Sites
Fort Marcy, Fort Foote, Fort Greble;
Fort Chaplin; Fort Carroll;
Fort Ricketts; Fort Mahan; Fort Dupont;
Fort Slocum; Fort Stevens; Fort Totten;
Battery Kemble; Fort Bunker Hill;
Fort Bayard; Fort Davis; Fort Stanton;
Battleground Cemetery; and
greenbelt connecting corridor

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SITES

Remnants of the fortifications can be found along the topographic ridge surrounding the city. They range from landmarks such as Military Road, where only the name suggests its origins, to partial reconstructions such as Fort Stevens and the stabilization and rearmament of Fort Foote. At many of these sites, interpretive markers to tell their stories. Others require some sleuthing to locate and recognize them for what they are.

Today some remnants of Washington's Civil War defenses are administered by the National Park Service as part of already established parks at George Washington Memorial Parkway, Rock Creek Park, and National Capital Parks–East (see The Plan map, p. 6).

George Washington Memorial Parkway administers Fort Marcy, perched high above the Potomac in Virginia, where it protected against enemy forces crossing Chain Bridge and attacks from northern Virginia land routes.

Rock Creek Park administers a semicircle of Civil War sites, where fortifications guarded against threats to the water supply and invasion from the west or north. Beginning at Chain Bridge Road, the ring starts with Battery Kemble and continues to Fort Bayard, Fort Reno, Fort DeRussy in Rock Creek Park itself, Fort Stevens, Fort Slocum, Fort Totten, and ending with Fort Bunker Hill beside the Franciscan monastery in the northeast part of the city.

Along the hilltops southeast of the Anacostia River, the chain of forts from east to west guarded bridges, Capitol Hill, and naval installations from likely enemy approaches from southern Maryland.

Portions of the Fort Circle Parks managed by National Capital Parks–East include Fort Mahan, Fort Chaplin, Fort Dupont, Fort Davis, Fort Ricketts next to Fort Stanton, Fort Carroll, and Fort Greble.

Fort Foote, also managed by National Capital Parks–East, is in Maryland just south of the city. On Rosier Bluff overlooking the Potomac River, two 15-inch Rodman cannons, the heaviest guns of the war, remain as evidence of the important role the fort played in defending the nation's capital against any river attack.

SITES OUTSIDE NPS OWNERSHIP

A number of forts that are not in national park system units are owned and managed by other public agencies in the Washington area. These agencies are potential partners for coordinated interpretive and other programs that would relate to the entire Civil War defense system surrounding Washington. See appendix C for a list and description of those sites in public ownership but outside NPS boundaries.

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

The 1902 *McMillan Commission Report* to Congress proposed creation of a "Fort Drive" connecting the Civil War circle of forts and earthen fortifications surrounding the city of Washington. This was to be a modern roadway through a landscaped corridor providing leisurely access to each fort site. In 1902, the drive would have been just outside the city.

Between 1930 and 1965 the National Capital Park and Planning Commission continued to pursue the Fort Drive concept, which included acquiring fortification sites and land for parks. Some lands were purchased under the Capper-Cramton Act of May 29, 1930; some were acquired following street closure by the District of Columbia; some were transferred by other government agencies; and some lands were donated. Those properties were transferred to the National Park Service. In 1933 the publicly owned forts administered by the War Department were transferred to the National Park Service. In 1937 the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) reconstructed a portion of Fort Stevens, and in 1959 the National Park Service acquired Fort Marcy.

The most recently approved management plan for the Fort Circle Parks was the 1968 *Fort Circle Parks Master Plan.* While recognizing the historic importance of the Fort Circle Parks,

the plan proposed "a continuous flow of visitor use around the inner city of Washington."

Visitors would be afforded opportunities for "active and passive recreation as well as historical and natural history interpretation."

The key to this connection of recreational opportunities was to be a continuous bikeway and foot trail, with interpretation of the historic fort sites along the way. The bicycle/pedestrian trail was proposed in lieu of the original fort drive concept because "by this time it has become obvious that the concept of developing a continuous Fort Drive 'parkway' is impossible and impractical." By then, the residential development of the city had grown to surround the Fort Circle Drive ring. Further, the National Capital Planning Commission, in conjunction with the National Park Service, reevaluated the Fort Park system in 1965 and determined that what would best serve the city and the resources would be to retain the concept of the McMillan Commission to "foster the memorialization aspects of the old fort sites into a continuous ribbon of park land in terms of present-day needs and conditions, without a road" (NPS 1968).

The *Master Plan* made various recommendations for treatment of the fort sites, including stabilizing Forts Mahan, Chaplin, Totten, and Battery Kemble; preserving Fort DeRussy; rehabilitating Battery (Fort) Ricketts; and restoring Fort Dupont and partially restoring Forts Stevens, Davis, Greble, and (Battery) Carroll.

During the intervening years since the approval of the 1968 *Master Plan* only a portion of the hiking/bicycle trail connecting the fort sites has been constructed. Restoration and rehabilitation recommendations were not implemented. Today some of the remaining fort sites are in need of attention. While essential preservation needs have been met at some sites, portions of others have deteriorated to the point where preservation efforts are needed.

PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE

Purpose

Purpose statements normally are defined by a park's enabling legislation. Although the Fort Circle Parks are not a specifically legislated unit of the national park system, they were acquired under broad legislative authorities and need to be protected and preserved. The following purpose statements have been developed to guide management decisions for protecting the resources related to the system of forts and connecting corridors of the Fort Circle Parks.

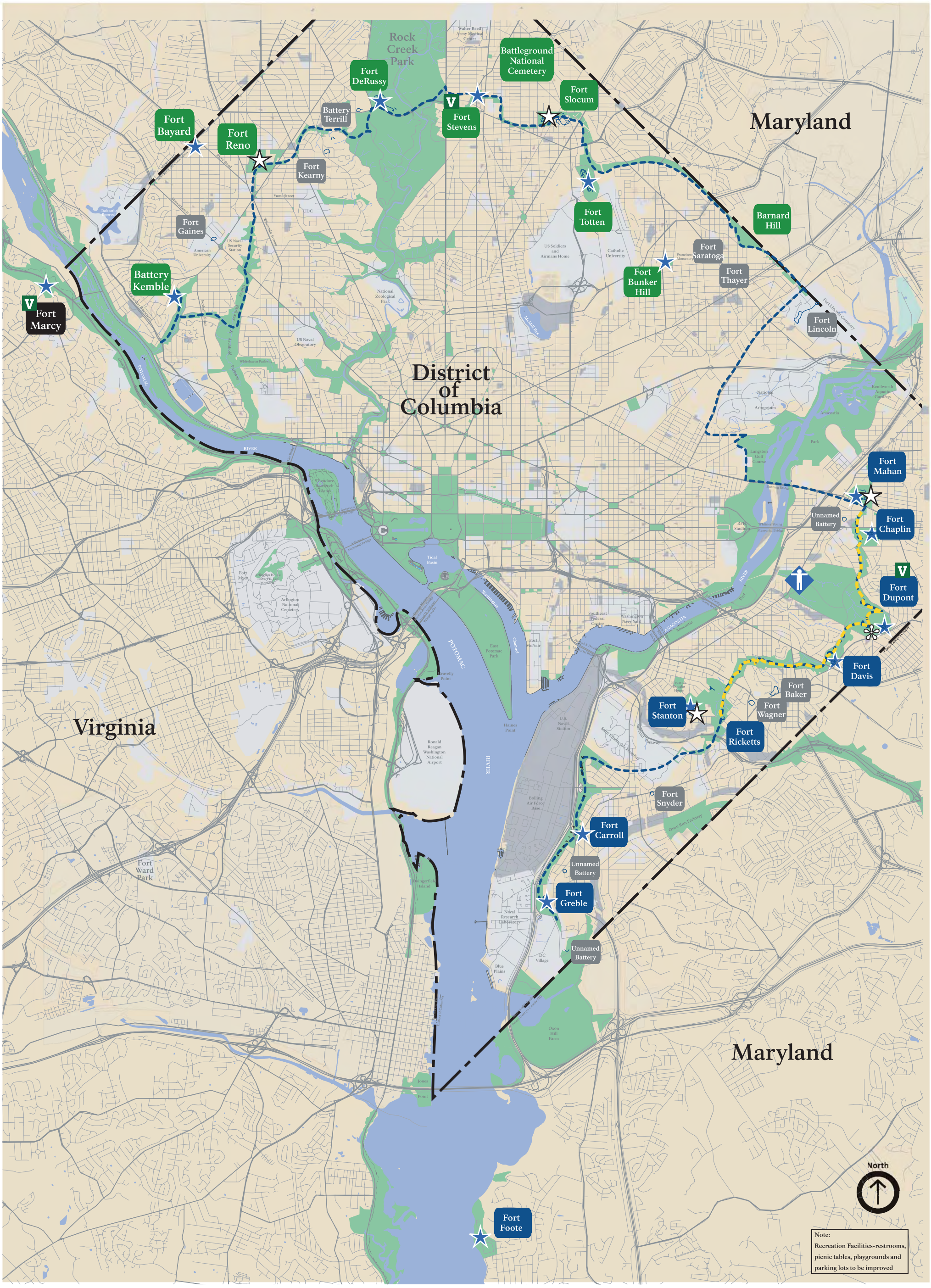
The purposes of the Fort Circle Parks are as follows:

- to preserve and interpret historical resources related to the Civil War defenses of Washington.
- to conserve this linkage of urban green spaces that contribute to the character and scenic values of the nation's capital
- to provide recreational opportunities compatible with historic and natural resource values

Significance

Significance statements define the most important things about a park's resources and values, creating a tool for park managers to use in setting resource protection priorities and identifying primary park interpretive themes and desirable visitor experiences. The following significance statements for Fort Circle Parks reflect the importance of park resources.

- The park sites contain remains of the defense sites (e.g., forts, batteries, rifle trenches) that effectively deterred the invasion of the nation's capital during the Civil War.



