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## Office of Communications News Release

For Immediate Release: Friday, December 11, 2009  
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### **National Park Service Issues National Mall Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Public Comment; Plan increases space for Public Gatherings & First Amendment Activities**

Washington, D.C. – The National Park Service (NPS) National Mall Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement (NMP DEIS) will be available for public comment beginning Friday, December 18, 2009. Substantive written comments will be accepted until 11:59 p.m. March 18, 2010. A link to the document on the National Mall Plan website is found at [www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan](http://www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan). The document will be available for public inspection at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library downtown and at all 23 branch libraries in the District of Columbia. CD's will be sent to those on the plan's mailing list and those who request a copy.

Nearly 30,000 people have provided input into planning to date. Their written comments and suggestions have shaped the range of alternatives and the preferred alternative. Federal and local agencies have collaborated on this plan as well as those interested in historic preservation. Public participation has been helped by widespread media coverage, 17 public meetings, a symposium, walking and bus tours for groups and the public, numerous speaking engagements, conference presentations, and other opportunities for public engagement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement analyzes five (5) alternatives that describe different visions for how the National Mall could be managed. They include a No- Action and the agency Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative combines ideas from each of the other alternatives to best achieve the plan goals of improving the condition of the park's resources, visitor amenities and increasing space available for public gatherings and First Amendment activities.

According to Assistant Secretary of Interior for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, Tom Strickland, "the plan lays out a vision and strategy to restore the National Mall for today and tomorrow... resulting in a healthier ecosystem and much improved appearance...and ensuring that in the future the National Mall will continue to be a treasured landscape and symbol of our nation."

"The plan protects our democratic rights and renovates the National Mall so it can better fulfill its unique role as our country's civic stage," says National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis. "For the first time, the National Mall would be prepared for many different uses – improving its ability to host national celebrations, First Amendment demonstrations, and other activities."

National Mall Superintendent John Piltzecker said, "releasing the Draft Plan is the first step. We look forward to getting public input on this plan. Upon completion of the plan we will begin to implement the vision."

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

This is the public's first opportunity to review the entire National Mall Plan DEIS as a complete document. The National Mall Plan DEIS is a lengthy document (600 pages) because it analyzes and compares the five (5) alternatives. A companion photo book is provided online as well as on the CD version of the document to remind the public about National Mall areas, uses, and existing conditions. After the completion of the comment period, NPS will be responding to substantive comments and making appropriate changes to the document. Then a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) will be published. 30 days after the FEIS publication date, an official Record of Decision will be announced in the Federal Register.

**PROVIDING COMMENTS:** Anyone wishing to provide written comment is directed to please submit written comments online at [www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan](http://www.nps.gov/nationalmallplan). A link will be provided to the public comment site, where instructions will further guide the public on how to submit written comments. The National Mall Plan is a large document because of the nature of issues and topics to be covered. As a result of this and because of expected public interest, the comment period will run for 90 days from the publication of the Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. The NPS hopes the public will take the time to review this draft and provide written comments to the NPS online.

Before including a commenter's address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in their written comment, all commentors should be aware that their entire written comment – including any and all personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While anyone may ask the NPS in their comment to withhold their personal identifying information from public review, the NPS cannot guarantee it will be able to do so.

The National Park Service strongly encourages written comment online to assist in analyzing and responding to comments. However, the public may also submit written comments via the U.S. Postal Service or other carriers to:

National Mall Plan  
c/o Deryn Goodwin – Planning Division  
National Park Service  
12795 West Alameda Parkway  
Denver, CO 80225

Or comments may be mailed or hand delivered to

National Mall Plan Attention: Susan Spain, Project Executive  
National Mall & Memorial Parks  
900 Ohio Drive, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20024

To request a CD copy be mailed to you, send an email to:

[nationalmallplan@nps.gov](mailto:nationalmallplan@nps.gov)

Please put a "Request copy of National Mall Plan DEIS" in the subject line and make sure to include the commenter's full name, full mailing address and zip code.

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