



Newsletter # 2 - Spring 2004

Planning Team Completes Initial Phase of General Management Plan Process

Fort Pulaski's planning team spent the last year meeting with park employees, public agency representatives, partner organizations, neighbors, and members of the general public to hear and record those issues, concerns, and ideas people have about the park's future. The team hosted meetings with agencies, neighbors, and partners at Fort Pulaski in October 2002 and June 2003 and in Atlanta in May 2003. The National Monument arranged open house meetings for the general public in December 2003.

These meetings produced about 68 distinct statements that we have sorted into 33 narrowly defined categories for the purpose of analysis. Later, some of these categories will be combined into broader groupings to facilitate the development of management alternatives. The greatest number of comments fell into five categories: interpretation, boundary expansion, Highway 80 widening proposal, partnerships, and protection of wetlands.

- Interpretation – Interpretation in the National Park System means helping every visitor make a personal connection with park resources and values. The methods used to achieve this goal range from the traditional campfire talks by Park Rangers to electronic and digital media. Most of the comments the planning team received regarding interpretation suggested expanding the programs in the areas of natural history and ecology, African American stories and contributions to the history of Fort Pulaski, the broader role of Fort Pulaski



Fort Pulaski demilune, moat and flagpole – NPS Photo, December 2003

in the total military history of the Savannah area, the story of the fort's construction village, and the story of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) era. Other comments dealt with interpretive methodology such as restoring the landscape to appear more like it did in 1862, the period of significance in the park's military history.

- Boundary Expansion – Several individuals noted that Fort Pulaski does not now include any of the Union batteries such as Battery Halleck that were instrumental in the bombardment and subsequent surrender of the garrison. They suggested that the boundary be expanded to include these

resources. Another respondent observed that Battery Halleck is privately owned and that the owner is not a willing seller. Barring boundary expansion or Federal acquisition, the individual suggested that NPS work with non-profit organizations or local governments to secure protection for important sites.

- Highway 80 Widening – The Georgia Department of Transportation has been developing a proposal for several years to widen and elevate Highway 80 between the Bull River bridge and the Lazzaretto Creek bridge. Highway 80 runs through the middle of Fort Pulaski with the marshes and tidal creeks of McQueen's Island on the south (continued on page 4)

Greetings from the Superintendent

Dear Friends:

This newsletter is the second coming to you from our planning team. For the past year or so we have been asking people to tell us about their visions for the future of Fort Pulaski. This newsletter presents a summary of the suggestions, concerns, and issues that you expressed to us. We hope you will read this material and let us know if, in your estimation, we missed anything.

The next step in the planning process is to begin to develop management prescriptions, which are sets of resource conditions and visitor experiences that we would like to achieve in different areas of Fort Pulaski National Monument. These prescriptions will be applied to alternative management concepts to produce a set of maps that will become part of the draft GMP that ultimately will be made available for public review and comment.

As we develop these preliminary management concepts, we will be publishing and distributing additional newsletters to give you the opportunity to participate in the planning process. These ideas will also be published on the Internet. You can view the GMP planning website for Fort Pulaski by using your web browser to go to the following web address:

<http://planning.nps.gov/>

Then type the words "Fort Pulaski" in the search bar at the top of the page and you will be taken to the GMP website.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and will continue to stay in touch with us throughout the planning process.

Thank you for your interest in Fort Pulaski.

John Breen
Superintendent

What We Heard from You

The Fort Pulaski GMP team has completed the initial scoping phase of the planning process. We met with federal agencies, state and local agencies, and a variety of partners, stakeholders, and other interested parties. The result was a wide-ranging list of concerns and suggestions for NPS to consider in developing the GMP.

The GMP team received approximately 70 comments and suggestions during scoping. We then placed these comments into about 32 categories. Many of the comments and suggestions fell into the following categories:

- Interpretation
- Boundary expansion
- Highway 80 widening
- Wetlands/marsh

A. Interpretation – The team received several suggestions for including and expanding the interpretation of African American experiences at Fort Pulaski. Other contributors noted the growth in ecotourism and natural history interpretation and recommended increasing programs in these areas. The

military history of the fort and its connection to the larger military history of Savannah was also a theme recommended for the park's interpretive program.

- B. Boundary expansion – The protection and possible acquisition of federal batteries was a common element in this category.
- C. Highway 80 widening – Meeting participants emphasized both participation in project planning to protect the park's resources and realization of opportunities to benefit Fort Pulaski through improved access, safety, pulloffs, and terrapin exclusion devices.
- D. Wetlands/Marsh – The vast salt marsh on the south side of Highway 80 evoked several comments from our partners and stakeholders. The identification and delineation of wetland boundaries was one focus. Another theme was the need to protect water quality and biodiversity in the salt marsh ecosystem.

A complete listing of the scoping comments and categories will appear in the draft General Management Plan.



Fort Pulaski western wall, moat, sally port and flagpole. NPS Photo, December 2003

The Construction of Fort Pulaski*

In 1807, with Europe embroiled in the Napoleonic Wars and the United States fearing British attack, Congress authorized the "Second American System of Fortifications." This defense was characterized by the early efforts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which built fortifications featuring high stone or brick walls with multilevel tiers containing internal casemates and gun positions for more firepower. Before this system was completed, however, damage to it and the First System forts by British attack during the War of 1812 pressed Congress for further action. In 1816, Congress moved to create the Board of Fortifications for Sea Coast Defense.

In 1828 the Board approved plans for erecting a new fort at Cockspar Island. That same year Major Samuel Babcock, the first engineer assigned to the project, began to conduct topographical surveys while also building the workmen's village and a system of drainage ditches and embankments. A young West Point graduate named Robert E. Lee, who reported to his first military assignment in 1829, joined Babcock. Lee acted as assistant engineer, but began to direct many tasks when Babcock's health deteriorated.

