

Transportation, Circulation, and Congestion—Current transportation options and infrastructure do not meet the needs of many visitors and result in congestion at several popular destinations, including sections of Crater Rim Drive such as Thurston Lava Tube (Nahuku). Volcanic events have led to closures of park roads and may continue to disrupt established travel patterns. The location, capacity, and condition of park roads, parking lots, trails, and other infrastructure should be evaluated in relation to visitor needs as well as resource protection goals.

Natural Resource Preservation, Restoration, and Research—The park is home to an amazing diversity of life, including 54 species that are Federally listed as threatened or endangered. Invasive species are an overriding concern at the park—they degrade natural ecosystems, reduce the richness of flora and fauna, and threaten the survival of the park's unique biodiversity. There is an on-going need for adequate staffing, funding, and facilities. Improving the capacity of the park to protect its native plants, animals, and natural processes requires innovative management. The park is also home to pioneering research studies and an active research community. The GMP will explore opportunities for the park to continue to expand its capacity to preserve and perpetuate natural resources through stewardship and research activities. A separate EIS effort was initiated in 2008 that is specifically focused on managing non-native ungulates and consequent restoration of native ecosystems and cultural resources affected by ungulates.

Cultural Resource Protection and Management—The park has many significant cultural landscapes, historic structures, archeological sites, ethnographic resources, and museum collections. There are also many places in the park that are culturally significant to Native Hawaiians and are used for ongoing traditional use. Managing these resources presents challenges—such as protection from visitor impacts, weathering, and vandalism, as well as insuring funding for preservation and education. Incorporating Native Hawaiian values and ongoing traditional use into future park planning will be addressed.

Climate Change—Global climate change may potentially lead to changes in local weather patterns, wildfire frequency, distribution of plant and animal communities, hurricane frequency, sea level, and increased avian disease. Pro-active planning and management actions can help the park adjust to climate change, interpret

changing conditions to the public, reduce the effects on park resources, operations and visitors, and reduce emissions from park operations to the extent feasible and possible.

Sustainable Operations and Facilities—Managing a park sitting astride two active volcanoes presents many challenges. Volcanic activity has destroyed a number of operational and maintenance facilities. Today, the remaining facilities are scattered throughout the park, often in outdated structures that were not intended for these uses and may not be sustainable or efficient. The uncertainty of future volcanic activity and concerns about health and safety require operational and emergency procedures that are flexible and responsive to changing conditions.

Partnership Development—Partnerships, both inside and outside park boundaries, have greatly expanded the park's capacity to fulfill its mission and greatly enhance the quality of services provided. The park is currently working with private entities, various governmental agencies and non-profit organizations in local, regional, and landscape level conservation partnerships, such as the park's involvement in the Three Mountain Alliance and their close relationship with Hawaiian Volcano Observatory and the Pacific Island Ecosystem Research Center. Non-profit organizations also provide a range of services within the park, including visitor guided tours and educational programs, and cultural and natural resource service projects.

Business Relationships—Commercial service operators provide a range of visitor amenities within the park, including food service and lodging, guided tours and educational programs. The GMP will explore how the park can improve visitor experiences by promoting commercial services that are necessary and appropriate to support visitor needs.

Park Boundary—Activities adjacent to the park's boundaries have the potential to impact sensitive park resources. Planning for the next 15–20 years prompts pro-active thinking about best protecting the park's fundamental resources and values. In addition, the Olaa rainforest area is managed by the NPS, but is not part of the official park boundary. The GMP will consider any potential for recommendations for boundary changes.

Kahuku District—The park increased significantly in 2003 when the 116,000 acre Kahuku area was acquired. There are currently no visitor facilities at Kahuku and highway access needs to be analyzed. Resource inventory and

monitoring has begun. Planning for the Kahuku District is essential for developing a cohesive vision for the entire park. Also, a wilderness eligibility assessment for the Kahuku District, as required by NPS management policy, will be included in the GMP. The park currently contains 131,542 acres of Congressionally designated Wilderness. A separate Wilderness Management Plan will be prepared following completion of the GMP update.

Decision Process: Following the scoping phase and consideration of public concerns and other agency comments, a Draft EIS will be prepared and released for public review. Availability of the forthcoming Draft EIS/GMP will be formally announced in the **Federal Register**, as well as through local and regional news media, direct mailing to the project mailing list, and via the Internet. Following due consideration of all agency and public comment as may be received, a Final EIS will be prepared; at this time it is anticipated that the final proposed plan will be available in 2013. As a delegated EIS, the official responsible for the final decision on the proposed plan is the Regional Director, Pacific West Region. Subsequently, the official responsible for implementation of the approved plan is the Superintendent, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park.

Dated: February 19, 2009.

