

THE  
**FUTURE**  
OF  
**AMERICA'S**  
**NATIONAL**  
**PARKS**

First Annual  
Centennial Strategy for

# Gateway National Recreation Area

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: GATE

Year: 2007

**Vision Statement**

Gateway National Recreation Area was established in 1972 to bring the "NPS Experience" to the nation's largest urban area. A mosaic of rare and beautiful natural areas accented with historically significant landmarks and landscapes, the park provides a place of refuge for millions of urban residents seeking opportunities for recreation, reflection and learning. Our challenge---by the Centennial Celebration and beyond---is to develop Gateway so that it can without reservation represent National Park Service values in the nation's center for media, finance, arts and culture. To do so, the park must engage an ever widening network of institutions, agencies, organizations and individuals. Working together we will explore the meaning of nature and history and recreation to people of differing backgrounds, ages and cultures. We will reshape the park as an urban laboratory for sustainable practices, park-based education, resources stewardship, and life-long health through recreation. We will exemplify the best in park management.

One of our projects, Rehab of Buildings 272 and 74 on Floyd Bennett Field for Educational Purposes, will create new opportunities to expand the visitor base for the park, to attract volunteers and junior rangers, and to identify new park partners. Development of the project will be done by the Schoolhouse Foundation, a non-profit organization established specifically to develop buildings for educational purposes. When complete, the facilities will be used by the NYC Dept. of Education to support teacher-training and science programs in schools throughout the City.

Our second project, Restoration of the Tidal Creek at Floyd Bennett Field, is an illustration of sharing among city, state, and federal partners to an unprecedented level the common goal of restoring ecosystem function. The NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection will be a key partner in this effort. Completion of the project will provide an exterior site for classroom study of diverse plant and animal populations, as well as a location for junior ranger work involving the reversal of long-term pollutants on native habitats.

**Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager**

Barry Sullivan, General Superintendent, Gateway National Recreation Area

Site: GATE

STEWARDSHIP

Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Restoration of saltmarsh habitat provides accessible nature viewing areas.

Because the rehabilitation of Buildings 272 and 74 will be used by thousands of students, teachers, and parents, this project will create new opportunities to expand the visitor base for the park, to attract volunteers and junior rangers, and to identify new park partners.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: GATE

STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Rehabilitate high-priority historic buildings to good condition, and help communities to preserve their history through programs like Preserve America.

Rehabilitation of Building 272 will address \$1.5M in deferred maintenance, correct code deficiencies, make changes necessary to support educational programs, and reduce energy consumption.

Rehabilitation of Building 74 will address \$1.3M in deferred maintenance, correct code deficiencies, and replace existing HVAC systems with high efficiency equipment.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Restore native habitats by controlling invasive species and reintroducing key plant and animal species.

Native saltmarsh habitats that are increasingly imperiled by urban impacts will be restored and native vegetation (spartina alterniflora and s. patens) re-established to provide habitat function and value for a wide variety of animal species.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Improve high-priority assets to acceptable condition, as measured by the Facility Condition Index.

Building 272 has an API of 70 and an FCI of 0.229. Building 74 has an API of 10 and an FCI of 0.035. This project will address approximately \$2.8M in deferred maintenance and return them to functional utility.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: GATE

STEWARDSHIP

Set the standard of excellence in urban park landscape design and maintenance.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The area surrounding Buildings 272 and 74 will be landscaped to support outdoor programs and enhance park wildlife programs.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: GATE

STEWARDSHIP

Serve as the Preeminent resource laboratory by applying excellence in science and scholarship to understand and respond to environmental changes.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Restored saltmarsh habitats serve as living laboratories that expand scientific knowledge of estuarine ecosystems and restoration science. Application of this knowledge in future restoration work is essential to achieving sustainability of these ecosystems.

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Site: GATE

STEWARDSHIP

Encourage children to be future conservationists.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Restored saltmarsh habitats serve as a living classroom, encouraging children to explore the many aspects of conservation biology and the natural world.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: GATE

ENVIRONMENT

Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.

Reduce the environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality.

To the greatest degree practical, rehabilitation work on Buildings 272 and 74 will be done in accordance with green building principles and standards. Passive and active energy generation systems will be incorporated in the facilities for practical and educational purposes.

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Site: GATE

**ENVIRONMENT**

Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

Establish programs to showcase exemplary environmental practices and increase visitor awareness of how the practices apply to their daily lives, as measured by surveys.

Restoration programs exemplify the importance of re-establishing ecosystems and provide a means to convey to visitors their functions and values to biota, as well as their importance to humans.

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Site: GATE

**ENVIRONMENT**

Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Ecosystem restoration of the saltmarsh at Floyd Bennett Field is one of the best ways to bring together a diverse group of concerned and dedicated individuals and groups involved as stewards of their park. This has been demonstrated with several restoration projects at GATE and has successfully engaged partners, volunteers, community leaders, schools, and non-governmental organizations toward the common goal of environmental improvement.

In the case of the rehabilitation of Buildings 272 and 74, one park partner, the New York City Department of Education, plans to use the facilities to support teacher-training and science programs in schools throughout the City. The second partner, the Schoolhouse Foundation, will develop the buildings for educational purposes.

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Site: GATE

**RECREATION**

Expand partnerships with schools and boys and girls associations to show how national park experiences can improve children's lives.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Buildings 272 and 74 will be used by a park partner, the New York City Department of Education, to support teacher-training and science programs in schools throughout the City. Because the rehabilitated facilities will be used by thousands of students, teachers, and parents, this project will create new opportunities to attract junior rangers.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: GATE

RECREATION

Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

Increase the number of visitors that attend ranger-facilitated programs such as campfire talks, hikes, and school programs.

Restoration efforts at both natural and cultural sites can contribute to increasing visitation because those newly restored areas will serve as outdoor classrooms.

Because Buildings 272 and 74 will be used by thousands of students, teachers and parents, this project will create new opportunities to expand the visitor base for the park

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Site: GATE

EDUCATION

Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

After its rehabilitation, Building 272 will be used to support teacher-training and science programs in schools throughout the City.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: GATE

EDUCATION

Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.

By restoring ecosystems, science-based learning experiences can be understood in an interesting and unique way. Visitors will take with them, a greater appreciation of the biological and physical world when they understand why the ecosystems were degraded, but were resilient enough to be re-established.

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Site: GATE

**PROFESSIONALISM**

Model what it means to work in partnership.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Because natural and cultural restoration involves bringing together in a variety of disciplines, agencies, groups, and individuals, it provides the perfect "medium" for cooperation and partnerships. Gateway has been highly successful in fostering partnerships for its restoration efforts.

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