NPS Land

NPS site - National Capital Parks - East

NPS site - Rock Creek Park

NPS site - George Washington Memorila Parkway

Non NPS ownership

Proposed Visitor Contact Facility

Earthworks (existing)

Earthworks (No longer extant)

Activity Center / Education Center

Fort Dupont Improvements

Existing Trail (Hiking / Biking)

Walking Trail (Route shown is conceptual)

The Plan

FORT CIRCLE PARKS

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- The Fort Circle Parks include the remains of forts that were engaged in the Battle of Fort Stevens in July 1864 — the only Civil War battle in the District of Columbia and the only time a sitting U.S. president has come under enemy fire in warfare.
- The pattern (greenbelt) of public space of Fort Circle Parks represents an element of one of the earliest urban planning efforts for public recreation in the United States (as first suggested in the 1902 *McMillan Commission Report* and the 1926–1927 *National Capital Planning Commission Plan).* Today it enhances the aesthetics of the nation's capital and the quality of life for its citizens.
- The Fort Circle Parks preserve significant natural features, including substantial acreage of mature native hardwood forest, geologic and aquatic resources, and a diversity of important habitat for indigenous flora and fauna that are unusual in an urban setting and that contribute to the uniqueness of the nation's capital.

INTERPRETIVE THEMES

The overall goal of interpretation is to ensure that all visitors have opportunities to make intellectual and emotional connections with the many meanings reflected in park resources. It is the public's direct and indirect exposure to park resources, their experiences, and the meanings and values they associate with the resources that provide their will for stewardship. Interpretive themes provide a framework for developing interpretive programs and media. They are derived from and reflect the purpose and significance of a park area. The following themes encompass the important stories to be told about the defense sites.

- During the Civil War, Washington was not only the national capital, it was also a symbol of the Union and the nerve center of Union military operations. The city was threatened throughout the war.
- Washington is in a topographic bowl, and the strategic heights around it had to be protected to prevent the enemy from locating cannons there and firing on the city. The system of forts was constructed on the elevated positions from which to fire at attacking enemy troops to give support to the flanks of the other forts and to protect the heights from enemy occupation.
- The defense sites contain green space that represents one of the earliest urban planning efforts for public recreation in the United States. This public space, or greenbelt, affords prominent views of the city, as recognized in the 1902 *McMillan Commission Report* and in the subsequent *National Capital Planning Commission Plan.* Today the defense sites enhance the aesthetics of the nation's capital and the quality of life for its citizens and visitors.
- General Early's raid on Washington was the only Civil War battle in the District of Columbia and the only time a sitting U.S. president came under enemy fire.
- After the Civil War, the redistribution of land and facilities associated with the fort system affected the pattern of development of the city and the growth of urban communities.
- The forts were proposed for protection as part of the 1902 *McMillan Commission Report* for "Fort Drive." Today they serve as important green spaces in the city.
- The Fort Circle Parks contain significant natural corridors that offer opportunities to learn about native flora, fauna, and other natural features in the urban area.

DESIRED VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Desired visitor experience statements describe the fundamental visitor experiences that the National Park Service most wants to facilitate at the Civil War defense sites. In planning facilities, exhibits, trails, waysides, activities, personal services, outreach, and publications, park staff would work to create and enhance the opportunities for these experiences. By facilitating a variety of opportunities for people to experience the parks in their own ways, the

National Park Service hopes to foster in visitors a sense of stewardship for the Fort Circle Parks resources.

Visitors to the Fort Circle Parks should have the opportunity to do the following:

- interact with the Fort Circle Parks' cultural and natural resources in ways that do not damage or derogate those resources and provide safe, satisfying experiences
- readily access orientation and activity-planning information and easily find their way around park sites
- enjoy the park sites through passive and active recreational experiences in social or solitary ways
- learn about or simply enjoy the diversity of the sites' natural resources
- learn about and contemplate the Battle of Fort Stevens and the important role that the Civil War defenses played in the war
- appreciate the vulnerability of the sites' natural and cultural resources to human activities inside and outside park boundaries, and actively participate in helping to preserve and protect park resources
- interact with park employees and/or volunteers who are courteous and knowledgeable
- access interpretive information about the parks without visiting them
- continue learning about Fort Circle Parks resources after visiting the parks

DESIRED RESOURCE CONDITIONS

The preservation of the significant cultural and natural resources that make up the Fort Circle Parks is fundamental to an appreciation of the interpretive themes and the overall visitor experience. The decision-making for Fort Circle Parks will be guided by the following principles, which are prescribed in law and NPS policy:

- Earthworks will be maintained in accordance with the draft *Guide to Sustainable Earthwork Management* (NPS 1998a).
- Archeological resources will be inventoried and evaluated, and an "Archeological Overview" will be produced.
- Management strategies and interpretive guidelines will be developed to resolve conflicts between the requirements for preservation and the impacts of interpretation and visitor use of the earthworks.
- Earthworks and other features will be mapped with the use of global positioning and geographic information systems technologies.
- Cultural landscapes will be defined, and measures will be taken to preserve those cultural landscapes consistent with the needs of natural resources and other cultural resources.
- Properties, sites, or landscapes in the Fort Circle Parks that are eligible in their own rights for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places will be identified. These will be properties whose significance has been redefined in light of new information or through reevaluation of existing significance.
- Natural resources will be preserved to the extent possible consistent with the preservation of cultural resources, and appropriate measures will be taken to prevent avoidable damage to such resources.
- Measures will be undertaken to prevent vandalism through education and to quickly repair any damage identified.

PLANNING ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

CULTURAL RESOURCE ISSUES

Balancing the desires of today's urban dwellers for recreation and aesthetically pleasing green space and the need to preserve and protect the remaining Fort Circle resources for future generations is a significant challenge for resource managers today.