In 1830, the fort construction was reassigned to Lieutenant Joseph K. F. Mansfield. Mansfield recommended revised plans after he found



Fort Pulaski arches. NPS Photo, December 2003

Babcock's work inadequate, probably the result of poor supervision during his illness. In 1833, under Mansfield's direction, construction of the massive red brick structure finally began.

The new fort was named Fort Pulaski to honor the heroism of Polish patriot Count Casimir C. Pulaski at the Siege of Savannah during the American Revolutionary War. The first phase of its construction involved placement of wall foundations and timber grillage and the careful pounding of timber piles into the earth. Approximately twenty-five million bricks were used in building the fort's 32-foot-high walls,

which vary in thickness from seven to eleven feet. Slave labor was rented from nearby rice plantations and used to perform most of the hardest work of the fort's construction. Other workers included military servicemen, skilled masons, and carpenters, some of whom were recruited and brought down each fall from Northern states.

A construction village, built in 1829, stood at the north end of the island. These frame buildings served as quarters to accommodate engineers, mechanics, and workers and house building materials. The project was made more difficult by frequent coastal storms and years when Congress did not appropriate funds for Fort Pulaski's construction. However, by late 1839, the central edifice of the five-sided fort neared completion. The main features of the fort's interior, the demilune (the large projecting outwork behind the main fortification), and various dikes and ditches, were finished by early 1847. The fort received fairly minor repairs and regular maintenance over the next fourteen years. By 1861, the overall cost of Fort Pulaski totaled above one million dollars.

*Source: *Fort Pulaski National Monument Administrative History*, December 2003, J. Faith Meader, New South Associates, Cameron Binkely, Editor, National Park Service



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fort Pulaski National Monument at Cockspar Island, Georgia, preserves a striking masonry fortification significant in American military history. Visitors to Fort Pulaski learn how the golden age of coastal fortifications ended on April 11, 1862, when the fort failed to withstand bombardment by Union forces who attacked it during the American Civil War using newly developed rifled cannon.

Fort Pulaski National Monument

U.S. Highway 80 East
P.O. Box 30757
Savannah, Georgia 31410

Phone
912-786-5787

E-mail
FOPU_superintendent@nps.gov

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

General Management Plan Schedule

STEP	TIME FRAME	ACTIVITY	OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION
1	Summer – Winter 2003	Initiate Project The planning team assembles, begins to identify the project's scope and begins to establish contacts with the participants.	- Read the newsletter - Send us your ideas and comments - Come to public meetings
2	Winter 2003	Define Planning Context The team examines <i>why</i> the national monument was established and affirms its mission, purpose, and significance. Team members collect and analyze relevant data and public input needed to support the planning effort.	- Read the newsletter - Send us your ideas and comments - Come to public meetings
3	Spring – Summer 2004	Develop and Evaluate Alternatives Using staff and public input, the team explores <i>what</i> the national monument's future should look like and proposes a range of reasonable alternatives.	- Read the newsletter - Send us your ideas and comments
4	Fall 2004	Prepare a Draft Document A <i>Draft GMP/EIS</i> is published. The draft document describes the alternatives and the impacts and public input, a preferred alternative is identified in the document.	- Send us your ideas and comments - Come to public meetings
5	Fall 2005	Publish Final Document Based on review and comment by the NPS and the public, the team revises the <i>GMP/EIS</i> and distributes a final plan. The plan is approved in a published record of decision.	- Read the final plan, including NPS responses to substantive public comments and official letters.
6	Spring 2006	Implement the Approved Plan After the <i>Record of Decision</i> is issued, and as funding allows, the <i>GMP</i> is implemented.	- Work with Fort Pulaski to implement the plan.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fort Pulaski National Monument
 U.S. Highway 80 East
 P.O. Box 30757
 Savannah, Georgia 31410

First Class Mail
 Postage and Fees
PAID
 Washington, DC
 12651

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The General Management Plan sets future resource conditions and visitor experiences that the National Park Service wants to achieve at Fort Pulaski National Monument during the next 15-20 years. This newsletter serves to keep our partners, stakeholders, and the public informed about milestones and progress in the GMP process.

Editor
 David Libman

Fort Pulaski Superintendent
 John Breen

Contributors
 Mark Kinzer, John Breen
 Mike Hosti, Tammy Risius
 June Devisfruto

NPS Photographer
 David Libman

Comments? Write to:
 David Libman
 NPS Southeast Region
 100 Alabam St., 1924 BLDG
 Atlanta, GA 30303

GMP Initial Phase Completed (continued)”

(continued from page 1)

side and the south channel of the Savannah River and Cockspur Island on the north side. Several respondents advised NPS to participate in the Highway 80 project to ensure that DOT is aware of and considers the park’s concerns in plans for the road project. Other individuals emphasized the issue of traffic safety especially as it relates to eastbound vehicles attempting to turn left into the park.

- **Partnerships** - The National Park Service works to develop and sustain partnerships that invite public participation, understanding, and support of the national parks. Several meeting participants suggested exploring opportunities for additional partnerships such as volunteer programs, friends groups, environmental education, and

outreach to school groups. Other individuals noted existing successful partnerships such as the relationship with the Oatland Island Educational Center.

- **Wetlands** – The planning team received many comments expressing interest in and concern about the protection of the marshes and wetlands of McQueen’s Island. Typical of such comments were those suggesting the need to have more complete information about the wetlands such as the boundaries of wetlands within upland areas, a definitive wetland delineation for the park, and a study of the dike system and hydrology. Another respondent suggested that NPS needs to be cognizant and aware of and comment on water quality & biodiversity in salt marsh ecosystem and surrounding saltwater rivers.