Jonathan B. Jarvis,

Regional Director, Pacific West Region.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Resource Protection Study, Record of Decision, Curecanti National Recreation Area, Colorado

AGENCY: National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Availability of a Record of Decision on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Resource Protection Study, Curecanti National Recreation Area.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C), the National Park Service (NPS) announces the availability of the Record of Decision for the Resource Protection Study, Curecanti National Recreation Area, Colorado. On December 4, 2008, the Regional Director, Intermountain Region, approved the Record of

Decision for the project. A report, jointly prepared by the National Park Service and the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation, the cooperating agency on the EIS), will be forwarded to Congress through the Department of the Interior. That Report to Congress will present the Resource Protection Study's findings, and will recommend the implementation of the Preferred Alternative (Proposed Action) contained in the FEIS issued on October 3, 2008. Congress will then decide what action to take, if any. As soon as practicable following such congressional action, the National Park Service will begin to implement those actions.

Alternatives Receiving Detailed Impact Assessment

Alternative 1: No Action (Continuation of Existing Conditions)

Under Alternative 1, the No Action Alternative, NPS would continue to manage the natural, cultural, and recreational resources of Curecanti National Recreation Area (NRA), and associated facilities, pursuant to Reclamation law, NPS law, the 1965 Memorandum of Agreement between NPS and Reclamation (1965 MOA), and other applicable laws and regulations. Reclamation would continue to manage the three dams and reservoirs, power plants, access roads, and other related facilities, to meet the purposes of the Colorado River Storage Project Act (CRSP); would continue to manage the East Portal area to meet the purposes of the Uncompahgre Project; and would continue to have unrestricted access to their lands and land interests, water and water interests, and facilities; pursuant to Reclamation law, the 1965 MOA, and other applicable laws and regulations. There would be no significant change in the NRA boundary. A permanent NPS presence would not be assured under this alternative.

Alternative 2: Proposed Action

Under Alternative 2, the Proposed Action, or Preferred Alternative, NPS would manage the same natural, cultural, and recreational resources and facilities as Alternative 1, pursuant to Reclamation law, NPS law, including new legislation establishing the NRA with 10,040 acres of additional agreed-upon neighboring agency lands, a revised MOA with Reclamation, and other applicable laws and regulations. Reclamation would manage their same facilities and areas of responsibility as Alternative 1, and would have unrestricted access to their lands and land interests, water and water interests, and facilities, pursuant to Reclamation

law, the revised MOA, and other applicable laws and regulations. NPS would be authorized to work in partnership with private landowners within a Conservation Opportunity Area of 24,300 acres outside the NRA boundary, to implement a variety of tools, including acquiring interests in land from willing landowners, such as fee simple acquisition and conservation easements, which would promote the long-term conservation of resources. A permanent NPS presence would be assured under this alternative, which is also the environmentally preferred alternative.

Other Alternatives Considered

Four other alternatives pertaining to the proposed boundary, and various scenarios for different agencies to manage the NRA were considered. They were all eliminated from detailed impact assessment for reasons stated in the FEIS.

The Record of Decision includes a description of the background of the project, a statement of the decision made, synopses of other alternatives considered, the basis for the decision, a finding of no impairment of park resources and values, a description of the environmentally preferable alternative, and an overview of public involvement in the decision-making process.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Connie Rudd, Superintendent, Curecanti National Recreation Area, 102 Elk Creek, Gunnison, CO 81230; Tel: (970) 641-2337 ext. 220; E-mail: connie_rudd@nps.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Copies of the Record of Decision may be obtained from the contact listed above or online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/cure>.

Dated: December 9, 2008.

Michael D. Snyder,

*Regional Director, Intermountain Region,
National Park Service.*

Editorial Note: This document was received in the Office of the Federal Register on April 7, 2009.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R6-R-2008-N0344; 60138-1265-6CCP-S3]

Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Sullys Hill National Game Preserve, Fort Totten, ND

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce that our Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan (Plan) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Sullys Hill National Game Preserve is available. This Final CCP describes how the Service intends to manage this refuge for the next 15 years.

ADDRESSES: A copy of the Plan may be obtained by writing to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Refuge Planning, P.O. Box 25486, Denver Federal Center, Denver, Colorado 80225; or by download from <http://mountain-prairie.fws.gov/planning>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Laura King, 406-644-2211, (phone); 406-644-2661 (fax); or laura_king@fws.gov (e-mail).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Sullys Hill National Game Preserve, established in 1904, is a 1,675-acre National Wildlife Refuge sitting on the south shores of Devils Lake, about 10 miles south of the city of Devils Lake, North Dakota. This Refuge supports a unique community of habitats such as an oak, ash, basswood and aspen woodland, mixed grassed prairie, and some natural wetlands. These diverse habitats provide "edge" habitat for over 250 species of migratory birds, plains bison, Rocky Mountain elk, white-tailed deer, turkeys, and prairie dogs.

The Refuge is one of only 19 designated natural areas in North Dakota, of which only four are National Wildlife Refuges. It is also one of only four Refuges nationally established for bison conservation.

Sullys Hill National Game Preserve has over 60,000 visitors annually. The Refuge is becoming a progressive regional conservation learning center, promoting the conservation role of the National Wildlife Refuge System while educating visitors about the functions and benefits of prairie wetlands and grasslands. Per its legislative purpose, there is no hunting permitted on this Refuge.

The draft Plan and Environmental Assessment (EA) was made available to