Many of the fort sites, batteries, rifle trenches, and associated weaponry have disappeared from the landscape of the Fort Circle Parks. Much of the high ground surrounding the city has been impacted by development, although forests cover much of the Fort Circle Parks. These green spaces are a mere shadow of the once continuous protective shield that surrounded the nation's capital.

Today the remaining Civil War fort sites and associated earthworks have become important recreation areas for city residents. Local neighborhood parks have taken the place of military parade grounds and picnic shelters, and gardens now occupy some of the high ground once diligently protected by Union soldiers. Some families have recognized certain fort sites as yearly gathering spots for reunions through generations. In some locations, inappropriate recreational activities are having a detrimental effect on the historic resources.

The challenges that exist today to preserve and protect the remaining cultural resources related to the Civil War lie in recognizing the changing face of the urban landscape. Land once considered indispensable for the protection of the nation's capital in the latter half of the 19th century has evolved into a landscape deemed indispensable for recreation and for the preservation of natural and historic resources in the crowded urban landscape of the 21st century.

NATURAL RESOURCE ISSUES

Natural resource issues include the invasion of native plant communities by aggressive exotic plants, city development, streams "blown out" by uncontrolled runoff generated from impervious surfaces in the surrounding urban areas, soil compaction and erosion, and large-scale dumping of household and other wastes.

Preservation efforts to save the Civil War defenses could have a secondary negative effect on the sites' natural resources. Balancing the need for the preservation of historic sites and the preservation of natural areas in an urban setting challenges natural and cultural resource managers to reach mutually beneficial decisions related to the defense sites.

VISITOR USE ISSUES

Providing adequate and consistent interpretation, education, and visitor services at the defense sites is another challenge for park managers, as is balancing the demand for recreation with the need for resource preservation. Many recreational visitors to one or more of the sites do not know that they are in a national park, nor do they recognize the individual park as being part of a larger system of parks that protect the remains of historic forts, batteries, and rifle trenches. Visitor services are extremely limited at most sites, with few restroom facilities, poor or inadequate signs, and no onsite orientation available. Few interpretive and educational programs are offered at the sites, and interpretive media are virtually nonexistent.

Another challenge to managers is to establish a balance between passive and informal recreational use of open spaces and intensive use by organized sports leagues. At some sites the sports leagues represent an influx of park users from outside the surrounding neighborhoods, whereas members of the local communities are more likely to use the parks for passive recreation such as picnics and children's play. Because there is a finite amount of green space in the District of Columbia, there is fierce competition among user groups for such space.

Safety is also a major concern. Many neighbors to the sites are concerned that some forested and secluded areas provide cover for illicit activity. U.S. Park Police concur with this view. In addition, neighbors are concerned that preservation efforts will limit neighborhood uses of park areas such as community gardening and picnicking. Some people are also concerned that raising the profile of these parks will bring strangers into their neighborhoods, causing traffic congestion, parking problems, and other possible issues of concern.

PARK ADMINISTRATION/OPERATIONS ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The Fort Circle Parks are managed by three different administrative units. Because the fort sites are not a unit unto themselves, funding for preservation, maintenance, and interpretation programs compete with other park needs within the three units now managing the sites.

Interpretive rangers and maintenance staffs of each of the administering parks also work in the Fort Circle Parks. Whereas George Washington Memorial Parkway manages one fort site, Rock Creek Park and National Capital Parks–East manage multiple sites. This has created differing approaches and emphases for managing the fort sites among the three managing park units.

Ever-changing park priorities and the distinctions in the needs and desires of the communities surrounding the fort sites make it difficult at best to coordinate preservation, maintenance, security, and/or interpretive and educational programs across the Fort Circle Parks system.

ISSUES BEYOND THE SCOPE OF THIS PLAN

This management plan does not address site-specific planning or implementation strategies for each individual defense site. Rather, those plans and designs will be developed after this plan has been adopted and a strategy for management is in place.

ZONING AND BASIC STRATEGIES

ZONING

INTRODUCTION

The National Park Service uses zoning to provide a framework for decisions about use and development. Each park is divided to indicate the specific management emphasis — recreation, natural, or cultural resource preservation, or special use — in that zone.

Management prescriptions are developed for each zone. A management prescription is an approach for administering or treating the resources or uses of a specified area. These actions are based on the desired outcomes. This section contains descriptions of all the management prescriptions that could be applied to the Fort Circle Parks.

In each management prescription are target goals or objectives for one or more resources or visitor experiences present in the prescription area. The Fort Circle Parks consist of multiple zones with different management prescriptions.

The management prescriptions described herein define the desired resource conditions and visitor experiences, including the appropriate kinds and levels of management, use, and development. Together, all the management prescriptions meet the goals of the Fort Circle Parks. Different physical, biological, and social conditions are emphasized in each zone. These factors then indicate the types of activities or facilities that are appropriate in each zone.

Regardless of the target visitor experience or resource condition, all management prescriptions conform to all park-specific purpose, significance, and mission goals and to the servicewide mandates and policies described earlier in this document. For example, an archeological site will be protected regardless of the zone it is in. However, the use of that site for interpretive or educational purposes might vary, depending on the management prescription applied to its area.

POTENTIAL MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS

Cultural Resource Zone

The cultural resource zone contains lands that are managed primarily for the preservation, protection, and interpretation of their cultural resource values, but the zone also could require management consideration of preserving natural resource values. Typically, lands in this zone will include key cultural resources related to the significance and purposes of the parks. Examples of such resources are earthworks and any associated archeological features.

Desired Visitor Experience. Visitors will have the opportunity to learn about and contemplate the Civil War resources in the parks and gain a sense of their significance. They will learn about the resources mainly through brochures, wayside exhibits, or other nonpersonal services. A visitor can expect a low to moderate number of encounters with other visitors or NPS personnel.

Desired Resource Condition. Archeological and historic features will be protected and preserved to the extent possible. All cultural resources in the zone will be document and interpreted.

Cultural landscapes in this zone generally will be managed to reflect their historical design or to lend stability to ruins or remnant resources. Nonnative plant species generally will be avoided or used sparingly if consistent with management objectives.

The management of natural resources will be compatible with the programs and procedures aimed at preserving cultural resources. Natural processes will be maintained wherever possible.

Appropriate Kinds of Activities or Facilities. Activities will be limited to those compatible with maintaining the integrity of the featured cultural and/or natural resources. The placement

of facilities in these areas will be minimized to ensure the preservation of archeological resources and to retain the existing (often natural) landscape surrounding the earthworks.

Connecting Corridor Zone

The connecting corridor zone will contain areas of the Fort Circle Parks that were purchased for the construction of a parkway connecting fort resources. Historic earthworks will not be included in this zone, which will be made up mainly of small parcels of manicured lawn and trees maintained as green space.

This zone will constitute a pleasant corridor through a mix of trees and open spaces with limited views of the surrounding city. Landscapes will be maintained in a sustainable fashion, and the defining features of this zone will be preserved.

Desired Visitor Experience. A visitor can drive, bicycle, or walk along a well-maintained paved road, sidewalk, or designated trail (often unpaved) through the park. The experience will be linear and sequential. Visitors entering this zone may gain a sense of decompression and relaxation. The rate of encounter with other visitors in this zone may be high at times, and temporarily heavy traffic will be accepted.

Desired Resource Condition. The landscape in the connecting corridor zone will be substantially modified from natural conditions. A mix of exotic and native plant materials will be used to create an aesthetically pleasing landscape in keeping with the historic parkway design.

Appropriate Kinds of Activities or Facilities. Visitor activities in the connecting corridor zone will involve driving, jogging, bicycling, walking, and skating. Landscape management will be more intensive than in natural zones, including such activities as mowing and trimming, tree planting or removal, and exotic plant control. Some intersections or other points will be rehabilitated for visitor safety or aesthetics, but the redesign will avoid increasing the capacity of the roadway or encouraging higher speeds.

Recreation Zone

The recreation zone will contain areas where recreational facilities have been developed or those that have been designated for specific activities; for example, picnic areas, community gardens, or baseball, basketball, or softball/soccer fields, along with associated parking areas. These will be relatively small nodes of intense activity in portions of the Fort Circle Parks that are not associated with the Civil War defenses and do not contain earthworks or other historic or archeological resources. The background setting will consist of heavily manicured lawns and well-maintained vegetation and structures.

The community gardens will be set aside for use by neighborhood gardeners. Trails around or through this zone will allow visitors to connect with other zones in the Fort Circle Parks.

Desired Visitor Experience. The recreation zone will encompass both (a) areas of intense activity where large groups of people actively use the facilities or passively watch the activities of others and (b) areas of relative quiet where community gardens are tilled as a comparatively solitary endeavor. There will be a high tolerance for noise and activity around ballfields and picnic areas in this zone, with less noise in community garden areas. Most of the visitation in this zone will be local or regional. National visitors probably will pass through on a designated trail.

Desired Resource Condition. Ballfields and picnic areas will be intensively maintained to keep them in good condition while allowing for concentrated visitor use.

Community gardens will be carefully maintained and attractive. Tools, supplies, and other items necessary for gardening will be brought in and removed each day to maintain an attractive appearance.

Appropriate Kinds of Activities or Facilities. Organized and informal recreational activities will be the primary use of the recreation zone. Facilities will be highly specialized and

designed for high use. Parking and restroom facilities will be appropriate in this zone.

Community gardens will be a specialized area in the recreation zone. Utilities such as water may be provided.

Natural Resource Zone

The natural resource zone comprises areas of the parks that are managed primarily to maintain forests and natural scenery, but they may also contain cultural resources. Natural processes will predominate except where intervention is needed to protect or restore disturbed systems or to preserve cultural resources. Such areas might be stream valleys, woods, prominent forest corridors, and other sensitive natural areas not included in the cultural resource zone. Resources can be minimally modified for visitor needs (such as trail improvements) or for visitor safety, but only after careful review of alternatives consistent with the environmental compliance process. The tolerance for resource degradation in this zone will be low. This will be the largest zone in the Fort Circle Parks.

Desired Visitor Experience. Visitors in the natural resource zone can hike along a trail that lets them feel they are in a forest without leaving the city. The trails will be mostly unpaved, as opposed to the mostly paved sidewalks in the connecting corridor zone. Scenic quality and natural sound will be essential. The probability of encountering other visitors and NPS staff will be moderate. The interpretive media in this zone, which will be as unobtrusive as possible, will be anchored to adjacent, more intensive use zones where possible. Some natural areas (stream valleys, topographically challenging areas) will remain free of new trails or development.

Desired Resource Condition. Natural processes will predominate in the natural resource zone except when thorough examination of alternatives shows that some manipulation is needed for safety, resource protection, or habitat restoration. The prominent forested ridgelines that serve as backdrop for the cityscape will be maintained as contiguous corridors. Clearings and new facilities that interrupt these contiguous corridors will be avoided if possible.

Appropriate Kinds of Activities or Facilities. Birding, walking, jogging, and nature study will be appropriate activities for the natural resource zone. Appropriate facilities will be maintained, and any new trails and maintenance roads will be unpaved. Orientation and subtle interpretive signs will be appropriate, especially if they are directly adjacent to more developed zones. Other structures will be appropriate only if they are required to preserve cultural or natural resources.

Visitor Services Zone

The visitor services zone will present information, orientation, interpretation, and education about the Fort Circle Parks, as well as other visitor services. Such services can be offered in commercial structures outside park boundaries or in adapted historic or nonhistoric structures in any of the Fort Circle Parks units — Rock Creek Park, George Washington Memorial Parkway, or National Capital Parks–East. (If visitor services are developed outside the boundaries of the Fort Circle Parks units, there will be no need for this zone.)

Desired Visitor Experience. Visitor services in this zone will be safe, convenient, inviting, and easily accessible. The kind of orientation and interpretive background offered will allow visitors to enjoy the parks on their own or with a guide brochure or to take advantage of park programs from which they can gain a greater understanding of the parks' natural and cultural resources. The probability of encountering other visitors and NPS staff will be high.

Desired Resource Condition. In the visitor services zone, special attention will be paid to compatibility with the surrounding park landscape and with historic and natural features.

Appropriate Kinds of Activities or Facilities. Appropriate facilities in the visitor services zone will be kiosks, visitor centers, visitor contact stations, restrooms, and staging areas. Also

appropriate will be small amphitheaters designed to offer orientation to the Fort Circle Parks, directions to other units, and interpretation of the overall importance of the forts. Parking areas might be appropriate at some sites. Any structures will blend with their natural and cultural environments.

Special Use Zone

The special use zone encompasses the areas of the Fort Circle Parks that are given over to facilities or uses not fully under the control of the National Park Service. Examples are the water reservoirs at Forts Reno and Stanton, schools and playgrounds, the Anacostia Museum, and recreational centers operated by the District of Columbia.

Desired Visitor Experience. Visitor services in this zone will not be under NPS control, and visitors may not be appropriate in some of these areas. Where visitors are welcome, the experience will be compatible with the Fort Circle Parks experience — safe, convenient, inviting, and easily accessible, complementing the experience in other zones of the Fort Circle Parks.

Desired Resource Condition. To the extent possible, facilities in the special use zone will be designed to be compatible with surrounding park landscape and historic and natural features. Noise levels can be higher than those in other zones of the Fort Circle Parks.

Appropriate Kinds of Activities or Facilities. Appropriate activities in the special use zone are those that are already permitted.

Administrative Zone

The administrative zone covers NPS areas that are an important component of the Fort Circle Parks but are not normally seen by visitors, such as offices, maintenance areas, and U.S. Park Police facilities.

Desired Visitor Experience. It is unlikely that visitors will spend time in the administrative areas.

Desired Resource Condition. Because the administrative zone will contain support facilities, it will consist mainly of low natural and cultural resource integrity, such as previously disturbed or developed areas. These areas will be landscaped to be as unobtrusive as possible. Maintaining the scenic quality of the surrounding area is important. Noise levels in this zone can be higher than elsewhere, particularly if maintenance activities are involved.

Appropriate Kinds of Activities or Facilities. The facilities in the administrative zone are those necessary to the operation of the Fort Circle Parks but not generally used by visitors, such as offices, maintenance and maintenance storage facilities, internal roads, and staff parking.

BASIC MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The need for a comprehensive framework for cultural, natural, and recreational resource management and interpretation is recognized as a major component of this planning effort. These actions are related to historic resource preservation planning (including specific park management plans), carrying capacity, safety issues, and access for visitors with disabilities.

PRESERVATION PLANNING

The Fort Circle Parks contain remnants of forts, trenches, and earthworks that protected the nation's capital from Confederate attack during the Civil War. Most of the fort sites and related features were dismantled after the war or have slowly but steadily disappeared with the city's expansion.

The remaining 18 defense sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places consist mainly of earthworks and the remains of rifle trenches. The greenbelt connecting corridor designated "Fort Circle Drive" by the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission reflects the original communication routes between the fort sites, as well as aspects of 20th century urban planning philosophies. (The District of Columbia historic preservation officer considers these green spaces eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.)

In the 1930s the Civilian Conservation Corps reconstructed Fort Stevens, the most historically significant of the defense sites. Deterioration from natural elements and vandalism threaten the resources at Fort Stevens and many other sites. Although essential preservation needs have been met at some sites, portions of others have deteriorated to the point where preservation efforts are needed.

Recommendation: Park managers recognize that to properly maintain and interpret the defense system of historic, natural, and recreational resources, the National Park Service must take a holistic approach to its preservation. Therefore, managers from the three parks administering the defense sites will work together to develop a comprehensive preservation plan to address detailed protection and preservation needs at each site. The plan also will include criteria to identify the sites where there is the most immediate need for stabilization and preservation. The plan also will outline cyclic maintenance needs and schedules to meet preservation goals for all the park sites within the boundaries.

The managers of the three parks will work together to plan and carry out other functions necessary to administering these sites holistically, such as managing cultural and natural resources, managing museum collections, and interpretation. To appropriately accomplish these management functions, the following plans are especially needed: a historic resource study, a comprehensive interpretive plan, a cultural landscape report, and an archeological overview and evaluation.

Historic Resource Study

On June 19, 1973, the District of Columbia Joint Commission on Landmarks designated the entire Fort Circle Parks as "Landmarks of the Nation's Capital." This designation included the forts themselves, along with the greenbelt connectors purchased by the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission for the "Fort Drive."

The Fort Circle Parks were placed on the National Register of Historic Places on July 15, 1974.

On February 9, 1998, the District of Columbia historic preservation office reaffirmed the significance of the "Civil War fort sites" and suggested that the "Fort Circle Park System" was eligible for the national register in its own right, citing the Fort Circle Parks system as a major element of the 1902 McMillan Commission plan for the city of Washington.

A historic resource study is underway to identify the historic context for the development and evolution of the Civil War defenses of Wash-

ington. Information contained in the report will be used to update the national register nomination for the defenses and to identify the relationship of early urban planning efforts to the evolution of the fort sites and adjacent corridor surrounding the city of Washington.

Comprehensive Interpretive Plan

An interpretive plan is needed to guide the development of interpretive programs specifically related to the defense sites. The plan will be used by the staff and volunteers in conjunction with the development of exhibits and wayside media. It also will provide specific guidance for preparing an exhibit plan.

In related NPS efforts, interpretive plans are underway for Rock Creek Park and Anacostia Park (a unit of National Capital Parks–East). Recommendations in those documents will supplement the more specific guidance of such a plan for the Fort Circle Parks.

Cultural Landscape Report

The National Park Service completed a cultural landscape inventory of the defense sites in 1996 (NPS 1996) as part of this planning effort. The work in the cultural landscape inventory lays the groundwork for the completion of a cultural landscape report. The information in a cultural landscape report will provide the basis for any recommendations to amend the national register nomination, including contributing and noncontributing features, suggested treatments for cultural resource preservation, and the provision of management guidelines appropriate for national register properties. Potential vistas will be identified.

Archeological Inventory and Evaluation

Associated with some of the earthworks were ancillary features or structures that served as encampments, signal corps facilities, and headquarters. Also possible could be evidence of hospitals or aid stations, temporary graves, or unmarked interments. Many of these show up on military maps of the period. However, still unknown is whether such features still exist, their state of preservation, or the impact of visitation on them.

NPS policy and section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, require that all cultural resources — archeological, historic, architectural, and landscape architectural — be inventoried and evaluated for possible inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Until that can be completed, The National Park Service will undertake individual surveys of each area that would be affected by the actions of this plan. At each site where ground disturbance will occur, the National Park Service will carry out archeological testing and other methods that use low impact techniques to minimize any possible adverse impact.

VISITOR USE STUDY

A comprehensive visitor use study is needed to understand who the visitors to the Fort Circle Parks are and how they use the parks. Such a study will help the parks to meet visitors' expectations and provide better services, more knowledgeable staff, and facilities appropriate to visitors' needs. The study also will help to identify where park resources should be focused.

CARRYING CAPACITY

No carrying capacity studies have been conducted for the Fort Circle Parks.

Visitor carrying capacity defines the appropriate level of resource use beyond which the resource is damaged. Each cultural or natural resource area is evaluated to determine how the resource is used and to identify indicators of possible damage. These indicators could be such things as erosion, extensive soil compaction, creation of "social trails" (informal trails), damage to trees, shrubs, or cultural resources, or an inability of visitors to properly enjoy the site due to crowding.

Carrying capacity is difficult to measure at most of the defense sites. Visitor access is difficult to

control in urban parks. The use of the parklands associated with the sites is primarily by city residents living near the sites. In addition, the primary use on associated parklands is active recreation, rather than appreciation of the historic resources.

Although overcrowding does not appear to be an issue, the misuse of the resources (such as the creation of "social" trails and climbing on earthworks) is significant. This is an enforcement issue rather than a carrying capacity issue.

Recommendation: A carrying capacity study should be conducted for the Fort Circle Parks to better understand how visitors use each site, what visitor expectations and demands are, and what effects visitation causes on each historic resource (see indicators described in the "Zoning" section).

SAFETY

Safety issues in Fort Circle Parks are of two basic varieties. First is the need for visitors to be safe while in the parks. Many of the large wooded areas are used for illicit activities, and visitors are legitimately concerned about their personal safety. The U.S. Park Police may need to increase their patrolling of the parks, but they cannot be expected to make them totally safe. As more activities are scheduled and more people use the parks, visitors will feel less uncomfortable.

The second safety concern is the protection of visitors from slips, trips, and falls resulting from lack of maintenance or other unsafe conditions.

Recommendation: A study of possible activities at the Fort Circle Parks should be undertaken, in keeping with the historic and recreational significance of the parks. It is important to fill the parks with life in order to take them back for use by law-abiding citizens. More Park Police patrols should be added.

ACCESS FOR VISITORS WITH DISABILITIES

A significant part of the mission of the National Park Service is providing for visitor enjoyment. All visitors should enjoy NPS parks and facilities. Visitors come in all ages, sizes, and capability levels. An increasing number have special physical needs and requirements to be able to enjoy our national parks.

As outlined in the policies of the National Park Service, *Management Policies 2001*, the National Park Service will provide the highest feasible level of physical access to historic properties for people with disabilities, consistent with the preservation of the properties' significant historical attributes. Access modifications will be designed and installed that will least affect the features of a property that contribute to its significance.

All nonhistoric buildings and structures associated with the Fort Circle Parks will be made fully accessible to people with disabilities, and every effort will be made to accommodate visitors with disabilities at the historic fort sites while balancing the maintenance of the historic integrity of each site. All visitor services will be adapted to accommodate visitors with special needs.

Recommendation: An evaluation of each site and facility should be undertaken to determine what actions will be necessary to enhance accessibility, consonant with the preservation of significant resources.

THE PLAN

OVERVIEW

In the *Draft Management Plan / Environmental Assessment,* three alternatives addressing concerns and issues about the future management of the Fort Circle Parks were evaluated. Purpose and significance statements, identification of significant resources, and input received during public meetings guided the development of the alternatives.

After the draft plan was published and following agency and public review, the planning team, in response to comments received, combined the previous alternatives 2 and 3 to form a new preferred alternative. A finding of no significant impact was issued in September 2003. That document indicated that the agency's preferred alternative also is the environmentally preferable alternative and would become the management plan for the Fort Circle Parks.

The management of the Fort Circle Parks will focus on both cultural resources and recreation. Cultural resource management will focus on the story of the Civil War defenses of Washington, with special emphasis on the battle of Fort Stevens and on the ring of forts that protected the city of Washington during the Civil War. These sites are nationally significant because they effectively protected the nation's capital from Confederate attack, influencing the outcome of the Civil War.

A significant part of the mission of the National Park Service will be to improve local and regional recreation. Recreation management will be compatible with the protection of significant cultural and natural resources of the parks. It will involve linking sites through interpretation, designating a new foot trail linking some of the fort sites and the connecting green corridor of the Fort Circle Parks system, designating auto tour routes, and producing a driving tour guide and other publications (see The Plan maps sections 1, 2, 3, and 4.)

The Fort Circle defenses and the natural areas that have grown up around them have become part of the local cityscape and now function as community parks. The National Park Service will offer interpretation and educational programs so that all visitors can experience park resources in ways compatible with preserving those resources. Visitors will have opportunities to make personal connections with the historic events these sites commemorate.

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The focus for managing cultural resources in the Fort Circle Parks will be on the national significance of the battle of Fort Stevens and the ring of forts and batteries that protected the city during the Civil War. Other foci will be on the activities of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) at various sites during the 1930s, the McMillan Plan, and early 20th century city planning and parks/parkway design concepts.

Preservation actions for historic resources will entail stabilizing earthworks, controlling erosion, and managing vegetation. Vegetation will be cleared from selected areas in Fort Foote and Fort Totten following archeological evaluation. This will enhance the interpretation of the critical role played by the system of forts during the Civil War.

The CCC-era reconstruction of Fort Stevens will be preserved, and Fort Stevens will be recommended for national recognition as a national battlefield, national historic landmark, or national historic site in its own right.

A walking tour of the battle of Fort Stevens, between Battleground National Cemetery and Fort Stevens, will be developed to encourage visitors to use the proposed side trail to the National Cemetery (see the map on p. 6). A brochure will be prepared to interpret the defense sites system, the significance of the Battle of Fort Stevens, and the evolution of preservation efforts related to the fort sites and the greenbelt connecting them.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural resources will be managed to maintain the greenbelt around the city for its natural, cultural, and scenic values. Preservation actions will involve emphasizing the removal of exotic vegetation to ensure habitat for native plant and animal species, retaining the forest canopy over earthworks, and surveying and monitoring park boundaries to prevent encroachments. Steps will be taken to eliminate illegal dumping, manage stormwater, and control erosion. The use of adjacent lands will be monitored, and zoning will be used to protect park resources.

Opportunities to correct stormwater impacts from nonpark sources will be sought and implemented, and feasible environmental enhancements will be undertaken. These actions will improve the opportunities for interpreting natural resources.

RECREATION

Existing recreational opportunities and facilities will be improved where needed. Such improvements might include rehabilitating selected ballfields, basketball and tennis courts, picnic areas, and other existing facilities as needed. Proposals for added new facilities will be carefully evaluated.

A new trail will be developed to link most of the fort sites and to connect the green corridor of the Fort Circle Parks system. A separate planning effort will be necessary to develop the new trail. The National Park Service will consult with the District of Columbia and other governmental and private organizations to develop a route. Existing trail segments will be used, as will city sidewalks, with some minor construction to connect existing trail segments. It is proposed that the trail extend the entire 23 ± miles around the city.

In the Shepherd Parkway area, the trail will go primarily along city sidewalks to avert the impacts of a new trail in narrow wooded corridors and to avoid important wildlife habitat.

Appropriate signs will be placed along the greenbelt corridor connecting most of the fort sites. Where possible, bicycles will be allowed on the new trail so long as cultural and natural resources can be sufficiently protected. Existing bicycle use of the trail between Fort Mahan and Fort Stanton can continue, but because of the